

Travel Policy

Section 1 - Scope

(1) This Policy applies to all staff, non-staff and students of the University who are required to travel for University business, on University funds. The Policy includes air travel, accommodation and car hire. Approval for travel expenditure must be done in accordance with the [Delegations of Authority Policy and Register](#) and this Policy.

(2) A traveler will be provided with appropriate travel and accommodation arrangements to support their business travel requirements.

(3) For the purposes of this Policy, the terms 'The University', 'University' and 'ACU' refer to Australian Catholic University.

Section 2 - Purpose

(4) This Policy has been developed to ensure that:

- a. travel practices support the safety and wellbeing of the individual traveler;
- b. the University meets its duty of care to staff and students while they are travelling;
- c. travel is adequately planned;
- d. travel budgets are available for the required travel for all University staff;
- e. there is cost-effective management of travel budgets;
- f. travel practices and procedures are appropriately documented;
- g. there is appropriate reporting on financial acquittal of travel activities;
- h. the traveler is not required to undertake undue administrative efforts to acquit travel; and
- i. the possible incurrence of [Fringe Benefits Tax](#) payable by a staff member has been considered (refer to Section 6 of this Policy).

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

(5) The Vice-Chancellor and President is the Approving Authority for this Policy.

(6) The Chief Operating Officer is the Governing Authority for this Policy. The Chief Operating Officer or nominee is responsible for authorising corrective action to rectify all breaches of this Policy and must also report any fraudulent activities to the Vice-Chancellor and President.

(7) The Chief Financial Officer is the Responsible Officer for this Policy. The Chief Financial Officer is the primary point of contact for advice on implementing and administering the Policy.

(8) A traveler must obtain appropriate pre-approval before booking travel for University business.

(9) The Approving Officer must ensure:

- a. travel is necessary to effectively perform the business purpose;
- b. the availability of existing funds within an approved budget, or that the external source of funds is available and sufficient;
- c. travel is conducted in the most cost effective and efficient manner; and
- d. required acquittal, trip reporting and relevant receipts and documentation are submitted in support of all travel within set time frames.

(10) The Traveler must ensure:

- a. there is approval to travel before any bookings/payment is made;
- b. bookings are made in a timely manner using the most cost-effective travel options (lowest logical fare) at all times;
- c. acquittal, trip reporting, receipts and documentation are submitted in support of all travel within set time frames;
- d. risk management has been addressed; and
- e. emergency contact details for the period of the approved travel are supplied to the relevant delegate of the Faculty, Institute, Directorate or Portfolio.

Section 4 - Further Assistance

(11) Before starting your business trip:

- a. Check for travel warnings including [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) and [International SOS](#) (refer to Section 13 of this Policy).
- b. Seek travel approval.
- c. Seek leave approval (where applicable).
- d. Apply for a University Purchase Card and Uber for Business (both are subject to Executive approval).
- e. Book travel with [FCM Travel Solutions](#) or seek assistance with Finance and Planning acu.procurement@acu.edu.au.
- f. Receive Itinerary and Statement of Costs.
- g. Check passport, visas and inoculations.
- h. Non-staff to purchase or ensure adequate travel insurance is in place prior to travel.
- i. Keep a Travel Diary and receipts.
- j. Seek reimbursement.
- k. Manage and authorise Purchase Card, travel advances and other non-purchase card/travel advance acquittal expense reimbursements.
- l. Approve, as required, business-related travel in advance of the commencement of your travel. Ensure that any expenses paid or reimbursed comply with this Policy.

(12) Please ensure staff, students as well as non-staff are not travelling to areas where the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) advises against travel. Staff members seeking further clarification of this Policy should consult with their nominated supervisor. Further advice can be obtained from [Finance and Planning Staff](#). Travelers can contact [International SOS](#) 24/7 via the App or by calling Sydney number +61 2 9372 2468. Questions relating to medical or security issues can also be sent to sydney@internationalsos.com.

(13) For any queries related to Covid-19 Government restrictions, please refer to the [Covid-19 FAQs Travel](#). The [Covid-19 Traveler Checklist](#) can be used for all domestic travel bookings.

Section 5 - Travel Approvals

(14) Staff, Students and non-University staff who need to travel for University related business, coursework or other University related activities, must obtain appropriate approval. Bookings must be made by a designated staff member via the Domestic Booking Tool or the International Pre-Trip Approval in [FCM Travel Platform](#). Please refer to the [FCM Pre-Trip Approve Quick Reference Guide](#) for more information relating to International Pre-Trip Approval.

(15) Staff and students travelling domestically require Senior Executive member approval.

(16) The Chancellor approves international travel for the Vice-Chancellor and President as well as the Pro-Chancellor and Senate members; the Vice-Chancellor and President approves travel for Direct Reports. All other international travel must obtain final approval from the Senior Executive member following preliminary approval outlined below.

(17) Faculty and Institute International travel approval:

- a. Inform the Head of School or Research Institute Director;
- b. Relevant Senior Executive member for approval.

(18) Directorate / Portfolio International travel approval:

- a. Member of the Executive for endorsement.
- b. Relevant Senior Executive member for preliminary approval.

(19) Executive staff may delegate authority to book international travel or accommodation on their behalf to their respective assistants once travel is approved.

Section 6 - Class of Travel

(20) The University acknowledges that travel is often an integral part of the work of staff at the University. ACU requires all staff, students and non-University staff who book travel for University business to make use of all available travel resources and obtain appropriate approval prior to booking travel.

(21) Staff, students and non-University staff are expected to utilise the best available fare:

- a. Best available domestic fare means the best fare available within 30 minutes either side of the preferred travel time that allows the staff member the ability to effectively complete their business.
- b. Best available international fare means the best fare available within a reasonable time of the desired departure.

(22) The authorised standard for staff members travelling intra or interstate on University business is economy class air travel or first-class rail travel, including sleeping berth. Upgrades can be obtained through use of frequent flyer points or personal funds.

(23) The table below indicates the class of travel (both international and domestic) determined for all staff:

Business Class (includes premium economy)	Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and President, Pro-Chancellor. Members of Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee. Members of Senate (international long-haul travel only, includes staff traveling in the capacity of a member of Senate). Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global and Education Pathways) and Director, Global Engagement for International long-haul travel only. Other staff where travel class is stipulated in their contract of employment.
Premium Economy	Members of the Executive (International long-haul travel only).
Economy Class (excludes premium economy)	Members of the Executive (Domestic travel and short haul flights while traveling internationally). Members of Senate (Domestic travel and short haul flights while traveling internationally). Staff Members and all other travelers.

Notes:

- a. Staff should not normally travel internationally more than four times a year. If additional travel is warranted, a formal justification will need to be provided for consideration by the Vice-Chancellor and President.
- b. Staff members who elect to travel at a higher class must personally pay the difference at the time of booking, via [FCM Travel Solutions](#). Definitions of Senior Executive and Executive can be found in the [Delegations of Authority Policy and Register](#).
- c. Staff members travelling business class should also consider using business/premium economy/economy class travel mixes.
- d. Economy domestic travel is encouraged whenever practicable.

Carbon Offset Levy

(24) In keeping with the University's focus on sustainability, the University has joined a carbon offset scheme to allow the University to offset carbon generated by flights undertaken for University business. To fund the scheme, a carbon offset levy of 4% is applied to the cost of all flights. The scheme invests in projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Section 7 - Travel Agent

(25) [FCM Travel Solutions](#) is the sole authorised Travel Agent and all airfares and domestic hotel bookings must be booked via [FCM Travel Solutions](#) for University travel.

(26) The corporate airfares agreement between the University, Qantas and Virgin Australia offers generous discounts on advertised fares (including web-based airfares) when booked either directly with [FCM Travel Solutions](#) or via the online booking tool available on the [FCM Travel Platform](#).

(27) Domestic travel (including airfares, accommodation and car hire), as well as travel to Timor and New Zealand, can be booked using the online booking tool available on the [FCM Travel Platform](#). All other bookings require [FCM Travel Solutions](#) to be contacted by phone or email.

Online Booking Tool (Domestic, Timor and New Zealand only)

Web <https://hub.fcm.travel>

Helpdesk

Phone +61 2 9423 8010

Email acu@fcmtravel.com.au

Training Requests

Telephone +61 2 9423 8010

Email tim.hunt@fcmtravel.com.au

International and Domestic Travel

Toll free 1300 555 062

Phone +61 2 9423 8010

Email acu@fcmtravel.com.au

Web www.fcmtravel.com

[FCM Travel Solutions](#) office hours are 8.30am - 5.30pm Monday to Friday (AEST). During Daylight Saving Time, office hours are extended to 8.30am - 6.00pm (Monday to Friday AEDT).

Emergencies after Hours: 1300 662 703 (Within Australia); +61 7 3170 7823 (From Overseas)

Account Manager: Tim Hunt tim.hunt@fcmtravel.com.au

Team Leader: Jon Stevenson jon.stevenson@fcmtravel.com.au

Group bookings for Students

(28) Group bookings for students' international travel require quotes from a panel of travel agents and are coordinated by Finance and Planning (email: acu.procurement@acu.edu.au) to achieve the best travel results.

FCM Platform Mobile App

(29) The FCM Platform mobile app allows users to access their itineraries, book & change domestic travel, access flight status notifications and much more on their mobile device. It can be downloaded by searching for FCM Platform on the Apple App Store or Google Play. More information including instructions on how to download and register the app can be found in the [FCM Travel Platform - Quick reference guide](#).

Section 8 - Accommodation

(30) [FCM Travel Solutions](#) and the University have an agreed list of preferred hotels that are provided at a significant discount when booked via the [FCM Travel Platform](#). Accommodation should be selected from ACU's Preferred and Executive Accommodation Venues as listed in the [FCM Travel Platform](#) online booking tool as 'Corporate Preferred'.

Note: When alternate accommodation is booked, it must be due to unavailability of hotels on the Preferred Hotels listing, accommodation must be booked via [FCM Travel Solutions](#), and price must be within the stated cost limits for each capital city and align with the [Reimbursement of Actual Expenses Policy](#).

(31) The reasonable amounts for domestic travel expenses, according to salary levels and destinations, for the 2023-24 income year, are shown in [ATO Taxation Determination TD 2024/3](#).

(32) International:

Accommodation	All Staff	Executive	Senior Executive*
International Accommodation (dependent on the cost of the country)	\$410.00	\$510.00	\$650.00

* Rate inclusive of club floor access

(33) All domestic and international hotels must be booked via the [FCM Travel Platform](#) or directly with the international hotels within the policy pricing limits. If a hotel isn't available within the pricing limits, the traveler must book via [FCM Travel Solutions](#), who will obtain the required approval via ACU.

(34) In the event that the traveler elects to stay in accommodation with a rate in excess of the above limits, or outside of the preferred hotel listings (unless hotel availability pushed the price above the hotel limits), then the traveler must personally pay the excess cost and this must be paid at the time that the booking is made.

(35) The safety and security of overseas accommodation should be considered, when booking accommodation outside of the preferred hotels. It is the traveler's responsibility to confirm the safety of hotels prior to making a booking (e.g. threats in vicinity/perimeter, access control, 24/7 English speaking reception, security staff, fire service installations, evacuation processes, proximity to itinerary sites etc.).

(36) Travelers can contact the [International SOS](#) 24/7 via the App or by calling its Sydney number +61 2 9372 2468. Questions relating to medical or security issues can also be sent to sydney@internationalsos.com.

Overseas Accommodation Special Allowances

(37) Special allowances apply to the 'All Staff' and 'Executive' limits only. The total limit including special allowances for 'All Staff' and 'Executive' is capped at the 'Senior Executive' limits. Limit increases for the cost of accommodation is made because of:

- a. Falling Australian dollar exchange rate against US currency; and
- b. High Cost Countries. For the purpose of this allowance, a High Cost Country is defined as any country that falls into Cost Categories 5 and 6 as per the [ATO Taxation Determination TD 2024/3](#).

(38) The allowances are calculated as follows:

- a. Where the AUD falls by 10% or more against the USD compared to the Base or Standard USD/AUD, then the accommodation limit is increased by the percentage difference within the cap outlined above. The base rate is determined at the beginning of each year.
- b. Where a country falls into the High Cost Country classification, as per the rule above, then the accommodation limit is increased by 25% compared to the figures stated in the tables under Section 8 of this Policy and within the cap outlined above.

(39) To clarify the workings of the cap, the following applies:

- a. The establishment of the cap is in AUD only. To apply the cap, all currencies must first be converted to AUD based on current exchange rates.
- b. The allowance limit is increased for changes to the exchange rate between the Australian and US dollar where the difference (decrease) exceeds 10% based on the Base USD/AUD rate.
- c. Where a percentage increase is applied to the allowance limit because of either a decrease in the current exchange rate against the Base Rate or because the 25% allowance for a High Cost Country applies, the maximum permissible allowance limit is not to exceed the standard Senior Executive allowance limit as per the International Table above.
- d. Changes to the above and minor deviations may be made at the discretion of Finance and Planning and / or the Chief Operating Officer only.
- e. A change resulting from both a High Cost Country and exchange rate reduction, meeting the above requirements, are permitted to apply together i.e. they may be in addition to each other, but the Senior Executive limit still applies as the cap.

(40) Applicability:

- a. The Base or Standard USD/AUD FX is determined by Finance and Planning and communicated to [FCM Travel Solutions](#) for application annually.
- b. The Allocation of Cost Categories is determined by Finance and Planning and communicated to [FCM Travel Solutions](#) for application annually.
- c. The USD/AUD Base FX and Country Cost Category allocations that are applicable at any current point in time are those designated, at that same time, in the spreadsheet [ACU-FIN-013.1 International Accommodation Travel Policy Limits - Country Cost Codes and Calculation Worksheet](#).
- d. The above spreadsheet allows calculation of applicable limits and can accommodate changes to both Base USD/AUD FX and High Cost Country allowances, as may be changed from time-to-time at the discretion of Finance and Planning.

Section 9 - Car Hire

(41) Car hire bookings should be made via the [FCM Travel Platform](#) booking tool, to utilise the University's preferred supplier arrangements with Hertz and AVIS. Public transport and carpooling should be utilised where practical. It is the traveler's responsibility to ensure they are familiar with road traffic safety as well as rulings on rideshare platforms.

Section 10 - Travel Profile

(42) A travel profile is required for all travelers and must be established prior to making any bookings.

(43) Staff profiles are created automatically in the system without the need to be manually created by users. Once a staff member's profile is created, the details are automatically generated and included on all booked travel for that staff member.

(44) Before booking travel, the travel profile should be checked to ensure the name is correct as per their passport, that it includes their current contact information and the details of any delegated person who can book travel on their behalf. It should also include details such as the traveler's cost code, mobile phone number, membership details (e.g. Qantas Frequent Flyer), specific requests or medical conditions.

(45) Instructions on how to create a profile for guest or student travellers are available at [FCM Non-Staff Profile Creation](#). Check first to ensure that a profile does not already exist for any travel profile you are about to create.

(46) Should a travel booking need to be made using a different cost code to the one on the profile, the staff member must enter the alternate project code in the [FCM Travel Platform](#) booking tool. All travel itineraries must be checked by the staff member for accuracy of information.

Section 11 - Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

(47) A staff member should not be out of pocket as a result of incurring expenses associated with the carrying out of University business, where such expenses are reasonable and have been approved by the staff member's supervisor prior to travel.

(48) The University Visa Purchase Card is to be used as a first preference for purchasing travel-related incidental expenditure. It should not be used for domestic or international airfares; these must be booked through [FCM Travel Solutions](#).

(49) Travelers who do not have a University Visa Purchase Card may apply for a card, with approval from an Executive or Senior Executive member. The University Purchase Card must not be used for private expenses and personal credit cards should not be used for booking airline tickets.

(50) All requests for payment or reimbursement of costs associated with University related travel will require the following documentation to be forwarded to Finance and Planning:

- a. Original tax invoices / receipts to support all expenses being claimed;
- b. [Staff Reimbursement Form](#) authorised in accordance with the [Delegations of Authority Policy and Register](#) and [Reimbursement of Actual Expenses Policy](#);
- c. International Pre-Trip Approval from [FCM Travel Platform](#) (replacing the manual ITAF);
- d. [Travel Diary Form](#) for domestic or international travel in excess of five nights (refer to Section 12 of this Policy).

Cash Advance - Acquittal (International Travel Only)

(51) A staff member without a University Purchase card may request a cash advance for anticipated incidental expenses by completing the [Overseas Travel Cash Advance Request Form](#). However, prior notice of five working days is required to transfer the advance to their bank account. The advance must be acquitted, and unspent funds returned within 14 days on return from travel, by completing and forwarding the [Overseas Travel Acquittal Form](#) and above documentation to Finance and Planning.

Partly Funded Travel Expenditure

(52) Where a staff member or their spouse is eligible for travel that is partly funded by the University, the costs should be initially incurred by the staff member and then the University funded portion reimbursed in accordance with the [Reimbursement of Actual Expenses Policy](#).

How Much Expense Can I Claim?

(53) Schedule 1 of the [Reimbursement of Actual Expenses Policy](#) outlines the guidelines for claiming reimbursement of actual expenses and includes a guide to limits on amounts claimable based on the [Australian Taxation Office](#) ruling [ATO Taxation Determination TD 2024/3](#).

(54) The Schedule covers local and overseas travel and provides guidelines on limits in relation to accommodation, meals and incidental expenses. Also provided are guidelines on reimbursement of fares and motor vehicle expenses. It is important that staff members familiarise themselves with the requirements of this Schedule. Please note that only actual expenses incurred within the [Australian Taxation Office](#) limits will be reimbursed and will only be paid where appropriate receipts/documentation have been provided and will be paid to an Australian bank account. The traveler is required to pay any costs that exceed those outlined in Section 8 of this Policy. These costs must be paid at the time of booking.

Section 12 - Fringe Benefits Tax

Fringe Benefits Tax on Personal Travel

(55) Where private travel (approved annual / long service leave, at the manager's discretion) is combined with official University travel, the trip must be principally for business purposes; the private travel component must only be incidental to the overall purpose of the trip and cannot exceed 15 annual / long service leave days for it to be

accepted as 'No Private Use'.

(56) 'Private Use' attracts a liability for [Fringe Benefits Tax](#).

(57) In circumstances where approved annual / long service leave is not incidental or is greater than fifteen (15) days, even where incidental, the purpose of travel will be considered 'Dual Purpose' and the private travel component of the University business related airfare will not be treated as a University expense. To avoid incurring [Fringe Benefits Tax](#), the traveler will be required to pay 50% of the University business related airfare, 100% of personal flights and all other associated private travel expenditure including but not limited to accommodation and meals from personal funds.

(58) Please note that regardless of whether travel is considered dual purpose or no private use, all private/personal flights and associated private travel expenditure including but not limited to accommodation and meals must be paid for from personal funds.

(59) Any charges put on a University account, including the 'Academic Pursuits Account' or a Purchase Card, are considered University expense. The private component of travel cannot be paid for from a University account.

(60) Purpose of Travel - The Travel Diary within [FCM Travel Platform](#) Pre-Trip Approve provides the assessment of 'Dual Purpose' travel. Where the assessment outcome is dual purpose, FCM will advise the employee of the contribution required towards the airfare. FCM will arrange collection directly from the staff member. All other personal travel expenses must be paid for directly by the employee.

Travel Diary

(61) To comply with the [Australian Taxation Office](#) requirements and to minimise the University's tax liability for [Fringe Benefits Tax](#), travelers must provide a completed [Travel Diary Form](#) whilst on University travel for a period of more than five nights for both domestic and international travel.

Section 13 - International Travel Advice

Risk Management and Duty of Care

(62) The University has a duty of care to its travelers to ensure their safety and wellbeing at all times. It is the traveler's responsibility whilst travelling to be mindful of potential risks in the local area (including field excursions or laboratories) and to act in a manner that will minimise harm.

(63) To meet this duty of care, the University will:

- a. identify potential dangers or risks present in areas where staff may travel,
- b. seek advice from [International SOS](#), and
- c. take reasonable measures to control such risks and notify staff.

(64) Supervisors aware of staff travelling with a significant medical condition should:

- a. evaluate the need to travel,
- b. ensure they receive a travel management plan developed by the traveler and their doctor or an [International SOS](#) consultant, and
- c. remind the traveler how [International SOS](#) can assist them before and during overseas travel. Please refer to the [International SOS Information Sheet](#) to register.

(65) To minimise a potential operational impact to the University, no more than two Senior Executive members should

travel on the same flight.

Overseas Pre-trip Travel Security Risk Analysis

(66) The University uses [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (DFAT) Travel Advice Ratings to approve international travel. DFAT Travel Advice Ratings fall into four broad categories:

- a. 'Do not travel' means travel must not be taken to the specified country. Travel to a country or region with a Travel Advice Rating of 'Do not travel' requires the specific approval of a Senior Executive member. The Senior Executive member may impose a complete travel ban to certain countries or areas and may require travelers already in those areas to return home. Should travel be approved, although very unlikely, a risk assessment by the manager will need to be undertaken and approved by the appropriate Senior Executive member.
- b. 'Reconsider your need to travel' means travel is discouraged unless necessary. The traveller is required to download an [International SOS Assistance App](#), create an account and complete the Covid Trip Planner for risk assessment and compliance with the destination country entry regulations.
- c. 'Exercise normal safety precautions' and 'Exercise a high degree of caution' should not impact on travel but may require caution by the traveler as well as a full understanding of the [International SOS](#) travel advice provided by email or online.

(67) For any queries related to Covid-19 Government restrictions, please refer to the [Covid-19 FAQs Travel](#).

Itinerary

(68) Before departure for international travel, travelers must provide a complete copy of their itinerary, via [International SOS](#) including accommodation phone numbers. In the event of an emergency, authorised University staff are able to view details on [International SOS My Trips](#) to find the location of travelers.

Health Requirements

(69) It is the responsibility of the traveler to ensure they have the required inoculations and vaccinations prior to departure. Costs related to immunisation required for University travel will be paid for by the University. General travel health information is available on the [International SOS](#) website, by selecting the country or countries being visited.

Passport/VISA

(70) Before departing on approved University Travel, it is the responsibility of travelers to ensure that they possess a valid passport (a minimum validity of six months is preferred at all times) and the required visas for their intended journey. The University will fund the cost for visas required for University travel.

Personal Emergency

(71) Where an emergency occurs of a personal nature for the traveler and travel plans need to be changed, then the traveler will be responsible for the additional cost, if any, in excess of the original travel cost.

(72) To ensure travelers do not incur initial out of pocket expenses for which they have not budgeted, ACU may pay this additional cost up-front and then seek re-imburement from the traveler. At this point the traveler may make a submission for ACU to accept this additional cost (or part there-of) by showing just cause. "Just Cause" will be at the discretion of ACU and may include consideration of personal hardship, compassionate grounds, the extent of the additional cost (or part there-of), the willingness of the traveler to mitigate costs and the options that were available to the traveler at the time.

Insurance

(73) Staff and students are covered for approved business travel by the University's insurers. Non-staff traveling on University business should obtain adequate travel insurance and must purchase travel insurance prior to travel. Where a spouse is required by the University to travel with a staff member on University business, they are covered by the University's insurance. For more information, please refer to the [Insurance Overview](#) webpage.

(74) Only standard insurance included in a car hire fee should be undertaken. Additional insurance to reduce excess is not required.

(75) For any private travel component of greater than fifteen (15) days, the traveler will be responsible for their own travel insurance for the entire portion of private travel.

Section 14 - Corporate Lounge Membership

(76) All corporate lounge memberships or renewals are at staff members personal expense, staff are still able to join the scheme at the discounted rate by paying for this personally (not from an ACU credit card). In this case, staff can choose either one or two years membership with Qantas. Virgin offers one year renewals only based on the common expiry date 31 May each year and is pro-rated from the month purchased.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	21st May 2024
Review Date	21st May 2025
Approval Authority	Governance Officer
Approval Date	21st May 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Scott Jenkins Chief Financial Officer
Responsible Manager	Mitch Srbinovski Associate Director, Financial Operations
Enquiries Contact	Mitch Srbinovski Associate Director, Financial Operations <hr/> Finance and Planning