Professional Pursuits Accounts Policy

Section 1 - Background

(1) Academic and Professional Staff in a range of prescribed ways have opportunities from time to time to engage in certain professionally relevant activities for which a consideration is paid. Such activities are separate and distinct from their normal employment but rest within their area of academic or professional expertise and capacity, and must be appropriately approved. This Policy is designed to support and regulate the receipt of such benefits legally in accordance with Australian Taxation Office requirements. The Policy outlines parameters within which Professional Pursuits Accounts (PPAs) are managed and regulated by the University.

Section 2 - Policy Statement

(2) In addition to their normal teaching, research and administrative duties, Academic Staff may undertake certain activities for which a consideration is paid. Where appropriately qualified, Professional Staff may also undertake activities for which a consideration is made. Such activities are permitted under a range of University policies including:

a. the Paid Inside Work Policy
b. the Higher Duties Allowance for Academic Staff Policy

(3) No funds from other sources, including research activities and commercialisation of intellectual property, will be paid into a Professional Pursuits Account.

(4) Funds from research activities including those from commercialisation of intellectual property will not be paid into a PPA and will be managed through the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) under the direction of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) or delegate.

(5) Where the staff member elects to pay the monies generated into a Professional Pursuits Account, an appropriate entitlement will be established in that account for the staff member in recognition of the work done, permitting the Academic Staff member to augment the funds available to support their academic, research or professional development activities or the Professional Staff member to augment their professional or professional development activities. As the activities were performed under the auspices of the University, the University is the legal owner of the funds. In recognition of the fact that the individual has generated the funds, the University supports the monies being used to fund official University expenditure related to the individual concerned, subject to the following guidelines and in accordance with University policies.

Section 3 - Policy Purpose

(6) This Policy has been developed to outline the conditions under which a Professional Pursuit Account may be established to provide a mechanism through which a staff member may legally manage funds received through payment from inside the University to support their personal legitimate academic, research, professional or

professional development pursuits.

Section 4 - Definitions

(7) “Academic Staff Higher Duties” means payments made to ACU staff assigned as Deputy Dean, Associate Dean, National Head of School, State Head of School, Deputy Head of School, Course Adviser, or National Unit Lead in recognition of the higher level of responsibility exercised while performing this role. Academic Staff Higher Duties may also include payments made to ACU staff assigned other temporary duties, which warrant payment at a higher level than the staff member’s substantive level as approved in line with the University’s Delegations of Authority Policy and Register.

(8) “Paid Inside Work” means the provision of professional services to an internal ACU organisational or functional unit for a fee or other consideration and in line with the Paid Inside Work Policy.

(9) “Professional Pursuits Account” means an account established at the University into which payments, received on behalf of a member of staff of the University for approved activities performed under the auspices of the University, may be paid.

Section 5 - Application of Policy

(10) This policy applies to all continuing and fixed-term staff of the University who have an employment contract with ACU.

(11) Professional Pursuits Accounts may normally be opened only by an organisational or functional unit using the Request for New Project Code Form via Service Central. Within these accounts, appropriate entitlements will be credited to individual staff members who are assigned to that organisational or functional unit for the work they have done in generating the revenue.

(12) Funds may be credited to a Professional Pursuits Accounts with respect to individual Academic or Professional Staff members by deposit of earnings only through the University’s payroll processes after appropriate deductions are made.

(13) Funds credited to a Professional Pursuits Account may be used for professional or professional development purposes. It is emphasised that such funds can only be used to meet expenditure incurred in conducting legitimate University business in the same way as other funds available to a University organisational or functional unit (e.g. Faculty or Directorate).

(14) Subject to current University policy and guidelines, and with appropriate prior approval, expenditure from Professional Pursuits Accounts may be utilised for the purchase of work-related goods and services such as:

a. conference attendance;
b. purchase of equipment needed for a staff member’s work or research;
c. membership of professional or learned associations;
d. work-related entertainment or accommodation; and/or,
e. work-relevant courses that are directly employment-related.

(15) Because of the taxation implications of expenditure from Professional Pursuits Accounts, advice on proposed expenditure relating to the above examples or any other proposals should be obtained from Finance and Planning.

(16) Expenditure from Professional Pursuits Accounts must be authorised in line with the Delegations of Authority

Policy and Register and other relevant policies dependent on the purpose and nature of expenditure.

(17) As the funds have not been subject to taxation and are the property of the University, any assets which are purchased from these funds remain the property of the University and must be accounted for as part of University assets. Hence when a staff member, having purchased from this account certain equipment, moves from the University, the equipment will normally remain with the University. Subject to consideration and approval by the relevant University officer/s in accordance with the Delegations of Authority Policy and Register for the sale or disposal of assets, arrangements may be made to transfer equipment to another university's register of assets in cases where the staff member moves to another university.

(18) The monies lodged in Professional Pursuits Accounts become part of the University funds. They are therefore not transferable other than in the following circumstances:

a. in the case of a staff member leaving the employment of the University and who is not retiring and accessing superannuation, the monies on application by the staff member may, following deduction of appropriate taxation, be transferred to their superannuation fund as an employer contribution; or
b. in the case of a staff member leaving the employment of the University for the purpose of retirement and who is then eligible to access superannuation, the monies on application by the staff member may be paid into the staff member's bank account after the deduction of appropriate taxation.

(19) No other arrangements for transferring funds in Professional Pursuits Accounts are permitted by this policy.

(20) A staff member can request a payout of a PPA through P&C. Finance and Planning will then be engaged to conduct a review of the PPA to ensure all outstanding expenditure items have been recorded against the PPA.

(21) Monies in Professional Pursuits Accounts will normally be carried forward from year to year.

(22) Professional Pursuits Accounts with less than $200 in them for twenty-four months will be closed and any outstanding monies will revert to the University.

(23) No interest or investment earnings will be applied to Professional Pursuits Accounts.

(24) No levies will apply for payments into a Professional Pursuits Account.

Section 6 - Review

(25) The University may make changes to this policy and procedures from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this policy may forward their suggestions to People and Capability.

Section 7 - Further Assistance

(26) Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this policy should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of leave arrangements in their work area. Should further information or advice be required staff should visit Service Central.

Section 8 - Associated Information

(27) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	13th February 2025
Review Date	13th February 2030
Approval Authority	Governance Officer
Approval Date	12th February 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Responsible Manager	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Enquiries Contact	Bernardine Lynch ER and Safety Committees and Policy Officer People and Capability