Policy: ANU Travel

Purpose

The University recognises that domestic and international engagement is an essential component of education, research and other university related activities and that travel is one of the enablers of productive engagement.

The University recognises the need to, holistically and equitably, assess the benefits of travel for staff and students against its intensive resource requirements, environmental impacts and inherent privilege of travel.

This policy is designed to ensure the safe, efficient, cost-effective and low carbon travel for staff and students and ensure the University meets its duty of care obligations with approved University travel.

The policy is supported by the ANU Travel Handbook which contains important information required to implement this policy. This policy must be read in conjunction with the ANU Travel Handbook.

Scope

This policy applies to all University staff and students and/or anyone who incurs travel and travel-related expenses paid by the University, regardless of the source of funding (henceforth called ‘University travellers’).

The travel policy as well as the procedures and guidelines contained in the Handbook apply to all University staff and students and/or anyone who incurs travel and travel-related expenses paid by the University regardless of funds (henceforth called ‘University travellers’).

The Policy and the Handbook apply to individuals travelling away from their normal on-campus workplace. An on-campus workplace is defined as a building or structure which is owned, managed or leased by the ANU (that is, a workplace managed by the Division of Facilities & Services) or recognised as an ANU department where staff and students work or study.

This policy applies to all travel which involves:

- a trip of over 100 kilometres radius or more from the traveller’s usual workplace; or
• use of commercial services (i.e., flights, external car rental, accommodation, etc.); or
• some form of expense reimbursement (i.e., fuel cost reimbursement when using a private vehicle).

Policy statement

University travellers, travel arrangers, supervisors, approvers and delegated officers are responsible for always exercising prudent business judgement when authorising, booking and undertaking travel, by adhering to the following policy principles.

Essentiality

1. Essential business travel for staff and students can be broadly defined as travel undertaken in order to conduct research, teaching, learning and engagement activity including but not limited to meetings, teaching, conference attendance and/or presentations, and field trips.

2. Travel should only take place where the planned research, teaching, learning or engagement activity cannot be effectively conducted via alternate methods such as teleconferencing and video conferencing.

3. University travellers, supervisors and approvers ensure that travel provides an educational, financial and/or other material benefit to the ANU and is essential.

Safety first

4. The safety of University travellers is paramount.

5. All University business travel are obliged to comply with health advice and relevant Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) requirements at the time of travel.

6. All travellers are advised to familiarise themselves with the travel advice and services available at the DFAT website: www.smartraveller.gov.au.

7. Dean or Portfolio Head has overall responsibility for the safe travel of individuals within their respective College or Portfolio.

8. All travel is booked with the ANU preferred travel management partners.

9. All travel is registered with the ANU travel risk management partner.

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Environmental sustainability

10. University travel significantly contributes to the overall greenhouse gas emissions at ANU. The ANU is committed to a reduction of travel emissions and provides resources for individuals and areas to reduce their travel related carbon footprint.

11. To reduce travel emissions, it is recommended travellers consider using the Avoid, Shift, Improve model (United Nations Environment Programme 2020).

a. Avoid carbon intensive forms of travel

- **Avoid travel**: Consider whether travel is required and identify opportunities to use digital technologies for the same activities.

- **Combine multiple activities into one itinerary**: Schedule multiple activities or stops within one itinerary to make the most of that trip thereby reducing the number of trips made per year.

- **Reduce the number of people needed to travel**: Reducing the number of people travelling to the same meeting or event will reduce emissions. Instead, create opportunities to knowledge share the event or meeting outcomes.

- **Collaborate with local networks**: Consider travelling shorter distances to collaborate with regional partners. Establish a regional hub or node for a larger national or international conference, where it’s possible to network with nearby colleagues on common interests and activities.

b. Shift to low carbon modes

- **Choose land-based shared transportation over flying for shorter trips**: Rail and coach services are often the lowest emissions form of transportation. Most flight emissions are at take-off and landing. Shared transport services such as coach are the best low-carbon travel option if travelling relatively short-distances (i.e., Canberra to Sydney) or rail if travelling across Asia, Europe or North America.

- **When travelling in a group, choose car travel over air travel**: If it is necessary for multiple people to travel to an event or meeting, car travel can be more emissions efficient than air travel.

- **Use public transportation at the destination**: Taking a taxi or using a rental car at the destination can greatly increase greenhouse gas emissions footprint. When safe to do so, choose public transportation options for getting around.
c. Improve the carbon efficiency of travel options

- **When flying is the only viable option, choose lower emissions itineraries:**
  
  Flying is sometimes the only viable option for visiting major Australian cities and for overseas travel. Choosing the most direct route and travelling economy class are lower emission options. Choose a provider and route that uses aircraft with more efficient fuel consumption.

**Compliant**

12. The [Handbook](#) outlines the process for individual responsibilities when travelling on behalf of the University.

13. All official University travel is approved, prior to travel, by the appropriate delegate depending on the destination and type of travel.

14. The ANU Travel Approval [e-form](#) is completed (in full) for all domestic and international travel. All ANU approved travel enacts the University [travel insurance](#).

15. All expenses must be for a legitimate University purpose, meaning they are reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances, and publicly defensible. Staff and students travelling on ANU business are expected to exercise prudent judgement to ensure all expenses are necessary, reasonable, appropriate and allowable.

16. Approvers have the responsibility to verify that expenditure is in line with these principles and follow the normal financial delegation limits.

17. Travellers receiving funding for travel from an external body ensure that their travel complies with the conditions of the relevant external body.

**Best planning, price and practice**

18. The ANU supports the needs of University travellers by:

a. Providing an appropriate standard of comfort and conditions in which University travellers can undertake University activities whilst away from home.

b. Making reasonable adjustments to facilitate university travel for employees with disabilities and appropriately addressing the implications of any unexpected illness for individuals whilst undertaking travel.

c. Offering choice, best price and fare options, and convenience for University travellers.
d. Maintaining accurate records for all travel approval and travel related expenditure.

e. Ensuring transparent, effective and accountable management of travel costs across all ANU financial processes (purchase cards, invoices and reimbursements).

f. Providing timely and accurate reporting of travel activity including, but not limited to, volume, expenditure, savings and greenhouse gas emissions; and

g. Providing timely and accurate reimbursement for all reasonable travel expenses.

19. All bookings for travel on behalf of the University are, preferably, made through the ANU preferred travel management partners.