

## STAFF AND STUDENT TRAVEL: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR DECISION MAKERS

25 November 2020

*This guidance is produced by the Public Health Lead - COVID Response Office. It supersedes all other [COVID-19 related guidance](#) on this topic published before this date, including any relevant section of University Guidelines and other subordinate guidelines.*

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### Background

This document sets out guiding principles for decision makers regarding assessing COVID-19 related risk related to travel. It is a framework for making decisions and should be considered alongside extant ANU policies and processes.

As a general principle, travel should only be approved if it is deemed essential for work purposes for the rest of 2020. This Directive will be reviewed again in early 2021.

### Types of Travel

These guiding principles deal with the following types of staff and student work-related travel, including:

- Domestic work-related travel
- Essential overseas work-related travel

Private and compassionate travel is not included in this document but much of the same advice applies. For more information on domestic private travel, please see the [Private Travel FAQ webpage](#).

If compassionate travel includes permission to undertake work overseas, a comprehensive risk assessment is required to ensure WH&S risks are considered, including the risk of acquiring COVID-19.

### Delegations and approval

All delegations for approval of travel are as per extant University policies.

### Domestic

Examples of essential work related travel would include:

- Fieldwork – already accommodated in guidelines and on the travel e-form;
- Secondments, placements or internships to assist national and jurisdictional governments or other agencies;

- ANU staff travelling to other campuses including for the delivery of essential services related activities<sup>1</sup>;
- Travel to deliver remote training that must be delivered face to face as required under external contractual arrangements – to be considered on a case by case basis; and
- Travel from other locations to the Acton campus for essential work purposes.

All other work-related travel (for example, conferences, meetings, and presentations) should be considered non-essential at this time if alternatives are available.

Travel by air is permitted provided travellers follow COVID-safe protocols (guidance [here](#)). Requests to undertake any domestic travel and related activities must be accompanied by a WHS hazard and risk assessment and a COVID-19 Risk Assessment before they can be approved.

Individuals returning from domestic hotspots may be required to undergo 14 days of quarantine upon their return, depending on extant ACT guidance. ACT Health may approve this quarantine to be undertaken in private residences. As a general rule, any costs associated with quarantine will be considered part of business travel and will be covered by ANU.

This position will be reviewed in early 2021.

## International

Australia's borders are unlikely to formally re-open in the foreseeable future. In addition, the current Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) [SmartTraveller website](#) advises against any travel outside of Australia.

Only essential overseas travel, such as travel related to work supporting and endorsed by the Australian Government or an international organisation, particularly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, will be permitted in 2020.

Requests to undertake overseas travel and related activities must be accompanied by detailed WHS hazard and risk assessment before they can be approved.

Even if individuals are granted permission to travel overseas by the Australian Government, there may be significant delays in them returning. This risk and associated costs should be considered when reviewing travel applications.

- For Australian citizens significant delays may be experienced due to the current international arrivals cap.
- Individuals who are not Australian citizens, including temporary residents, may not be permitted to return to Australia until borders fully open, which could jeopardise grant funding, ability to teach, and therefore employment.

All individuals will be required to undertake 14 days quarantine upon their return to Australia. At present, this must be undertaken in ACT Health mandated hotels and will be at the University's

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<sup>1</sup> For example, statutory maintenance obligations, fire servicing and WH&S, resolution of IT issues etc.

expense. Individuals can apply for an exemption to quarantine at home only on urgent medical or compassionate grounds.

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**This Directive has been endorsed by:**

COO

DVC-SUE

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