Special Studies Program Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This Policy supports the commitment of the University to provide opportunities for academic staff to participate in development activities through a Special Studies Program.

Section 2 - Policy Intent

(2) The intent of this Policy is to establish the basis on which the Special Studies Program will be offered by the University.

Section 3 - Definitions

(3) In the context of this document, the following definition applies:

Term	Definition
Academic staff	Means individuals appointed to an academic position in accordance with the University of Newcastle Academic Staff and Teachers Enterprise Agreement. This definition specifically excludes honorary academic or conjoint title holders.

Section 4 - Policy Principles

(4) The Special Studies Program is a program of professional development for academic staff expected to provide benefit to both the University and the staff member.

(5) The program of work undertaken on a Special Studies Program must be agreed in advance of approval or commencement of the program.

(6) Participation in the Special Studies Program is not an employee entitlement and must be aligned to:

a. The applicants participation in the Academic Planning and Performance Process, and progress in relation to mutually agreed goals and development planning;
b. Identified institutional priorities.

(7) Participation in the Special Studies Program is not a period of leave, and during the period of participation in the program the academic staff member is subject to all the provisions applying to a staff member of the University.

(8) The University will make an annual call for participation in the Special Studies Program and conduct a process of selection of staff to participate in the Special Studies Program in the following year.

(9) Implementation of the Special Studies Program will be conducted in accordance with the Special Studies Program procedure and must be equitable and transparent in terms of access, funding, and approval processes.

(10) University credit cards must not be used to fund any Special Studies Program activities or costs.

Section 5 - Roles and Responsibilities

(11) Applicants shall be responsible for following any procedures and processes required for application to and participation in the Special Studies Program.

(12) Supervisor/Manager of an Applicant for the Special Studies Program shall be responsible for considering the institutional priorities for offering access to the Special Studies Program and the mutual benefit of any proposed Special Studies Program.

(13) Chief People and Culture Officer shall be responsible for developing procedures to support the principles of this Policy.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	22nd May 2023
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Approval Authority	Chief People and Culture Officer
Approval Date	18th May 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Martin Sainsbury Chief People and Culture Officer martin.sainsbury@newcastle.edu.au
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Applicant" - Where referring to a student, an applicant is an individual seeking entry to a program or course offered by the University or its partner organisation/s. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Credit" - When referring to course credit, credit is the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit can reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Supervisor" - Staff members with direct supervisory responsibility for other staff within the workplace (a Supervisor may also be member of Senior Management, with duties as an Officer as defined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, or any replacing legislation).

"Term" - When referring to an academic period, term means a period of time aligned to an academic year for the delivery of a course in which students enrol and for which they are usually charged fees for example semesters, trimesters, summer, winter or full-year term. The academic year for a term is determined by the academic year in which the course commences, not concludes. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Academic Planning and Performance Process" - The process set by the University and undertaken between employees and their manager or supervisor where an open dialogue takes place about performance, goal setting, and development planning.