

Key Risk Area (KRA)

KRA 2.5 Travelling on University Business

1. Purpose

This document provides guidance to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of persons when they are travelling on University Business. This guidance material is designed to be read in conjunction with the University [Travel Policy](#), [Travel for Work](#) webpage and related documentation.

2. Scope

This Guideline applies to all health, safety and wellbeing activities of staff, students, visitors (including volunteers and contractors), Council members, and other persons interacting with the University of Newcastle (workers); the operations of staff of University aligned Research Centres and controlled entities; and all activities conducted by or on behalf of the University of Newcastle on and outside of the University's campuses.

3. Guidelines

3.1. Risk Management

A specific risk assessment has been developed to assist in identifying specific hazards and risk controls associated with travel. The [Travel Risk Assessment](#) must be utilised to assist in identifying the risk rating of the destination and the risk rating of the activity conducted at the destination.

An initial assessment of the travel risk must be undertaken in order to determine whether the travel is to a low risk destination and involving low risk activities, in which case the travel arrangements can proceed according to local area processes (School, College, Business Unit, Division, or other work area based approval). For international travel, the websites for DFAT Smartraveller and ISOS should be consulted in order to determine if the travel is to a low, medium or high risk destination.

Where travel is to a high risk destination or activities that are associated with the travel include high risk activities (e.g. fieldwork, radiation work, GMO work, motor vehicle use off

sealed roads, career ready placements, study tours for student groups, construction or manufacturing work etc.) the activity shall also be risk assessed and submitted for Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team review.

Local Business Unit processes and approvals for international travel to low or medium risk destinations (as defined by DFAT and ISOS) and for low risk activities still require the approval of the Delegated Officer (i.e. travel risk assessment and supporting documentation) prior to travel in order for travel approval to be granted.

3.2. High Risk Activities

If activities to be conducted at the destination are identified on the Travel Risk Assessment as high risk activities, the following actions are required:

- Undertake a risk assessment utilising the [Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form](#) for the activity in accordance with the Guideline [HSG 3.1 Health and Safety Risk Management](#) as well as the [Travel Risk Assessment](#). Both documents must be referred to the [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team](#) for further assessment.
- Once reviewed by the [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team](#) the documents should be attached in the Travel Portal application for review and approval by the Leader / Supervisor.
- For international undergraduate student mobility events with 2 or more University Travellers, the International Student Mobility and Scholarship – Supervisor Pre-departure Induction should be completed by the Leader/Supervisor and all travellers when the travel has been approved by the course coordinator.
- Undergraduate University Travellers planning on travelling alone should contact their course coordinator or University of Newcastle Global Engagement Team.
- If 'fieldwork' is related to the travel, then reference should be made to [KRA 1.3 Fieldwork](#).

If a destination is considered overall a DFAT risk rating 1 or 2 (low or medium) but has a high individual risk rating for medical, the [Medical Review with a GP](#) form must be completed prior to travel for all travellers due to the high medical travel risk for the destination. The review should cover any required reasonable adjustments, routine vaccinations, medications and associated documentation that may be required to carry medication internationally. A security and medical briefing with International SOS can be booked if required to confirm specific details on access and medication for staff or students requesting reasonable adjustments.

DFAT		ISOS	H&S Review	Delegated Approver
Exercise normal safety precautions Exercise a high degree of caution	Or	Low, Medium Travel Risk; Low, Medium Risk Medical	No	PVC or delegated officer for Division
Reconsider your need to travel	Or	High Travel Risk; High Risk Medical	Yes	PVC or delegated officer for Division
Do not travel	Or	Extreme Medical or Travel Risk	Yes	VC

The following recommendations must be implemented (where appropriate) prior to travel for high risk activities:

- The [Fieldwork Medical Questionnaire](#) or equivalent emergency contact information including allergies, food intolerances or medical reasonable adjustments, must be completed by each traveller and provided to the trip coordinator prior to departure.
- Travel Coordinator is to provide a detailed itinerary once finalised - including the name, location and contact phone number for accommodation.
- All participants are to undertake the Global pre-departure briefing including emergency, security and safety information and processes.
- Travellers are to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 including all eligible boosters, at least two weeks prior to travel and is to carry an International COVID-19 vaccination certificate.
- Travel Coordinator is to review the location risk rating closer to departure and amend travel arrangements and health and safety control measures accordingly if the risk rating has changed.
- Traveller Coordinator is to provide detail on notification and isolation processes to ensure that risks have been considered and controls are understood should a serious illness or injury occur, or a traveller contracts COVID-19 immediately prior to, during or while on return from the travel. This shall include being able to isolate appropriately and obtain necessary items such as food and other needs during isolation. Where there is more than one traveller, this consideration should include the challenges and impact on other travellers including contingency for activity delivery and supervision.
- Final student listing must be registered in FCM Travel or My Trips, and with International SOS prior to departure, and the trip coordinator must download the ISOS Assistance app onto their mobile phone to receive real time alert and incident notifications about the area they are travelling in, and to obtain health and security assistance if required.
- The traveller and travel approver must be familiar with exclusions as identified in the University [Corporate Travel Insurance](#). It is therefore up to the School / College /

Division to identify any potential exposures that arise from the exclusions in the University's insurances - and cover any losses or additional insurances they believe are required.

- If a traveller holds Department of Defence security clearance, they are required by the Department to advise the University's Security Officer of the travel prior to departure.

3.3. High Risk Destinations

Delegated Officer approval is required for travel to, or work in High or Extreme Risk Countries. Delegated Officers include the Pro Vice-Chancellors for College and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operating Officer or Vice-Chancellor for Divisions.

Delegated Officer Approval is generally granted on confirmation of the following information:

- Advice that a medical review has occurred in order to ensure that the staff member or student has received medical advice and appropriate vaccinations/medications where applicable.
- A travel risk assessment, activity risk assessment (if applicable) and other supporting documentation, detailing suitable control measures for any hazards identified in relation to the travel and work activity and reviewed by the [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team](#).
- Travel to Extreme Risk Countries requires approval via the Vice-Chancellor, which also requires medical review advice and a rigorous and detailed risk assessment. This process also applies to 'foreign nationals' such as HDR students returning to their home country of citizenship and planning to undertake research there.

3.4. Other Risk Considerations

There are a range of other considerations that should be made in relation to planning for travel on University Business:

Ergonomics and Manual Handling: University Travellers should refer to the information in [KRA 2.1 Manual Handling and Ergonomics](#) to ensure that they are aware of good ergonomic and manual handling practices when travelling, considering that they may be carrying luggage and equipment, and working in environments such as hotel rooms with laptop computers which can introduce ergonomic hazards.

Travel clothing and equipment suitable for the destination: Research and teaching-related travel should be conducted to ensure that clothing selected for travel is culturally

appropriate and suitable for the climate of the destination, and consideration given as to whether special or additional equipment will be required such as carrying a first aid kit or satellite phone.

Rest: Fatigue management should be incorporated into planning for travel and ensuring that motor vehicle use incorporates regular rest breaks and monitoring driver alertness.

Arrangements for travel and working overseas should allow for at least 1 full day off free of duties per working week, and at least 10 hours of rest time should be allocated to occur in between working shifts. For international travel, a journey in excess of 8 hours should have at least 10 consecutive hours off duty between the journey's end and commencement of authorised duties. It should be noted that work or travel between the hours of midnight and 6 am carries an increased risk of fatigue, and that disruptions to the 'body clock' (circadian rhythm) or 'jetlag' due to crossing time zones can also increase the possibility of fatigue.

Motor vehicle use for domestic travel: it is preferable to use a Fleet Vehicle from Infrastructure and Facilities Services or School fleet vehicles, or a hire car from a reputable rental car company as these vehicles are known to be maintained to a certain standard and covered by University Insurance or that of the rental car company. Private motor vehicles used for travelling on University Business must be registered and roadworthy, comprehensively insured, and approval to use a private motor vehicle should be obtained from your School, College, Business Unit or Division before use. Refer to the University's [Vehicles – Private Vehicle Use Procedure](#) for more information. Prior to using any motor vehicle for travelling on University Business, it is recommended / best practice to conduct a 'pre-departure check' of the vehicle using the Motor Vehicle Pre-departure Checklist (pending) to ensure road worthiness.

Motor vehicle use overseas: Vehicles must be sourced from a reputable car rental company which has been pre-arranged with other travel arrangements prior to departure. The University Traveller must ensure their driver licence is acceptable in the country of destination and that they familiarise themselves with local traffic rules and conditions.

3.5. Disruptions to Travel Plan or Injury to Traveller

If an emergency is experienced while traveling overseas on University Business such as a medical or security problem, assistance can be provided by [International SOS \(ISOS\)](#). The University's membership of ISOS provides access to free, 24/7 assistance on call (+61 2 9372 2468 reverse charges), online and through ISOS offices on the ground to help with any

medical, security and logistical questions, concerns and situations that may arise. This may include recommending an appropriate doctor or medical service.

More information on destination countries and access to downloading the ISOS Smartphone App, can be obtained through International SOS quoting the University membership number 12ACPA000086.

If an injury occurs while travelling on pre-approved University Business domestically or internationally, the following contacts must be made as soon as practicable so that support can be provided, and action can be taken to initiate a workers' compensation claim if required:

- Leader/Supervisor; and
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team.

4. Definitions

In the context of the Health and Safety Management System Framework:

Delegated Officer	In accordance with the University of Newcastle Delegation of Authority, the position within the College or Division with the delegation to approve international travel. This may include the Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Vice-Chancellor, Chief Financial Officer or Chief Operating Officer.
Employer	Means the University of Newcastle (the University).
Executive Committee	Consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Pro Vice-Chancellors, the Chief Operating Officer, Chief People and Culture Officer and the Chief Financial Officer, the University Secretary and the President of Academic Senate.
High or Extreme Risk Country	Any country in relation to which the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) advises travellers to "Reconsider the need to travel" or "Do not travel" and/or is International SOS (ISOS) rated as 'High' or 'Extreme' for medical or security risk.
High Risk Activity	Activities that require escalated Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team review. For example, fieldwork, water-based activities (e.g. boating, snorkelling, caving), laboratory activity where there is a possibility of exposure to radiation, chemicals, animals, GMO's, or biological risks.
Leader / Supervisor	Any member of the University who is responsible for supervising staff and/or undergraduate or postgraduate students and/or for leading research projects.

Low Risk Activity	Short duration international travel to a low risk country (as per DFAT and ISOS ratings) and associated activities such as conferences, collaborative meetings, visits to other University.
University Business	Work or study undertaken on behalf of the University for purposes directly associated with the functions of the University.
University Traveller	Anyone who travels on behalf of the University on pre-approved University Business which is booked or arranged by the University, including staff, conjoints, and students.
Worker	Includes an employee, conjoint, student on work experience, contractor, sub-contractor, and volunteer. A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for the University or another person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as: (a) an employee, or (b) a contractor or subcontractor, or (c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, or (d) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking, or (e) an outworker, or (f) an apprentice or trainee, or (g) a student gaining work experience, or (h) a volunteer, or (i) a person of a prescribed class.

5. Responsibilities

A comprehensive list of health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities is provided in [HSG 1.2 Roles and Responsibilities Guideline](#).

Specific responsibilities under this Guideline include:

Leaders and Supervisors

- University Travellers under their supervision are aware of, and comply with, the University's Travel Policy and Procedure;
- A risk assessment is undertaken for international travel with reference to DFAT and ISOS ratings, to determine the risk level of the destination;
- A risk assessment is undertaken for any high risk activity planned for the travel;
- All the recommended documentation is prepared to assist with travel approvals and to ensure the safety of staff and students during the travel; and
- Ensure hazards and injuries are reported via University reporting systems.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team

- Review risk assessment documentation for travel requests that cannot be reviewed and approved at the local level (School, College, Business Unit or Division) such as travel to high or extreme risk destinations;

- Prepare documentation for delegated officer to review along with summary advice for High or Extreme Risk Countries travel requests to facilitate the approval process;
- Provide responses to the relevant people of the decision and restrictions around the University Traveller's travel.

University Travel Arranger

- Must be aware of, and comply with, the University's Travel Policy and Procedure, and any Health and Safety related processes, in order to effectively facilitate the travel arrangements;
- Attend information and training sessions relating to the Travel Arranger role when required;
- Review relevant applications and allow adequate time (minimum 1 week) for travel approvals to be processed before travel is taken; and
- Communicate the requirements relating to travel to the University Travellers that they are assisting.

University Worker Traveller

- Must comply with the requirements of the University's Travel Policy and Procedure, and any Health and Safety related processes;
- Must take accountability for their own health and safety while travelling and working or studying in a location away from their primary location, and exercise good judgement to ensure that their actions do not place them in a situation of increased risk;
- Prepare relevant applications and allow adequate time (minimum 1 week) for travel approvals to be processed before travel is taken.

6. References & Related Documents

The following documentation is referenced in, or applicable to this Guideline:

[HSG 1.2 Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[HSG 3.1 Health and Safety Risk Management](#)

[KRA 1.3 Fieldwork](#)

[KRA 2.1 Manual Handling and Ergonomics](#)

[Travel Policy](#)

[Travel Procedure](#)

[Delegation of Authority](#)

[Vehicles – Private Vehicle Use Procedure](#)

7. Amendment History

Version	Date of Issue	Approval	Section(s) Modified	Details of Amendment
1	June 2015	Director, People and Workforce Strategy	-	Original version as Guideline
2	October 2023	CPCO	All	1. All sections reviewed for legal compliance 2. Updated content in all sections 3. Added new/renamed Related Documents 4. Added Amendment History 5. Amended document control header and footer

8. Appendices

Nil