University Fleet Vehicle Use Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The University of Newcastle (University) is committed to ensuring that owned and leased fleet vehicles are used in an efficient, cost effective and safe manner; and in a way that supports University business.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This procedure applies to:

a. all fleet vehicles, owned or leased by the University; and
b. staff, students and approved guests.

(3) This procedure does not apply to motor vehicles leased by staff as part of salary packaging arrangements.

Section 3 - Audience

(4) This procedure should be read and understood by:

a. vehicle custodians;
b. drivers of University fleet vehicles; and
c. business unit heads.

(5) This procedure should be read in conjunction with:

a. the University Health and Safety Management System documents, including KRA procedure 2.5 Travelling on University business;
b. Student Code of Conduct / Staff Code of Conduct;
c. Travel Procedure; and
d. any operational guidelines set down by the business unit responsible for the vehicle.

Section 4 - Definitions

(6) In the context of this document:

a. “approved guest” means a person who is not a University staff member or student and who is approved by the business unit head to travel in a University fleet vehicle;
b. “department vehicle” means a University fleet vehicle assigned to a college or department;
c. “garaged at home” includes but is not limited to off-street parking, private garaging, and on-street parking;
d. “pool vehicle” means a University fleet vehicle that is made available for use by staff;
e. “relevant business unit head” means the head of the University business unit that is responsible for the

University fleet vehicle;

f. “vehicle custodian” means a staff member who is responsible for the day to day management of the fleet vehicle/s; and
g. “University fleet vehicles” means vehicles, either owned or leased by the University, that are used for official University business.

Section 5 - Conditions of Use

Eligible Drivers

(7) Each fleet vehicle is classified as a pool vehicle or a department vehicle, and as such, cannot be assigned to the exclusive use of one person.

(8) Vehicles can be driven by students or approved guests (for University business purposes) subject to prior written approval from the relevant business unit head.

(9) Note, the University will permit international drivers licence holders to drive a University fleet vehicle, subject to written approval from the relevant business unit head, providing this is in accordance with the jurisdictional requirements of the state in which any driving will occur.

Driver Responsibilities

(10) Before driving the vehicle, drivers must:

a. conduct a visual inspection of the vehicle prior to travel and report any damage to the vehicle custodian prior to the vehicle use;
b. familiarise themselves with the processes outlined in the Driver Information Kit (located in the vehicle), specifically in relation to roadside assistance and accident management; and
c. when towing trailers / equipment, ensure that:
    i. the vehicle to be towed is in good condition and meets requirements for restraining loads;
    ii. the vehicle to be towed is appropriately insured; and
    iii. the manufacturer’s towing limits are adhered to at all times.

(11) When driving University fleet vehicles, drivers must:

a. comply with all relevant legislation, including jurisdictional licencing requirements for the state in which any driving will occur;
b. comply with all relevant University policies;
c. drive in a safe manner;
d. hold a current and valid driver’s licence, excluding learners permits, and drive to any conditions of their licence;
e. action any accidents or damage to the vehicle, regardless of whether any injury was sustained, in accordance with the Accident Management process outlined in the Driver Information Kit contained in the vehicle. In addition, notification should be provided to the vehicle custodian as soon as reasonably practical; and
f. not use fleet vehicles for private purposes.

(12) Drivers must return vehicles with no less than half a tank of fuel. Drivers must re-fuel using the provided fuel card in the vehicle. Where a fuel card is not provided, or not available for use, a company credit card may be used. Similarly, electric vehicles must be returned fully charged or placed on charge when returned.

(13) The transport of passengers who have no relationship with the University (e.g. family, friends, hitch-hikers etc) in University vehicles, except for approved guests, is prohibited.

(14) Smoking in University fleet vehicles is strictly prohibited.

(15) University fleet vehicles may only be garaged at home where it would not be practical to do otherwise. (For example, an early offsite business meeting the following day; or a late finish that does not practically allow for the vehicle to be returned to campus). When garaged at home the vehicle is not to be used for any private purposes while in the driver's possession overnight. The relevant business unit head responsible for the vehicle must provide approval for the fleet vehicle to be garaged at home.

(16) Except for assistance / support dogs, pets or other animals are not permitted in University vehicles unless required for research or business needs. Accordingly, where animals are required to be transported, this must only occur in an air-conditioned vehicle, and with the animal appropriately restrained according to state road rules and any relevant legislation.

(17) Drivers of University fleet vehicles must take responsibility for any traffic or parking fines that are imposed on the University fleet vehicle whilst the vehicle is in the driver's possession.

(18) Drivers must:

a. return fleet vehicle keys to the vehicle custodian or nominated person upon cessation of use;
b. ensure the cleanliness of the fleet vehicle is commensurate with the condition in which it was received at the beginning of its use; and
c. park returned fleet vehicles to their designated parking bay on campus.

Section 6 - Vehicle Maintenance Standards

(19) Vehicles must be:

a. serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and by an authorised service provider; and
b. maintained in a safe and roadworthy condition.

(20) Any damages or faults must be repaired appropriately and in a timely manner. For leased vehicles, repairs should be done in accordance with the leasing providers fair, wear & tear guide prior to the end of the lease.

(21) All standard passenger vehicles will be replaced after a period of 5 years. Heavy duty and commercial vehicles will be assessed for replacement on a case by case basis.

Section 7 - Reporting Accidents or Incidents

(22) Motor vehicle accidents or incidents in a University fleet vehicle must be acted on immediately, as per the Accident Management Process outlined in the Driver Information Kit, contained in the vehicle.

Section 8 - Hygiene Protocol

(23) The following cleaning protocols must be upheld:

a. all vehicles must be professionally cleaned on a regular basis, as deemed reasonable, to reduce work health and safety risks and to uphold vehicle maintenance;

b. all vehicles must be kept free of loose items and rubbish; and
c. drivers are to be provided with appropriate sanitisation resources to ensure that the vehicle is cleaned before and after each use.

Section 9 - Custodians

(24) Vehicle custodians are responsible for:

a. the day to day management of the vehicle/s to which they are assigned;
b. ensuring that all drivers are:
    i. aware of the responsibilities outlined in this procedure;
    ii. familiar with the individual operating requirements of the vehicle (e.g. fuel type, features etc);
c. capturing the drivers licence details of each driver, in accordance with relevant privacy statutory obligations, in the event that an infringement notice needs to be assigned to the driver;
d. ensuring that vehicle keys and fuel cards are stored in a secure location, with controlled access;
e. ensuring logbook records are kept up to date and are appropriately filed for record keeping;
f. receiving notifications of any servicing/inspection requirements and actioning them in line with the manufacturers recommendation;
g. ensuring that the vehicle is kept clean, in a safe and roadworthy condition, and that any repairs are completed within a timely manner;
h. regularly conducting vehicle safety inspections to ensure that any damage is repaired appropriately;
i. familiarising themselves with the processes outlined in the Driver Information Kit in relation to arranging repairs, roadside assistance, and accident management; and ensuring that a copy of the Driver Information Kit is kept in the vehicle at all times in the event that a driver needs to access it;
j. ensuring the hygiene protocols are appropriately implemented, as per Section 8; and
k. ensuring pink slips are obtained in a timely manner.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	4th July 2024
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Approval Authority	Chief Operating Officer
Approval Date	3rd July 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Morven Cameron Chief Operating Officer
Enquiries Contact	Kevin McCarthy Director, Infrastructure and Facilities Services Infrastructure and Facilities Services

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.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Campus" - means any place or premises owned or controlled by the University, but may also specifically refer to a designated operating location such as the Callaghan Campus.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"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.

"University business" - Work that the University has directed to be undertaken which is required, essential, and beneficial for the functions of the University. This includes, but is not limited to, attending meetings, conferences or fieldwork, but does not include activity that is not location specific, e.g. email management, writing papers. University business may be undertaken by staff and non-staff.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.