

# International In-Country Study Programs Administrative Procedures

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## INTRODUCTION

The University has established a range of international in-country study programs as part of award courses to assist and broaden student learning, as part of staff professional development, and community engagement.

Staff administering off-campus activities are required to follow established University policies, procedures and guidelines when developing programs and when collecting, storing, accessing and distributing information about or for, these study programs.

## COMPLIANCE

This is a compliance requirement under the:

- [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\)](#);
- [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\)](#); and
- [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students](#)

## INTENT

This document is intended to outline the duties of program administrators and authorised officers in developing, administering, assessing for risk and reviewing, in-country study programs.

## RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

In the context of this document

**Authorised Officer** means any University staff member acting in the capacity of coordinator, leader or supervisor (or equivalent of) for an international in-country study program, or their delegate; and

**Participant** means any student or staff member (whether from the University or a partner institution), volunteers and members of industry or the general public, who take part in a University international in-country study program.

## PROCEDURES

### Establishing an International In-Country Study Program

When developing an international in-country study program consideration should be given to the needs of the potential participants in relation to health and safety, learning outcomes and the benefits to the University.

A binding agreement in the form of a memorandum of understanding should be established and needs to clearly state the obligations, roles and responsibilities of the University, any partner institutions (foreign or domestic) and/or local authorities.

### **Risk Assessment and Management**

It is imperative to conduct a thorough risk assessment and develop a risk management plan for any international in-country study program in the initial planning stages, throughout the duration of the program and again each and every time as part of a post-program review prior to any subsequent programs.

Authorised officers, in conjunction with the Health Safety and Environment unit and other program administrators, must conduct a risk assessment utilising the [Risk Assessment Form](#) to help identify any hazards (real or potential) and identify/plan measures to be taken, to mitigate or negate any risks and respond to emergencies.

### **Program Development**

In developing a program, consideration must be given to the following:

- Desired outcomes – learning benefits;
- Assessment methodology; and
- Schedule of learning activities.

For credit-bearing units, or other units required as part of an AQF award of the University, the learning outcomes, activities and assessment methods should be as per the accredited unit documents.

### **Pre-Departure Arrangements**

Preparation for departure should address:

- Costs to students;
- Costs to School/Institute (as agreed through the budget process and/or by the Head of School);
- Scholarships/grants – industry, University, Commonwealth and NT Government - availability;
- Accommodation – provided as part of program or participants to book their own;
- Transfer arrangements to/from airport and transport requirements in-country;
- Duration of entire program and individual structure of activities;
- Dietary considerations – participant requirements, availability options, local cuisine;
- Telecommunications all participants need to be able to be contacted in-country and need to be able to contact the program authorised officer at all times;
- Insurance – adequate medical and travel insurance;
- Visas – appropriate to program type and length (as required);
- Passport – must have at least six (6) months validity and sufficient pages for visas/entry and exit endorsement;
- Vaccinations – appropriate to destination;
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) warnings (if applicable);
- University [Movement Request form](#);
- Currency/cash/credit cards – not all countries allow use of foreign credit cards, banks should be informed prior to travel;
- Religious and cultural orientation of participant and host culture; and
- Certified medical clearance from health care professional to confirm suitability to type of travel and destination;

The above list is a guideline only and is not exhaustive.

### Information for Participants - Pre-departure

Adequate information must be provided to participants through pre-departure briefing sessions, online and hard-copy information.

Participants should have a clear understanding of:

- Program overview and schedule of activities;
- Costs;
- Program aims and objectives;
- Assessment of the program content and how grading will be applied – including any in-country assignments (if applicable);
- Program enrolment procedures;
- Risk assessment and security management plans;
- Cultural awareness and activities (including cultural practices, impolite behaviour, suggested dress standards and political and legal sensitivities);
- Acceptable ethical practices and the requirements surrounding appropriate ethics approval where appropriate;
- Acceptable and appropriate behaviour while participating in a program and/or program rules and expectations for participants' behaviour which will include, but may not be limited to, reasons that participants will be removed from a program such as use, distribution or purchasing of illicit drugs; malicious damage to property; putting their own life or that of others at risk; behaviour that brings the University's reputation into disrepute; or activities considered illegal in the host country;
- Eligibility criteria; and
- Scholarship availability and application procedures (if applicable).

### Information from Participants

Program administrators will be required to collect, store and access information about all participants on an in-country study program and also about Authorised Officers. The information for students will be stored electronically as part of Area 52. A hard copy of all information should also be forwarded to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor prior to departure.

### Incident or Emergency In-Country

In the event of an incident or emergency arising outside normal work hours, the DVC will be the University's Australian-based emergency contact for all international in-country study programs.

The information program administrators will need to collect from both participants and Authorised Officers may include:

- Primary and secondary emergency contact details in Australia;
- Flight details and itinerary\*;
- Accommodation details\*;
- Transfer details to and from the airport, accommodation and program venue/s;
- Insurance details (travel and medical);
- Proof of required vaccinations appropriate to program destination;
- An appropriate and reliable means of communication whilst in-country;
- Special dietary, religious, medical, assistance requirements; and
- Copies of participants' passport and visas (if applicable).

\* = If different from the program

Any information supplied to the University must be kept in the strictest confidence. Information collection, storage and dissemination is be governed by the [Information Act 2002](#) and the University's [Privacy and Confidentially Policy](#).

All participants will also need to fill out, sign and forward to the appropriate program administrators:

- Completed application form;
- Indemnity form;
- University Movement Requisition Form;
- DFAT Memo and Declaration Form (if applicable);
- Media release form;
- Signed medical clearance; and
- An agreement of compliance and undertakings whilst participating in a program.

**Program administrators should strongly recommend to participants that copies of all the above information and documentation be kept with the participants' emergency contact and/or or next of kin.**

### **In-Country Protocol**

Participants may be required to attend pre-departure briefings, in-country information sessions and post-program debriefing session/s.

Establishing and maintaining good relations with key contacts including Australian embassies/consulates in-country and relevant embassies/consulates in Australia, foreign and domestic emergency personnel, local government officials and community/religious leaders, will be an essential element of study program protocol.

It is imperative to thoroughly research and incorporate into every aspect of the program an in-depth understanding of cultural practices and sensitivity to local customs. Participants should be made aware of, and encouraged to exercise respect for, the host country's people and practices including, living context, dress standards, dietary habits, religious beliefs, traditions and rituals, environmental factors, political and gender sensitivities.

Suitable tokens of appreciation should be taken for presentation to foreign dignitaries and representatives of participating partner organisations on behalf of the University as appropriate [for further information, refer to the Director, Media, Advancement and Community Engagement].

### **Emergency Procedures**

Standard emergency procedures will be developed by the University in consultation with the Health Safety and Environment unit that will give advice and guidance for common scenarios that potentially may occur whilst administering an international in-country study program including:

- Procedures to be followed in the event of a participant or Authorised Officer/s dying, becoming seriously ill or injured or involved in an accident;
- Procedures to follow in the event of a natural disaster;
- Procedures to be followed in the event of civil unrest, hijacking or transportation disaster; and
- Procedures to be followed in the event that a participant or Authorised Officer/s is denied entry to a country or is arrested whilst in-country.

## Emergency Contact

Participants should be directed to notify their Authorised Officer/s in-country as soon as practicable should an incident or accident of a serious nature occur. If an incident or accident befalls the Authorised Officer then the participants should contact the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Prior to departure, participants and Authorised Officer/s must make available to the program administrators, details of a primary and secondary emergency contact for the period they will be in-country. If a participant's spouse and/or dependant/s are travelling with the in-country program then an alternative primary and secondary emergency contact for them must also be provided (Must be two (2) emergency contacts other than the participant themselves).

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor is the nominated contact and liaison point for all international in-country study program information should an emergency or adverse event arise. Program administrators must leave an up to date, hard-copy of participant information and emergency contact details with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the commencement of any program.

Program administrators should maintain a current list of emergency contact numbers for both Australia and the host country including for example, the Australian embassy in the host country, local police and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

## Review of Program

At the conclusion of all study programs a thorough analysis of the activities and outcomes should be conducted. Administrators, authorised officers and participants should engage in debriefing sessions and a report should be generated. The report should contain information on, and assessment of, the program, with a view to addressing any issues encountered. It should analyse and quantify how best to enhance learning outcomes and maximise the strategic benefits to the University.

Post-program activities may include seminars or public speaking engagements to encourage future participation by University staff, students and community members; media releases and publications to raise awareness of the programs and to promote the University; and involvement in functions such as open days and orientation.

## Dependants/Spouse of Participants

Participant's dependants and/or spouse are generally not permitted to travel with the participant whilst on an international in-country study program. However, the decision to allow a dependant/spouse to either participate in the program or travel with the participant may be permitted via the written approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

If the University agrees to either a dependant or spouse participating in, or travelling with the program, then they will also be required to provide the same information and complete the same forms as participants and supply this to the program administrator/s. The roles of the accompanying dependants or spouse need to be made clear with respect to practices subject to ethics clearance.

Dependants and spouses of participants will not be covered by University insurance and must therefore be advised of this and made aware that they must have adequate and appropriate travel insurance including comprehensive health cover that includes provision for emergency medical evacuation.

## Criminal History Checks

Some international in-country study programs will require that all participants produce a current Northern Territory Police criminal history check prior to being admitted to the program.

## ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Internal

[Code of Conduct](#)

[DFAT Memo and Declaration Form](#)

[Movement Requisition Form](#)

[Off-Campus Learning Activities and International In-Country Study Programs Policy](#)

[Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#)

[Risk Assessment Form](#)

### External

[Information Act 2002 \(NT\)](#)

## Document History and Version Control

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1.01	8 Jul 2013	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assigned document number</li> <li>• Converted document to current template</li> <li>• Updated and added hyperlinks</li> <li>• Minor changes to wording, grammar and formatting</li> </ul>
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