ACADEMIC STUDY LEAVE (ASL) GUIDELINES

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1. Financial Assistance
Requests for financial assistance must be identified in the ASL Application Form, and will be considered in relation to resources available. Where available the preference is for University preferred suppliers to be utilised.

Excluding salary received from the University, details of any other known earnings, or other financial benefits to be received during ASL must be declared at the time of making application.

ASL is subject to normal University audit procedures and all University funds must be appropriately acquitted. Funds advanced but not expended must be refunded within one month of return, and any other University funds must be appropriately recorded and acquitted by the approved process and in accordance with associated policies.

2. Paid or Unpaid Work during Academic Study Leave (ASL)
Any paid or unpaid work undertaken during the ASL program must meet the same conditions for approval as provided under existing University policies as amended from time to time, including but not limited to Consultancy and the Code of Conduct.

3. Timeframe for Application and Approval
Applications for ASL will be called on the first Monday in March of each year for the taking of ASL between January and June in the following year, and on the first Monday in September for the taking of ASL between July and December in the following year.

The following conditions for ASL applications are to be applied:
- application forms shall be lodged by the stipulated closing date with the Faculty Manager or the named nominee;
application forms received after the stipulated closing date shall not be considered for that period, but may be held or resubmitted for consideration in the following year;

the Head of School or Centre in consultation with the Faculty Manager or nominee will assess applications against the eligibility criteria;

for applications assessed as meeting the requirements of the eligibility criteria the Head of School or Centre will complete the relevant section of the ASL Application form and comment about the proposal and the value of the program to the Work Unit;

after the closing date and when the Head of School or Centre has completed their comments will eligible applications be provided to the Academic Study Leave Committee for consideration;

the Academic Study Leave Committee will consider eligible applications, and notify applicants of the outcome as soon as practicable after their determination; and

approved ASL applications shall be forwarded to the Personnel and Payroll area for processing and recording.

4. **Service on Return to the University**

On completion of ASL the employee agrees to return to the University and may not resign or retire, except for approved medical reasons, within a period equivalent to the period of ASL taken.

5. **Suitability of Academic Study Leave (ASL) Proposals**

It is the responsibility of the employee to prove and demonstrate within their ASL application:

- the suitability and rationale of their proposal;
- necessary detailed advice to support their claim;
- the required approval from any Ethics Committee or Regulatory Body;
- suitable evidence substantiating information provided; and
- eligibility to apply for ASL.

Applicants are encouraged to consult with Heads of School or Centre or other senior academic employees that are in a position to offer sound advice on the feasibility of the proposed ASL program well in advance of compiling their application.

Applications that are assessed as being incomplete or inconsistent with University policy, eligibility criteria and application form requirements will not be provided to the Academic Study Leave Committee.

Applications will be assessed on the information submitted. Neither the Head of School or Centre, or the Academic Study Leave Committee is obliged to seek out additional information on behalf of an applicant.

Should a Head of School or Centre make application for ASL the relevant line executive shall assess the suitability of their application.

6. **Academic Study Leave Committee (ASL) Composition**

The Vice-Chancellor or nominee shall determine and establish an Academic Study Leave Committee for the purpose of approving or rejecting eligible applications. Where possible these will consist of:

- Executive Dean, Dean, Director or their nominee (Chair);
- all relevant Heads of School or their nominees; and
• two (2) academic employees who are not applicants and nominated by the Faculty Board.

Where the Vice-Chancellor establishes an Academic Study Leave Committee for the purpose of approving or rejecting eligible applications by employees not in Faculties the composition of the Committee where possible will be:
• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or their nominee (Chair);
• appropriate relevant line executives or their nominees; and
• two (2) other academic employees not in Faculties, who are not applicants, nominated by the DVC or their nominee.

7. Role of Academic Study Leave (ASL) Committee
The Academic Study Leave Committee will consider each eligible application on its merits in relation to, but not limited to the:
• nature of the proposed program and its adherence to the purpose of ASL;
• needs of the Faculty’s or Centre’s operational plan;
• potential benefits to the individual’s Work Unit;
• available funding and resources;
• need for professional development of the employee;
• previous grants of ASL that the employee has taken; and
• application supporting the standing and reputation of the University.

The Committee may at its discretion require the applicant to provide more detailed information.

An application under consideration is not an indication that it will automatically be approved. The Committee in its considerations may vary an application this includes but is not limited to requests for financial assistance or length of ASL.

The Committee will not consider any requests for financial assistance other than those provided within the ASL application form.

Formally approved ASL programs can only be varied with approval of the Chair of the relevant Committee.

Decisions of the Committee are final.

8. Obligations
The applicant is required to demonstrate the needs of other employees and students will be adequately met during their absence.

Before proceeding on ASL the employee shall discharge all teaching and examination responsibilities and any other required duties to the satisfaction of the relevant line executive. Failure to complete required duties may result in the delay of commencing ASL, and if this occurs the ASL period will not be extended.

Employees on approved periods of ASL are obligated to act in good faith and in accordance with but not limited to the University’s Code of Conduct, and abide by the statutes, policies and procedures in place at the University, as amended from time to time.
9. **Action Required at the Conclusion of Academic Study Leave (ASL)**

At the conclusion of ASL the employee shall prepare a comprehensive ASL report for the Vice-Chancellor. The report is required within three (3) months of completing ASL.

The report should contain:
- an overview of the ASL program and outcomes;
- major objectives of the ASL program;
- description of the ASL program;
- evaluation of ASL against outcomes;
- a statement of benefits achieved or expected (e.g. Book, Research) ; and
- copy of itinerary details.

A financial statement of claimed expenses must accompany the report.

Failure to provide an acceptable report and/or financial statement within the three (3) month period will result in service for future ASL programs not being recognised until a suitable report or statement is provided, and/or any other action considered appropriate by the Vice-Chancellor.

10. **Application Procedures**

Applications for ASL must be of a demonstrably high quality, and applicants should consult with other ECU employees and persons at the institutions or organisations to be visited well in advance of compiling their application.

The following is provided to assist an individual in the completion and submission of an ASL application form:

(i) Read the associated ASL Policy, Guidelines and familiarise yourself with the requirements for making an ASL application.

(ii) If needed seek clarification on the ASL Policy, and assistance in completing the ASL Application Form.

(iii) Seek advice and input from peers or other senior academic employees on the quality of your ASL application and the proposed benefits of the program.

(iv) Complete all areas of the ASL Application Form. Areas not applicable mark as N/A.

(v) Identify clearly and succinctly the purpose and benefits of the proposed ASL program.

(vi) Provide full itinerary details of the ASL program.

(vii) Provide a detailed estimate of financial assistance required, and state any paid or unpaid work.

(viii) Provide sufficient detail of all your work commitments and how these will be adequately covered during the ASL period.

(ix) Check details and review the application with peers or other senior academic employees, and attach any supporting documentation such as Curriculum Vitae and copies of evidence (e.g., conference and/or performance invitations etc) or required approval from Ethics Committee or other Regulatory Body.

(x) Forward completed ASL applications to the nominated person by the closing date.

The ASL application form must be completed in:
- a minimum font size of 11;
- Arial or Time New Roman font; and
- in single line spacing.

Please note specific word counts apply to some areas of the ASL Application Form and these are strictly applied. Applications received that are not on the approved University ASL Application Form will be assessed as non-compliant.