

## Outbound Learning Abroad Governance Guidelines

Learning Abroad (global student mobility) covers the broad range of international learning experiences an ECU student may access during their course.

### 1. Intent

The intent of the Outbound Learning Abroad Governance Guidelines is to provide a high-level overview of how learning abroad programs and experiences are managed and governed at ECU. The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the ECU Travel Policy and School-Led Learning Abroad Program Guidelines and Student Exchange processes managed through Student Life.

### 2. Scope

- Program Funding;
- School-led study Learning Abroad Programs (Study tours and international clinical placements)
- International internships and other forms of work integrated learning (WIL);
- Semester exchange; and
- Independently arranged learning abroad programs.

### 3. Program Funding

#### 3.1. New Colombo Plan

The New Colombo Plan (NCP) is a signature initiative of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support Australian student engagement in the Indo-Pacific, including both short term and semester study. Applications for NCP funding are typically submitted around April/May each year, coordinated through the Internationalisation Team.

Participation in the NCP requires strict compliance with DFAT Guidelines covering:

- Student eligibility for grants;
- Program eligibility for grants; (programs must be at least 14 days)
- Successfully implemented programs, including due diligence on partners; and
- Compliant acquittal of Government Funding, including comprehensive feedback on the program outcomes.

#### 3.1.2 New Colombo Plan – Administration Funding

Each successful NCP project receives administration funding at 10% of the total grant amount.

Schools will receive NCP 'Administration' funding of 10% of the value of student funding for those that actually attend a mobility project. For example, for a Project that has 10 student places @ \$3,000 per grant, ECU receives \$33,000 with \$3,000 being allocated as Administration Funding. If only 8 students travel (receiving \$24,000 in student funding), only \$2,400 Administration funding may be distributed to the school, the remainder must be returned to the NCP.

Administration funding will be provided to schools once the Tour Lead provides a Project Completion Report and confirmation of the students who attended.

Any unspent funds must be returned to the NCP along with the remaining admin funding in line with the NCP acquittal process, managed by the International Liaison Officer.

The Internationalisation team, through the International Liaison Officer, oversees ECU participation in the NCP and ensures the University meets the necessary obligations and reporting timelines. ECU staff interested in this funding stream should contact the Internationalisation Team for more information ([international.office@ecu.edu.au](mailto:international.office@ecu.edu.au)).

### 3.2. School and University Funding

Where School and/or University funding has been allocated to a Learning Abroad program, the Internationalisation Team include detail of the grant in student offer letters on instruction from the School and/or Finance.

### 3.3. OS-HELP Loans

[OS-HELP](#) is a loan for students enrolled in a Commonwealth Supported Place who want to study some of their course overseas. Individual student eligibility is assessed against Australian Government requirements by the Transnational/National Program Support Office. Student applications should be submitted to the [Student Hub](#).

### 3.4 Unfunded

Where external funding is not available for a study tour program, tour leaders should consider the costs involved for both students and staff/school and the likelihood of successfully recruiting and retaining students to participate.

## 4. School-Led Learning Abroad Programs

Includes: study tours, clinical placements, internships and WIL.

### 4.1. Program Application Process and Management Summary

1. Program Leader (academic) completes application;
2. Program Leader completes activity specific risk assessment in Riskware (See Risk Assessment below);
3. Executive Dean endorses application and approves risk assessment;
4. Completed application is submitted to Internationalisation Team for endorsement by Dean, International Relations, and approval by Deputy Vice-Chancellor International;
  - a. Programs travelling to countries with a DFAT travel advice level of 'Exercise a high degree of caution' or higher require additional approval by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, as per Travel Policy.
5. Students apply for the Program via the [Short Term Program Student Application](#) webform;
  - a. Where students are pre-selected (i.e. nominated by the Program leader), student registrations are completed through the webform.
6. Student selection is completed by Program leader and the offer and formal acceptance of a place on the Program is coordinated by the Internationalisation Team;
7. Student Travel Approval is organised separately, in line with the ECU Travel Policy, after acceptance into the Program;
  - a. **Student travel should only be arranged *after* student travel is approved as outlined in step 7**
  - b. **Staff travel approval is staff responsibility and should be organised in line with their Schools process.**
8. Internationalisation team sends final program and student details and documents to the the Student Hub via teams. The Hub record the Learning Abroad activity against the student's Callista record.

### 4.2. Risk Assessment (Critical Incident Management Plan/Child Protection/Prevention Sexual Exploitation Abuse, Harassment)

An activity risk assessment must be completed by the Program Leader at the time of application for all Learning Abroad programs through the Riskware WHS Risk Register module. Assessments should reflect the specific nature of the program being assessed. See the [Riskware](#) staff intranet webpage and [Risk Assessment for Learning Abroad](#) guidelines for more detail and instructions on how to complete the assessment.

Risk assessments must be reviewed and updated by the Program Leader a minimum of three months prior to commencement of the activity.

ECU's [Safety and Employment Relations Team](#) provide support in completing activity risk assessments.

## 5. Student Exchange

The Student Exchange program is a semester length or full year overseas study opportunity for [eligible](#) students. Students can take advantage of studying with one of ECU's partner universities and achieve credit towards their ECU

degree. This program is managed through the Transnational/National Program Support Office within the Student Life Directorate. Students apply direct to the [Student Hub](#) to participate.

Students must ensure that units they have elected to study at the Partner University can be matched with units required within their ECU degree. Course Coordinators use the [Application for Overseas Study Credit Approval](#) form to assess/approve units, whether they be core, major or electives.

A Student Exchange agreement with each partner university must be in place and will stipulate the number of exchange places available and arrangements to manage balances. Agreements are managed through the Internationalisation Team.

A semester exchange Risk Assessment is completed by the Transnational/National Program Support Office and Internationalisation teams through the WHS Risk Register module with reference to the Critical Incident Management Plan. The Critical Incident Management Plans are developed by the Transnational/National Program Support Office for each exchange and are country/student specific.

## **6. Independent Learning Abroad**

Independent Learning Abroad refers to activities organised by students independently of the university or through one of ECU's approved [Third Party Providers](#). Students are required to seek the necessary approvals through the Study Overseas team to ensure the activity including any credit is recorded against the student record, including travel approval in line with the ECU Travel Policy.

Internationalisation Team

International Office