Travel Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

Context

(1) Travel management at The University of Queensland (UQ) is an enabling function that comprises all modes of domestic and international travel, and directly associated activities such as accommodation and meals.

(2) 'UQ Travel' is an approved journey that includes either a flight or overnight accommodation away from a UQ traveller's normal place of work.

(3) This Policy outlines the principles and key requirements for UQ travel, which is defined as:

a. authorised travel approved by UQ, regardless of funding source, for the purpose of UQ business.

(4) Persons undertaking UQ travel are defined as 'UQ travellers' under this Policy. Even if UQ is contributing to the travel costs, a UQ traveller does not include:

a. travellers undertaking travel because of personal reasons (e.g. family related, health related, returning to their home country of their own will);
b. job interviewees who are invited to UQ;
c. research participants;
d. volunteers;
e. external guests who are invited to UQ, but are not travelling as a representative of UQ; or
f. staff travelling to or from a home base to begin employment at UQ, or at the conclusion of a term or contract.

(5) Students (undergraduate/postgraduate coursework students and HDR candidates) should refer to the Student Travel Procedure.

Objective, Scope and Application

(6) The objective of this Policy is to facilitate UQ travel, while enabling and ensuring:

a. prudent and transparent use of resources;
b. effective and efficient management of travel-related risks;
c. compliance with legal and regulatory obligations; and
d. community expectations are met.

(7) This Policy applies to all UQ travel and to all UQ travellers.

(8) For staff (defined as continuing, fixed-term, research contingent funded and casual staff members), compliance with this Policy is a condition of their appointment and continuing employment with UQ. For UQ honorary/title holders, compliance with this Policy is a condition to retain their title.

(9) This Policy applies in conjunction with any travel-related conditions, obligations and arrangements stipulated in

employment contracts, grant conditions or contracts and arrangements with third parties. To avoid any doubt, this Policy prevails over such travel-related contracts, conditions, obligations and arrangements to the extent it does not adversely affect the rights of any third party.

(10) The 'six steps to travel' are outlined on the UQ Travel website and must be followed in conjunction with this Policy.

(11) This Policy is supported by the Dual Purpose Travel (DPT) Procedure.

(12) Request for exemptions from this Policy must be put in writing and formally approved by the relevant University Senior Executive Team (USET) member or Institute Director (IMB, QAAFI and AIBN) prior to requesting UQ travel and will only be considered where it is deemed fair and reasonable to apply an approved exemption. USET members require approval from their relevant supervisor for exemptions from this Policy.

Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

Legitimate Purpose of Travel

(13) UQ travel will be undertaken for legitimate UQ purposes only and be demonstrably aligned to UQ objectives and strategic priorities.

(14) All UQ travel will satisfy the test of necessity (i.e. UQ travel was practically the only option, or it was demonstrably the most effective and efficient option to achieve the underlying business/academic objective).

Conduct while Travelling

(15) UQ travellers will act with respect, integrity and professionalism at all times and ensure that their behaviour during UQ travel is:

a. appropriate to the purpose of the UQ travel;
b. consistent with the Staff Code of Conduct Policy and/or Student Code of Conduct Policy and UQ values;
c. compliant with applicable laws and regulations; and
d. respectful of local beliefs and customs.

(16) UQ staff are at work while on UQ travel, including between periods of UQ travel when it is impractical to return to their normal place of work. This does not include private travel days when a staff member is on approved leave (refer to the Dual Purpose Travel (DPT) Procedure for private travel day definition).

Sustainability

(17) While UQ travel is integral to UQ achieving its strategic goals, travel is also a large contributor to UQ's carbon emissions. The environmental impact of travel must be considered and minimised where possible, although not at the expense of a UQ traveller's health and safety.

(18) UQ travellers and travel approvers must:

a. avoid travel if the business/academic objective can be achieved without it; and
b. if UQ travel is necessary, make sustainable travel choices where possible such as flying Economy Class.

(19) The COVID-19 Pandemic has demonstrated many UQ business activities can be undertaken online effectively such as meetings, conferences and events. UQ will actively look to minimise the overall number of journeys undertaken by UQ travellers moving forward.

Prudent use of UQ Resources

(20) All reasonable steps will be taken to minimise the cost of UQ travel and its impact on UQ operations, provided:

a. the primary purpose of the travel is not compromised;
b. there is no unacceptable increase in the safety or health risk to the UQ traveller and/or to UQ; and
c. there is no adverse impact on UQ's ability to meet its duty of care obligations to the UQ traveller.

Class of Travel

(21) Domestic air travel must be booked at Economy Class.

(22) International air travel must be booked at Economy Class except if the air travel is more than 7 continuous hours, the travel approver may use their discretion to approve a UQ traveller to travel at a higher class of travel (Premium Economy or Business Class) in certain circumstances including:

a. to accommodate the specific health and safety needs of a UQ traveller such as:
    i. a medically certified disability or medical condition; or
    ii. the UQ travel is required to be undertaken within a very short timeframe (e.g. less than 48 hours total time in the business location).
b. budget is available and:
    i. the air travel is paid for by an external organisation with funds not administered by UQ, or where a higher class of travel above Economy Class is explicitly included and stated in the approved budget of an externally funded project/contract; or
    ii. the air travel is paid (or upgraded from Economy Class) using consultancy funding.

(23) UQ travellers may upgrade travel to a higher class with their own personal funds or loyalty/frequent flyer points. This can be facilitated by UQ's travel services provider, FCM Travel Solutions.

Justifications and Approvals

(24) All decisions and approvals for UQ travel will be transparent, verifiable, documented and demonstrate responsible stewardship of the UQ's resources, reputation and values.

(25) All UQ travel will be fully justified, budgeted, and approved prior to booking travel in accordance with this Policy, the Dual Purpose Travel (DPT) Procedure and the 'six steps to travel' outlined on the UQ travel website.

(26) UQ will not normally cover any unapproved and unreasonable costs. Where costs are incurred by UQ for any unauthorised travel, expenses will be recovered from the traveller and disciplinary actions will be taken.

(27) UQ travellers can not approve their own UQ travel or travel-related expenses including any reimbursement claims.

(28) UQ staff will not approve UQ travel or travel-related expenses for their supervisor.

(29) UQ travel funded by grants or by an external party (including work covered under the Consultancy, Secondary Employment and Internal Work Policy) must be considered in accordance with this Policy. To the extent the plans, contracts and conditions approved by the grantor/external party are materially inconsistent with this Policy, this Policy prevails, provided the grantor's/external party's rights are not adversely affected.

(30) Grant seekers will not seek or negotiate travel privileges as part of their grant requests and contracts.

(31) Expenses associated with loyalty programs and lounge memberships are to be paid for personally by the UQ traveller however UQ travellers can accrue points for loyalty programs resulting from UQ travel.

Travel Insurance and Fitness for Travel

(32) Automatic travel insurance applies to UQ travellers undertaking UQ travel more than 50km from their normal place of residence or business, excluding everyday commuting. Travel insurance cover is subject to full policy terms, conditions, exclusions and limitations.

(33) UQ travellers must ensure they are fit for UQ travel, given the nature, purpose, destination and duration of the travel.

(34) UQ travellers must familiarise themselves with what is and is not covered under UQ travel insurance while on UQ travel, refer to the UQ Insurance Services website (UQ Travel Insurance brochures for Staff and Students). UQ travellers must advise their supervisor and the relevant travel approver prior to requesting UQ travel approval if there is a possible foreseen risk of costs being incurred in connection with the UQ travel which may not be covered by UQ Travel Insurance (e.g. you have a pre-existing medical condition and your doctor has not been prepared to certify that you are fit for international travel or it's foreseeable that your travel may be cancelled or disrupted).

(35) Any uninsured costs or losses resulting from UQ travel, and where UQ is responsible, will be funded by the UQ traveller's business unit.

International Travel - Fitness for Travel Requirement

(36) If a UQ traveller is planning to undertake international UQ travel and has a pre-existing condition, or if the UQ traveller is over 75 years of age, they must obtain medical clearance to travel from a doctor within 30 days prior to the UQ travel using the Fit for Travel form available on the UQ Insurance Services website.

(37) Pre-existing Condition is defined by UQ's travel insurer as any illness, injury, medical or dental condition, disease or disability for which treatment, medication or advice (including advice for treatment) has been received or prescribed by a Doctor or Dentist in the 12 months prior to the international Journey. This includes pregnancy and any mental illness.

(38) The Fit for Travel form must be completed by UQ travellers prior to booking their international UQ travel if, at the time, they are showing symptoms of any condition, illness or disease.

Private Travel

(39) Dual Purpose Travel (defined as a combination of part UQ travel and part private travel) may be permitted in some circumstances provided:

a. the private travel component is not the primary purpose of the trip;
b. the private travel component will not adversely affect the objectives of the UQ travel;
c. the private travel component will not result in any additional cost to UQ;
d. the private travel component would not have occurred if not for the UQ travel;
e. the most logical and economical flight-path to and from the UQ travel destination/s has been selected;
f. leave for private travel is approved in accordance with UQ's leave approval process;
g. UQ will not incur any Fringe Benefit Tax liability;
h. the travel approver agrees the request is reasonable and approves the dual purpose travel in accordance with this Policy and the Dual Purpose Travel (DPT) Procedure;
i. the UQ traveller abides by the requirements of dual purpose travel in accordance with this Policy and the Dual Purpose Travel (DPT) Procedure; and

j. the UQ traveller agrees to disclose and maintain details of their dual purpose travel to enable UQ to assess compliance with this Policy.

(40) UQ will not cover any direct costs attributable to private travel e.g. accommodation, meals. Any costs incurred by UQ that can be directly attributable to or associated with private travel will be charged to and recovered from the UQ traveller.

(41) UQ will not approve any private travel to a High Risk Destination (see 'High Risk Destinations' provisions below).

(42) UQ will not be responsible or liable for managing any issues including risks and customer complaints relating to or arising from private travel or the private portion of dual purpose travel.

> Refer to the Dual Purpose Travel (DPT) Procedure.

Travel Insurance During Private Travel

(43) UQ travellers will be insured under UQ travel insurance cover (subject to full policy terms, conditions, limitations and exclusions) for some limited private travel which is incidental to the UQ travel. For more information on what private travel is and is not covered under UQ travel insurance, refer to the UQ Insurance Services website (UQ Travel Insurance brochures for Staff and Students). UQ travellers must obtain their own private travel insurance for any other private travel.

(44) UQ travellers will not be covered for any private travel to a High Risk Destination (see 'High Risk Destinations' provisions below).

Non-UQ Travel Companion/Person

Non-UQ Travel Companion

(45) In some circumstances a non-UQ travel companion (including family members such as a spouse, partner, or dependant etc.) may accompany a UQ traveller undertaking UQ travel, provided:

a. UQ will not be liable for the non-UQ travel companion;
b. UQ will not incur any additional costs;
c. the objectives of the UQ travel will not be compromised; and
d. the non-UQ travel companion doesn't pose any additional risks to the UQ traveller or UQ.

(46) UQ will not be responsible for managing any issues including risks and customer complaints relating to or arising from travel with a non-UQ travel companion.

(47) A non-UQ travel companion will not be covered by UQ's travel insurance and must arrange their own personal travel insurance cover.

Approved Non-UQ Person

(48) In some circumstances a non-UQ person may be approved by UQ to undertake UQ travel if there is a compelling and evidenced reason such as a medical, safety and/or security risk to the UQ traveller (e.g. a Carer who accompanies a UQ traveller with disabilities in order for the business objective to be achieved).

(49) Explicit written approval from the relevant USET member must be obtained prior to booking travel for the non-UQ person.

(50) A non-UQ person approved by UQ will be treated (and have the same responsibilities) as a UQ traveller in accordance with this Policy.

(51) A non-UQ person approved as a UQ traveller will be covered by UQ's travel insurance (subject to full policy terms, conditions, limitations and exclusions).

(52) Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) will be applicable on any costs paid for by UQ for a non-UQ person. The FBT liability will be funded by the business unit (contact the UQ Taxation Unit on fbs-tax@uq.edu.au for further information on FBT).

Risk Management

(53) Travel will not be authorised if the risk to the traveller and/or UQ is assessed as unacceptable by either the relevant travel approver or the High Risk Travel Approver.

(54) While travelling and where necessary, UQ travellers will be provided with medical and security assistance via UQ's emergency assistance provider, International SOS (ISOS).

(55) ISOS does not replace the UQ travel approval process. Once UQ travel is approved, UQ travellers must:

a. register their itineraries through ISOS prior to departure and update their itineraries should travel plans change;
b. check their emergency contact details are accurate in Workday and ISOS in the event of an emergency so they can be promptly contacted and located;
c. carry the ISOS Travel Assistance 24/7 contact number whilst travelling and contact ISOS in the event of any medical or security issue whilst travelling; and
d. stay in regular contact, as agreed, with their supervisor and inform them of any changes to travel plans prior to departure or during travel.

(56) UQ travel will be undertaken using safe and reliable carriers only. Air travel is only permitted on airline carriers rated safe as recommended by Airline and Safety Ratings Australia. Airline carriers on the banned list published by the European Union (EU) Air Safety List are not permitted to be used.

(57) Based on the activities undertaken, UQ travellers and supervisors should consider, and agree on, actions to ensure fatigue management is addressed.

(58) UQ travellers must ensure the secure, safe and legal transportation, storage, and distribution of all UQ assets (physical and digital) while travelling.

(59) UQ travellers must ensure that there are no international safeguards (e.g. sanction laws and regulations) under Australian law that may prohibit, or restrict, certain travel.

High Risk Destinations

(60) To ensure the health, safety and wellness of UQ travellers and to ensure UQ meets its duty of care obligations, UQ travel is not permitted to countries/regions rated by DFAT Smartraveller as:

a. Level 3 (reconsider your need to travel);
b. Level 4 (do not travel);
c. Where no advice has been issued by DFAT Smartraveller; or
d. Any other country/region as determined by UQ;

Unless:

a. the travel is necessary for legitimate UQ strategic purposes;

b. the High Risk Travel Approver (nominated representative of the USET) approves the request to undertake the travel; and
c. the UQ traveller undertakes all requirements for travel to a high risk destination outlined in this Policy and the Travel Website.

(61) UQ travellers must be vigilant with their personal safety while on UQ travel and should avoid taking unnecessary risks that impact their health, safety and wellness.

(62) If travelling in groups, a group leader with sufficient capabilities and authorities must be clearly identified to ensure there is clarity of direction and instructions during travel and in case of any emergency or incident.

(63) The high risk destination travel approval process is outlined on the Travel Website.

Travel Protocol for Senior Management

(64) No more than 50 per cent of USET members are to travel in the same aircraft/vehicle at the same time.

(65) USET, the Chancellor and the President of the Academic Board should avoid travelling with their deputies in the same aircraft or vehicle.

Travel Management

(66) The 'six steps to travel' on the Travel Website outline the requirements which must be followed for planning travel, approval for travel, booking travel, paying for travel, safety while travelling and returning from travel.

(67) Travel bookings must be made through UQ's preferred travel services provider, FCM Travel Solutions, in accordance with the booking travel process outlined on the Travel Website. Valid exceptions for not booking UQ travel through FCM are listed on the UQ travel website FAQ section.

(68) Personal preferences, airline memberships and reward program memberships (such as frequent flyer programs or other loyalty programs) are not sufficient reasons to not book travel through FCM.

Section 3 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

UQ Travellers

(69) UQ travellers are responsible for complying with applicable sections of this Policy, the Dual Purpose Travel (DPT) Procedure and the Travel Website including:

a. exploring all viable options to achieve the business objective (e.g. virtual attendance at meetings, conferences, workshops etc.);
b. ensuring UQ travel is properly budgeted for and funds are available to pay for the travel and all associated costs;
c. discussing their travel plans with their supervisor prior to submitting a travel request;
d. planning their travel and obtaining necessary approvals, within a timely manner prior to UQ travel;
e. ensuring UQ travel is planned and undertaken in the most cost effective and efficient manner;
f. ensuring their work responsibilities are suitably covered during the UQ travel;
g. assessing the risks and ensuring appropriate precautions are taken and risk management actions taken to protect themselves from medical, safety, security and related risks including:

i. assessing and ensuring their own fitness to travel and obtain medical clearance for international travel from a doctor if required; (UQ will reimburse UQ travellers for the cost of an appointment with a doctor to assess fitness for travel if the UQ traveller has a pre-existing condition or is over 75 years of age);
ii. obtaining necessary vaccinations/medications; (UQ will reimburse UQ travellers for the cost of vaccinations/medications required for their specific UQ travel destinations, other than for vaccinations listed in the Immunise Australia Program);
iii. seeking appropriate medical and security advice from ISOS prior to travel;
iv. completing risk assessment documentation where required;
v. providing true and complete travel-related information to UQ;
vi. ensuring their contact details and travel itinerary is kept up-to-date with ISOS;
vii. promptly responding to UQ or ISOS when contacted; and
viii. establishing appropriate communication arrangements with their supervisor and advising their supervisor of any changes to their itinerary or the risk profile of their travel;

h. holding a valid passport, appropriate visas and complying with relevant immigration requirements for the entire duration of UQ travel;
i. checking the accuracy of their travel documentation prior to travel and understanding the terms and conditions of their UQ travel bookings;
j. managing travel-related costs and expenses responsibly and consistently in accordance with UQ policies and procedures;
k. identifying any private travel costs during the UQ travel and pay their personal contribution at the time of booking;
l. disclosing to UQ any relevant details regarding private travel or UQ travel with accompanying non-UQ travellers or an approved non-UQ person to facilitate any audit and reviews undertaken by UQ or a party engaged by UQ;
m. maintaining and, where appropriate, providing copies of necessary travel-related records. All travel-related records must be finalised within 30 days of return from UQ travel;
n. ensuring all UQ assets are reasonably protected during UQ travel; and
o. ensuring that there are no international safeguards (e.g. sanction laws and regulations) under Australian law that may prohibit or restrict certain travel.

(70) A prospective UQ traveller may decline to undertake UQ travel due to compelling and evidenced medical, safety and/or security reasons.

(71) UQ travellers who act outside of this Policy and any associated procedures will be personally responsible for costs incurred by UQ. Repayment must be made by the UQ traveller from personal, post-tax funds and cannot be paid from a university account (e.g. consulting, external funding or research funded account).UQ will expect repayment of this cost within 30 days of identification. Failure to do so will result in debt recovery action being taken by UQ.

Travel Approver

(72) The role of travel approver will vary across UQ. In most cases, the relevant travel approver will be the UQ traveller's supervisor or Head of Organisational Unit (such as school, institute or division) or their approved delegate (i.e. Head of School / Deputy Head of School / School Manager / Deputy Director / Faculty Executive Manager or equivalent).

(73) The travel approver is responsible for assessing and ensuring the following, where relevant, in a timely manner:

a. the UQ travel is necessary;
b. the travel plan is reasonable (timing, duration, and total cost etc.) and demonstrates prudent use of UQ resources (i.e. the most logical and economical route is selected and, if required, Premium Economy or Business

Class is justified); and

c. all proposed business location/s are for legitimate UQ business purposes.

Supervisors

(74) The UQ traveller's supervisor should confirm the following with the UQ traveller prior to departure:

a. appropriate controls have been or will be implemented to effectively manage the risks associated with undertaking UQ travel;
b. the traveller is fit to undertake UQ travel having regard to the nature, purpose, destination, and duration of the travel (it's the responsibility of the traveller to get a medical clearance for international travel if they have a pre-existing condition); and
c. appropriate communication arrangements have been put in place to remain in contact with the traveller.

High Risk Travel Approver

(75) The High Risk Travel Approver is a nominated representative of USET (see High Risk Destination section on the Travel Website) and is responsible for:

a. assessing, in conjunction with advice from the Governance and Risk Division, all requests for UQ travel to high risk destinations and deciding whether to approve the request; and
b. ensuring the risks associated with the UQ travel are acceptable and the risk mitigation measures put in place align with UQ's Risk Appetite Statement (refer to the Enterprise Risk Management Framework Policy).

(76) The High Risk Travel Approver may impose a complete travel ban to certain destinations and may require UQ travellers to alter their travel plans or return home. UQ travellers must comply with all such directives. UQ has no liability or responsibility where this may impact either a UQ traveller's private travel (as part of dual purpose travel) or any non-UQ travel companion that accompanies a UQ traveller.

UQ Senior Manager, University Travel

(77) The UQ Senior Manager, University Travel (Governance and Risk Division) is responsible for:

a. providing systems and processes, to the extent necessary and feasible, to enable efficient adoption of this Policy;
b. engaging, establishing and managing contracts and relationships with travel-related suppliers or third parties including travel management provider/s, airlines and accommodation providers;
c. enforcing the requirements of this Policy; and
d. escalating any material and/or systemic breaches of this Policy to Senior Managers for remediation.

Section 4 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(78) Supervisors, travel approvers and budget holders will monitor all travel (and travel related expenses) within their areas of responsibility to ensure compliance with this Policy, any associated procedures and the Travel Website.

(79) The UQ Senior Manager, University Travel will:

a. assess compliance with this Policy at least annually and ensure any material deficiencies are rectified or escalated to Senior Managers for remediation; and
b. provide annual assurance on the effectiveness of this Policy and make recommendation/s, as appropriate, to

improve this Policy.

Section 5 - Recording and Reporting

(80) The UQ Senior Manager, University Travel will produce the annual Overseas Travel Report.

(81) UQ travellers, supervisors, travel approvers and UQ Finance will provide the necessary information and data to the UQ Senior Manager, University Travel to produce the annual report and any other reports to USET.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	8th September 2026
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Policy Owner	Joanna Spanjaard Director, Governance and Risk
Enquiries Contact	Governance and Risk Division

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