

# OUTSIDE STUDIES PROGRAM (OSPRO) POLICY AND PROCEDURE



## CONTENTS

1	PURPOSE.....	1
2	SCOPE.....	1
3	POLICY STATEMENT .....	1
4	PROCEDURE .....	2
	Eligibility .....	2
	Time release and financial support available.....	2
	Leave, insurance and taxation .....	3
	Applications.....	3
	Criteria.....	4
	Approval.....	4
	Variation to approved application.....	5
	Suspension of University related duties.....	5
	Sickness during OSPRO.....	6
	Return to the University and reporting .....	6
	Conditions .....	6
	Appeals .....	7
5	RESPONSIBILITIES .....	7
	Compliance, monitoring and review.....	7
	Reporting.....	7
	Records management.....	7
6	DEFINITIONS .....	7
7	RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS.....	7
8	FEEDBACK.....	7
9	APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS.....	8

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 Outside Studies Program (OSPRO) is a professional development option available to CQUniversity employees
- 1.2 The University provides opportunities for employees to participate in OSPRO in order to develop capabilities appropriate for meeting organisational needs and the individual's professional goals.
- 1.3 This policy and procedure details the purpose, requirements and conditions of OSPRO.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to eligible CQUniversity continuing and fixed-term, full-time and part-time academic, teaching and professional employees.

## 3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 The University recognises the need for employees to have the opportunity to develop capabilities appropriate for meeting the University's strategic needs and the individual's professional goals. This may be in order to keep abreast of developments, to use facilities, or to access other resources not available in the University. To assist with this, the University may authorise periods of OSPRO, under the conditions set out in this document and subject to the financial and other limitations of the University.

- 3.2 The University regards participation in OSPRO as building on employee capabilities to meet the University's future needs and opportunities. OSPRO is an opportunity, rather than an entitlement, and it is on this basis that the University authorises salary and financial assistance.
- 3.3 In general, approved purposes for OSPRO include activities which advance and support the University's core business (engagement, learning and teaching, research and innovation and enterprise). For example, OSPRO can be used to develop capabilities around advanced scholarship and innovation in one or more of these core business areas, as relevant to the staff member's duties.
- 3.4 Continuing outcomes after an OSPRO will be monitored through the Performance Review and Professional Development (PRPD) process.
- 3.5 Employees seeking support for other activities, such as the completion of a stage of doctoral studies or to undertake formal coursework, should refer to the relevant policies for available support options (e.g. [Staff Study Support Procedure](#)).

## 4 PROCEDURE

### Eligibility

- 4.1 All continuing and fixed-term, full-time and part-time, academic, teaching and professional staff may apply to undertake OSPRO, provided probationary requirements have been satisfied and subject to other provisions of this policy and procedure.
- 4.2 OSPRO will only be granted to professional employees where there is a direct benefit in terms of their current position description. Part-time employees must take OSPRO at the fraction at which they are employed (ie part-time service will not be converted to full-time equivalence or vice versa).
- 4.3 Employees will be eligible to apply for OSPRO after having been employed for a minimum of three years with the University as at the date of the commencement of the OSPRO period, or equivalent fractional service. Long service leave and leave without pay absences will not count.
- 4.4 Following an OSPRO, employees will only be eligible to commence a subsequent OSPRO after a further three years of employment from the date of submission of an approved report for their previous OSPRO.

### Time release and financial support available

- 4.5 OSPRO can be taken for a minimum of three months, and a maximum of six months.
- 4.6 The University will provide financial assistance towards travel and living expenses by way of an allowance:
- financial assistance is intended to be a contribution towards the cost of undertaking OSPRO and there should be no expectation that the full cost incurred by the employee in undertaking an OSPRO will be covered. Employees working from their home campus will receive time-release only.
  - employees should consider all funding sources available to support OSPRO, including industry support.
  - employees may apply for less than the relevant amount listed.
  - a single travel grant may be paid to assist in the coverage of spouse and dependants' travel.

	3 months allowance	4 months allowance	5 months allowance	6 months allowance	Spouse and dependant travel grant
Working from home campus	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Within Australia and New Zealand	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$500
Overseas	\$7,000	\$8,000	\$9,000	\$10,000	\$2,000

- 4.7 An allowance will be provided to cover travel and living expenses only. It may not be used to purchase equipment or resources. Employees may be supported from Division/School/Directorate funds for such purchases. Employees can attend conferences during OSPRO with the direct costs associated with the conference to be supported from other funding sources. Any allowance paid will be additional to the current salary entitlements.
- 4.8 Employees should seek their own taxation advice in relation to the finances of their proposed OSPRO. Approved allowances will be budgeted and paid from the relevant Division/School/Directorate funds. Any part of the allowance allocated for 'living expenses' or 'spouse and dependant travel grant' will be paid directly to the employee through the University's payroll and will be treated as salary for income taxation purposes. However, the University may consider paying the allowance in a way other than salary, upon receipt of written advice from the employee's accountant/taxation advisor. Deductions against the income will be a personal taxation matter for the individual. Employees should retain all receipts and other evidences of expenditure incurred for personal taxation purposes.
- 4.9 Higher duties allowance will not be paid to employees during OSPRO. Employees on OSPRO will continue to receive their normal salary entitlements.
- 4.10 Employees undertaking OSPRO in an industry placement cannot receive salary from industry for their work. Employees wishing to be paid for industry-based work should refer to the [Secondment and Exchange Procedure](#) for further details on professional development opportunities.
- 4.11 Employees may wish to give consideration to combining a number of professional development opportunities in the one timeframe, such as combining OSPRO with a period of secondment to make the most of the opportunities available.
- 4.12 OSPRO funding will be considered through the OSPRO Committee as an amount determined from year to year. Following the OSPRO approval process, approved allowances will be reported to the Division/School/Directorates to be allocated through their normal annual budget process.

## **Leave, insurance and taxation**

- 4.13 Employees should note that there are insurance, taxation and risk issues relating to extended periods of travel. These matters are within the scope of the [Travel Policy and Procedure \(FMPPM\)](#).
- 4.14 Annual or long service leave may be taken in conjunction with OSPRO. Employees wishing to take any type of leave in conjunction with OSPRO must outline the proposed dates as part of their OSPRO application. If the OSPRO application is approved, it will be the employee's responsibility to ensure an ESSO Leave Application is submitted following receipt of the OSPRO approval letter.
- 4.15 The University strongly discourages travellers requesting recreational leave or other personal leave in conjunction with University funded travel (including those funded by research funding) and will endeavour to avoid the approval of travel incurring fringe benefits tax.
- 4.16 Travellers undertaking travel for OSPRO must complete a Task/Activity Risk Assessment in consultation with the University's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Unit. This risk assessment must be approved by the OSH Unit prior to travel and a copy submitted with the travel request.

## **Applications**

- 4.17 A call for applications will be issued annually, and will include the timeline for the submission and consideration of applications. Applicants will be required to use the [OSPRO Application Kit](#) to make their application.
- 4.18 An application for OSPRO should be considered to be comparable in quality to that expected for a peer reviewed publication or major grant application, with a particular focus on the outcomes from the proposed investment of resources.

- 4.19 Proposals will be considered in relation to the University's strategic priorities, proposed contributions to the University's core business (engagement, learning and teaching, research and innovation, and enterprise), the requirements of the University's academic programs, and the scholarly performance and development needs of the individual.
- 4.20 OSPRO is expected to contribute to the professional development of employees in ways that will enhance their capability to contribute to the core business of the University.
- 4.21 Applicants must consult with their line supervisor about their intention to apply and to seek advice on the appropriateness and timeliness of such an application.
- 4.22 All OSPRO related travel will be in accordance with the [Travel Policy and Procedure \(FMPM\)](#).
- 4.23 Applications must provide:
- a comprehensive plan in line with the applicant's current position, institutional needs, and professional goals
  - contain specific argument in support of undertaking a proposed OSPRO at:
    - a particular organisation
    - an organisation overseas, or
    - an organisation where a previous OSPRO has been undertaken by the applicant, and
  - be submitted by completing the OSPRO Application Form, contained in the [OSPRO Application Kit](#).
- 4.24 If the applicant is proposing to commence an OSPRO which will conclude within 12 months of an expected or notified retirement age, resignation, redundancy or expiry of a fixed-term appointment, the applicant must demonstrate that there will be sufficient benefits to the University in the time from return to ceasing employment to justify approval of the application.

## Criteria

- 4.25 The OSPRO Committee will consider:
- the benefit of the proposed OSPRO to the University's strategic goals of engagement, learning and teaching, research and innovation and enterprise as well as the applicant's professional goals
  - the proposed measurable outcomes must be appropriate and achievable and the applicant must have sufficient plans for dissemination of their OSPRO report to the University and wider community as appropriate
  - the ability of the applicant to benefit from the proposed period of OSPRO, based on evidence of performance to date, and a proven record in the achievement of goals, targets and work tasks
  - the evidence, from previous OSPRO reports and subsequent performance, of benefit to the applicant and the University, of any previous participation in an OSPRO or other related University programs
  - the appropriateness of the arrangements made to cover the applicant's work duties and responsibilities
  - whether an OSPRO concluding within 12 months of an expected or notified retirement age, resignation, redundancy or expiry of a fixed-term appointment will bring commensurate benefits for the University
  - whether sufficient documentation from the host organisation/s has been included with the application, and
  - the proposed location/s.

## Approval

- 4.26 Applications will be submitted to the applicant's line supervisor for consideration of employee management issues. Line supervisors will then forward the applications to the Dean/Director/Head, along with the reasons for the support or non-support of each application. The Dean/Director/Head will forward the applications to their relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

- 4.27 The relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor will consider the applications with regard to the value of proposal and its intended outcomes, whether it supports the directions of the Division/School/ Directorate, and its contributions to the University's strategic directions, and rank the applications accordingly. They may wish to seek advice from the Division/School/Directorate management group as part of their deliberation process.
- 4.28 The relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor will provide the ranked applications for their area to the OSPRO Committee Secretary for collation ([PACDirector@cqu.edu.au](mailto:PACDirector@cqu.edu.au)).
- 4.29 The OSPRO Committee Secretary will provide the collated applications and summarised report to the OSPRO Committee.
- 4.30 The OSPRO Committee, comprising the Provost, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), will meet to consider the ranked applications within the context of the University's strategic directions, budget considerations, and from a whole of University perspective. Other relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors/Deputy Vice-Chancellors may be called to the Committee if applications are received from other work units not currently represented.
- 4.31 The OSPRO Committee will determine whether each application is approved or not by simple majority. Where the vote is tied, the Provost will hold the casting vote.
- 4.32 The OSPRO Committee Secretary will provide a summary report of all approved OSPRO applications to the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee, Corporate Budget Team and Payroll Unit for noting. Furthermore, the OSPRO Committee Secretary will provide a report on approved applications to the relevant work unit. It will then be the responsibility of each work unit to ensure they budget for the approved amount for their relevant employee.
- 4.33 The OSPRO Committee Secretary will arrange for all applicants to receive a letter advising of the outcome of their application, and if successful, the amount of time and financial support to be provided.
- 4.34 The OSPRO Committee Secretary will maintain a record of OSPRO applications, and the location and purpose of each OSPRO.

### **Variation to approved application**

- 4.35 Any changes to the approved OSPRO prior to commencement, must immediately be submitted in writing to and approved by the employee's Deputy Vice-Chancellor, following endorsement by the relevant Dean/Director/Head. The changes must then be provided to the OSPRO Committee Secretary ([PACDirector@cqu.edu.au](mailto:PACDirector@cqu.edu.au)) who will submit to the OSPRO Committee for final approval. The employee will be notified of the outcome by the Committee Secretary.
- 4.36 Details of any subsequent changes once the OSPRO has commenced must be forwarded immediately to the employee's Deputy Vice-Chancellor, following endorsement by the relevant Dean/Director/Head. The changes must then be provided to the OSPRO Committee Secretary for the OSPRO Committee to note.
- 4.37 Where an employee needs to significantly defer an approved OSPRO (e.g. from one year to another), a new application must be submitted. Employees should not expect that a new application will be automatically approved.

### **Suspension of University related duties**

- 4.38 Employees will discharge all teaching and administrative responsibilities, higher degree supervision and other duties to the satisfaction of their line supervisor prior to commencing OSPRO.
- 4.39 Where the employee is a member of a University Committee/s, the employee is responsible for notifying the relevant Committee Secretaries of planned absence and, if appropriate, assist in the sourcing of a replacement Committee Member. The Dean/Director/Head may approve continuing membership of University Committees in special circumstances.

## Sickness during OSPRO

- 4.40 If an employee becomes ill or injured during OSPRO, they may apply to the Dean/Director/Head for recognition of that part of the OSPRO that was lost, or for a short extension of the OSPRO.
- 4.41 The OSPRO Committee may, on the recommendation of the Dean/Director/Head, authorise an extension of the period of detached duty, if that authorisation would assist the employee carry out an important part of the planned OSPRO. Any additional costs incurred in such an extension would be the responsibility of the Division/School/ Directorate concerned.
- 4.42 There will be no transferability of time between OSPRO applications – that is, the time lost on one OSPRO cannot be credited to the next OSPRO.
- 4.43 The OSPRO Committee will inform the People and Culture Directorate as soon as possible, of any action taken under this provision.

## Return to the University and reporting

- 4.44 Employees will be required to return from OSPRO and associated leave in sufficient time to carry out normal teaching and course planning administration requirements of the Division/School/Directorate.
- 4.45 A Dean/Director/Head may, however, in special circumstances, approve a later return which must be copied to the People and Culture Directorate.
- 4.46 Upon completion of a period of OSPRO the employee must submit a report using the [OSPRO Reporting Template](#). The report must provide details of the actual period of the OSPRO, the impact and outcomes of the activities undertaken, the benefits that have accrued to the University and employee, and any action taken and scheduled according to the original dissemination plan.
- 4.47 Copies of the report must be submitted to the employee's line supervisor/Dean, relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the OSPRO Committee Secretary within two months of return. If the report is not submitted within this timeframe, eligibility for subsequent periods of OSPRO will not commence until and when an acceptable report is received.
- 4.48 Upon return to the University, the employee must action the dissemination plan provided in their OSPRO application. This should include a presentation to all interested University employees and the wider community as appropriate.
- 4.49 OSPRO reports will be submitted by the OSPRO Committee to any relevant University committees, e.g. Research Committee.

## Conditions

- 4.50 Employees are expected to return to their position within the University following OSPRO, and any approved leave immediately following it, for a period equal to the length of the OSPRO. Long service leave does not count unless specifically authorised by the Vice-Chancellor and President.
- 4.51 Employees who do not complete the required post-OSPRO employment must pay the University an amount equal to the sum of the salary received for the non-acquitted period of the OSPRO and a proportionate part of the financial assistance received.
- 4.52 As well as any other rights it may have, to the extent permitted by law, the University may deduct from any money otherwise payable to the employee the amount payable under these provisions, unless the Vice-Chancellor and President permits an alternative method of payment.
- 4.53 If the activities and actions detailed in the approved OSPRO application are not undertaken during the OSPRO, the employee must repay to the University a proportionate part of the financial assistance provided.
- 4.54 The [Paid Outside Work Procedure](#) and [Intellectual Property and Moral Rights Policy](#) will apply to any outside work or research undertaken while on OSPRO.

- 4.55 After a first OSPRO and subsequently, the University can reasonably expect that such efforts will be evidenced by publications, teaching achievements or other relevant material. In the absence of such evidence, the University is entitled to conclude that further investments in OSPRO are unlikely to stimulate genuine development effort in these staff members.

## **Appeals**

- 4.56 Where disputes arise concerning the eligibility, financial assistance or reporting requirements, the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Services) or, in their absence, another Deputy Vice-Chancellor not involved in the process will be the arbiter of such disputes.
- 4.57 An applicant whose application has been refused by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor/Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and the applicant believes that there has been a procedural irregularity, the applicant may appeal to the Vice-Chancellor and President, who will determine the matter.

## **5 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Compliance, monitoring and review**

- 5.1 The Director, People and Culture is responsible for monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this policy and procedure.
- 5.2 The OSPRO Committee Secretary is responsible for ensuring this policy and procedure is followed, or escalating to the OSPRO Committee if required.

### **Reporting**

- 5.3 No additional reporting is required.

### **Records management**

- 5.4 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy and procedure in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

## **6 DEFINITIONS**

- 6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

## **7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS**

[Intellectual Property and Moral Rights Policy](#)

[Outside Studies Program \(OSPRO\) Application Kit](#)

[Outside Studies Program \(OSPRO\) Reporting Template](#)

[Paid Outside Work Procedure](#)

[Secondment and Exchange Procedure](#)

[Travel Policy and Procedure \(FMPM\)](#)

## **8 FEEDBACK**

- 8.1 University staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policy@cqu.edu.au](mailto:policy@cqu.edu.au).

## 9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee
Administrator	Director, People and Culture
Next Review Date	04/07/2021

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	23/10/1993
Amendment Authority and Date	Academic Board 1/3/1999; Executive of Council 12/3/1999; Chancellor's Committee 31/5/2007 (including that the approval authority is now the Vice-Chancellor and President); Vice-Chancellor and President 21/7/2009 – updated to reflect current staff titles; updates approved Director, Human Resources 29/6/2010; Vice-Chancellor and President 3/9/2012; Vice-Chancellor and President 30/4/2014; Vice-Chancellor and President 4/07/2018; Administrator Approved – Director, People and Culture 16/07/2018.
Notes	This document consolidated and replaced the Outside Studies Program (OSPRO) Procedure and Outside Studies Program (OSPRO) Principles (30/04/2014).