

Special Studies Program Policy - Academic Staff

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The Charles Sturt University (the University) Special Studies Program provides academic staff with an opportunity to undertake approved professional, scholarly or research activity uninterrupted by teaching and other normal duties.

(2) Eligible activities are:

- a. professional learning and development;
- b. research or creative work;
- c. doctoral studies;
- d. scholarship of teaching;
- e. professional activity, including maintenance and improvement of professional and vocational knowledge;
- f. practice as an artist or performer;
- g. experience in the work for which the academic is preparing students; and
- h. academic leadership and management experience.

Principles

(3) This Policy is based on the following principles:

- a. Charles Sturt University (the University) is committed to providing a rich and rewarding environment for all staff. This includes providing career development and professional learning and development opportunities.
- b. We strive to maximise organisational productivity and performance aligned to the objectives of the University.
- c. We strive to build the institutional reputation of Charles Sturt University.
- d. We recognise the diversity of the contribution made by academic staff and the wide variety of academic work undertaken.
- e. We promote workplace arrangements that are fair and flexible.
- f. We have a commitment to supporting and facilitating opportunities based on merit and equity.
- g. We want our decision-making processes to be transparent.

Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all academic staff of Charles Sturt University with continuing or fixed term appointments.

Section 2 - Glossary

(5) For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Academic staff - refers to Charles Sturt University staff who are employed at Academic Levels A to E, including Heads of School and Sub-Deans.
- b. Manager/Supervisor - is normally the Head of School for Level A, B, C and D employees, and normally the

Section 3 - Policy

Part A - Eligibility

(6) Academic staff must meet the following criteria to be eligible to participate in the Special Studies Program. They must:

- a. be employed on a Charles Sturt University academic contract for at least three years (full time or pro rata for part time staff) before starting the Special Study Program period;
- b. have satisfactorily completed a final probationary review, including on-line modules;
- c. have satisfactorily completed and met the requirements of the Employee Development and Review Scheme and have the Special Study Program identified in their Development Plan;
- d. have complied with the Charles Sturt University leave conditions and not have accumulated excess annual leave; and
- e. not have taken a Special Study Program grant in the last three years.

Part B - Responsibilities

(7) The Executive Director, People and Culture is responsible for developing, approving and reviewing the policy, procedure and application form for the Special Studies Program, in consultation with the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

(8) The Executive Deans are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the policy and [procedure](#), allocation of the annual funding, appointment of a Faculty Special Studies Program Committee, approving the applications, monitoring the allocation and acquittal of the travel grants, and reviewing and storing the documentation, acquittals and final reports.

(9) The Executive Deans are responsible for providing an annual report to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) with a copy to the Executive Director, People and Culture.

(10) The Division of People and Culture is responsible for entering individuals' travel information and the period spent on the Special Studies Program into the Alesco data base.

Part C - Conditions

(11) The Special Studies Program may be undertaken in Australia or overseas for a period of one teaching session.

(12) No changes can be made to the period of the Special Study Program without written approval from the manager/supervisor.

(13) Unless additional leave is approved, the academic will resume duty at the University immediately after the Special Studies Program period ends.

(14) In some circumstances, the academic may be requested to assist the University during their absence. This could include, for example, interviewing candidates for appointment or making inquiries and investigations on behalf of the University.

(15) An academic granted time away from the University on the Special Studies Program will complete a written undertaking to return to the University for a period equal to the Special Studies Program period. If this period is not

completed, the academic will reimburse the University on a pro rata basis for the funding grant.

(16) Within two months of completing the Special Study Program period, the academic will submit a report on the Special Study Program activities and an acquittal of the funded amount to the Executive Dean through their manager/supervisor. The acquittal should include statements for all external grants, earnings and expenses.

Part D - Financial Support

(17) Special Study Program applications can include a travel grant.

(18) Funding is for the sole purpose of supporting the personal and professional costs of the academic over the Special Study Program period. This predominantly includes travel and the costs of associated activities.

(19) Under certain extraordinary circumstances, application can be made for additional expenses. Approval is at the discretion of the Executive Dean.

(20) The number of applications approved in a calendar year will be limited by the funds available. It will be determined by the capacity to maintain normal teaching/administration function in the Schools.

Section 4 - Procedures

(21) Refer to the [Special Studies Program Procedure - Academic Staff](#).

Section 5 - Guidelines

(22) Nil.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	6th December 2015
Review Date	2nd March 2018
Approval Authority	Executive Director, Human Resources
Approval Date	19th October 2015
Expiry Date	2nd February 2022
Unit Head	Maria Crisante Executive Director, People and Culture
Author	Karen Lenihan
Enquiries Contact	Division of People and Culture +61 2 63384884