

Special Studies Program Procedure - Academic Staff

February 2022 - This document has been rescinded. It is replaced by the [Professional Development Procedure - Academic Employee Schemes](#).

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Procedure describes the application and approval process for Charles Sturt University's (University) Special Studies Program.

Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to academic staff who are applying for the Special Studies Program, and staff involved in selecting or approving applications for Special Studies Program grants.

Section 2 - Glossary

(3) Refer to the glossary in the [Professional Development Procedure - Academic Employee Schemes](#).

Section 3 - Policy

(4) Refer to the [Professional Development Procedure - Academic Employee Schemes](#).

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Application and Advertising Procedure

(5) In April of each year the Division of People and Culture will call for applications for the Special Studies Program for the following calendar year. Applications will close at the end of May.

(6) Completed application forms are to be submitted to the Head of School and then forwarded to the relevant Executive Dean by the closing date.

Part B - Administrative Procedure

(7) Applications for the Special Studies Program will be considered by a Faculty Special Studies Program Committee against the objectives and priorities of the Faculty.

Membership of the Faculty Special Studies Program Committees

(8) The Faculty Special Studies Program Committees will consist of the following members:

- a. Executive Dean (Presiding Officer);
- b. two academic staff members of the Faculty, at least one of whom will be a member of the professoriate; and

- c. a member of the professoriate external to the Faculty.

(9) The Executive Dean will nominate the committee membership and ensure that there is appropriate gender representation.

Terms of Reference

(10) The Faculty Special Studies Program Committees will make recommendations to the Executive Dean regarding applications to participate in Special Studies Program, and:

- a. ensure applicants meet the eligibility criteria as specified in the [Special Studies Program Policy](#);
- b. ensure endorsement by the manager/supervisor that the School/Centre can accommodate the period of absence;
- c. assess the applications and rank them in order of merit;
- d. review the applications and adjust the Special Studies Program period and the amount of the travel grant if required;
- e. assess the need for any additional conditions;
- f. Make recommendations to the Executive Dean for approval of applications;
- g. review the post-Special Studies Program reports; and
- h. make recommendations to the Executive Dean on the quality of the post-Special Studies Program reports and on strategies to distribute the reports within the University.

Annual Budget

(11) Funding will be allocated annually by each Executive Dean.

(12) 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.

(13) Normally, one application per discipline is the maximum granted in a teaching session.

Part C - Assessment Criteria

(14) Applications are to include an assessment provided by the applicant's manager/supervisor. This will specify:

- a. the academic's contribution to the University;
- b. evidence that the intention to submit a Special Studies Program application and the outcomes to be achieved were discussed during a previous Employee Development and Review Scheme meeting;
- c. the extent to which the Special Studies Program proposal supports strategic objectives of the Faculty and the University; and
- d. capacity of the School/Centre to effectively function through the academic's absence.

(15) In making the assessment, the manager/supervisor will consider:

- a. the academic's teaching, research, publication record, artistic productions, consultancies, professional activities, scholarly activities and academic leadership roles;
- b. outcomes from any previous Special Studies Program, including final reports; and
- c. the academic's professional development needs and the inclusion of the Special Studies Program in the Development Plan of the Employee Development and Review Scheme.

(16) In assessing each application, the Faculty Special Studies Program Committee will consider:

- a. the manager's/supervisor's assessment
 - b. the degree that the application focuses on the strategic objectives of the Faculty and the University;
 - c. the people and/or institutions to be visited, the location(s) of the people and institutions, either in Australia or overseas, and the appropriateness of the locations, people and institutions for the proposed program; and
 - d. whether the dominant purpose is to enable the applicant to visit a number of tertiary institutions for briefings about their specialisation or attend a conference/congress, including as an office-bearer or invited speaker.
- These will not be considered favourably.

Part D - Periods of Special Studies Program

- (17) The maximum period for a Special Studies Program application is one teaching session.
- (18) Only under exceptional circumstances can a Special Studies Program period be taken in broken periods.
- (19) The Special Studies Program is to be taken in one of the nominated teaching intensive sessions.
- (20) The Special Studies Program can be taken consecutively with an approved period of annual leave. A request for any type of consecutive leave requires approval from the Executive Dean.
- (21) The Special Studies Program is normally not undertaken immediately before or after a Research Centre Fellowship.

Part E - Travel Grant Funding

- (22) A Special Studies Program application can include a travel grant request.
- (23) No costs other than those substantiated at the time of application will qualify for the travel grant.
- (24) The amount of the travel grant will be adjusted proportionately for lesser periods than the one teaching session, if applicable.
- (25) If the staff member is paid and/or receives any allowances from sources outside the University, the Special Studies Program travel grant will be reduced, in advance or retrospectively, at the discretion of the Executive Dean.
- (26) The approved grant will appear on the academic's payment summary at the end of the financial year for taxation purposes.

Part F - Approval Procedure

- (27) The Faculty Special Studies Program Committee will make its recommendations and the Executive Dean will make the final approvals by the end of July.
- (28) The Faculty will then:
 - a. advise successful and unsuccessful applicants in writing of the outcome;
 - b. provide feedback to unsuccessful academics;
 - c. follow up with the unsuccessful academic and provide further career advice (via the manager/supervisor); and
 - d. provide the Travel Office and the Division of People and Culture with details of each successful applicant, the approved travel grant and the Special Studies Program period.

Part G - After Approval Actions by Applicants

(29) At any time after receiving approval, and normally no later than two months prior to the proposed start of the Special Studies Program, the academic will submit to the Executive Dean, via their manager/supervisor, a declaration form that includes the following documentation:

- a. acceptance of the offer and any associated conditions;
- b. evidence that the necessary arrangements have been made with the host institutions, corporations or individuals necessary; and
- c. evidence of ethics approval for research that involves humans or animals.

(30) In addition to the declaration form, the academic will submit:

- a. a leave application for any other leave to be taken preceding or following the Special Studies Program period; and
- b. a travel request.

(31) Any subsequent changes to the approved application must have additional approval from the Head of School in consultation with the Executive Dean.

(32) If an academic decides to cancel the approved Special Studies Program grant, the Head of School, Executive Dean and Travel Office should be notified by the academic as soon as possible.

Part H - Actions Following the Special Studies Program Period - Special Studies Program Report, Abstract and Financial Statement

(33) Within two months of resuming duty, the academic will submit a report and statements of external grants, earnings and expenditure to the Executive Dean.

(34) If a Special Studies Program report is not received, the Executive Dean will notify the academic and allow a further month to submit the report.

(35) If the report is still not submitted, the academic is in breach of the policy and may be subject to disciplinary action as set out in the [Unsatisfactory Performance - Management Procedure](#).

Section 5 - Guidelines

(36) Nil.

Status and Details

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