

Protocols Procedure - Official Visits

Purpose

(1) This procedure supports the [Protocols Policy](#) and sets out Charles Sturt University's expectations for the management of official visits, including ministerial visitors and international delegation visits.

Scope

(2) This procedure has the same scope as the [Protocols Policy](#) and applies specifically to formal international delegations and ministerial visits.

(3) The following are considered out of scope for this procedure:

- a. Individual meetings between University staff and representatives of foreign universities, embassies, or other organisations that do not constitute a formal delegation.
- b. Informal visits where a member of a foreign university meets with a faculty member at one of the University's campuses without broader University involvement.
- c. Any engagements that do not require significant University resources or coordination beyond a single department.

Section 1 - Policy

(4) See the following policies:

- a. [Protocols Policy](#)
- b. [Travel Policy](#)
- c. [University Partnerships Policy](#)

Section 2 - Procedures

Part A - Ministerial visits

(5) As stated in the [Protocols Policy](#), Communications and Government Relations (CGR) is the primary point of contact with a government representative of Australia or their office, unless otherwise determined by CGR.

(6) Charles Sturt University staff considering a visit by an Australian minister or MP, or who have been approached by a minister or MP or their office about the possibility of a visit or meeting, or any request for a minister or MP to attend and/or speak at an event (either on-campus or off-campus) must contact the CGR as soon as possible, with information about:

- a. the minister(s) or MP(s) involved
- b. the purpose, date and timing of the visit, proposed meeting or event
- c. other participants involved, and

- d. prior dealings with the minister or MP, if any, including any current funding applications to or recent grants from the relevant portfolio(s).

(7) CGR will then determine what information, advice or support is required for the visit, and prepare the relevant documentation in consultation with the other University staff involved.

(8) CGR must:

- a. be copied into all correspondence with a government representative or their office regarding a visit/meeting, unless otherwise determined by CGR, and
- b. have input into any gift for government representatives. See also the [Financial Management Policy](#) and [Finance Guidelines - Expenditures](#) for information regarding gifts.

(9) The Head, Communications and Government Relations or their delegate may attend any ministerial or parliamentary visit/meeting.

(10) Appropriate follow-up with any government representative or their office following a visit will be coordinated by CGR.

Part B - International visitors and guests

(11) Representatives and delegates from current or potential partner organisations will sometimes make official visits to University campuses (e.g. to explore collaborative opportunities or promote joint activities, courtesy calls, signing ceremonies and other approved events). Where these are representatives of or from international partners (international delegates), the visits must be managed as set out in this part so that the correct stakeholders are involved, relevant legislative compliance obligations are met, and to facilitate a smooth and successful experience for all parties.

(12) The following table sets out the organisational units that will lead and/or be stakeholders in arrangements to host international delegates, based on the context of the partnership or visit:

Context	Lead Organisational unit	Additional organisational unit/stakeholders
International delegates from existing education partners	Office of Engagement and Enterprise (OEE) Business Development	International Office Teaching school
International delegations from government departments, embassies, or other governmental and public sector entities	OEE External Engagement	International Office Teaching school or Research Institute Business Development Directors
International delegations from prospective international partners with the potential for multiple engagement avenues	International Office/Faculty/Research Institute (depending on the initiator)	Teaching school International Office
International delegations from prospective partnerships focused solely on a specific faculty or research initiative	Faculty/Research Institute	Teaching school
International delegations from prospective partnerships focused solely on a specific international student recruitment initiative	International Office	Teaching school/Faculty

(13) The lead organisational unit is responsible for:

- a. initiating, coordinating, resourcing and managing all aspects of international delegation visits

- b. developing itineraries, and arranging necessary accommodation, transportation and cultural and logistical needs
- c. communicating with all relevant stakeholders, including University representatives and the visiting international delegates, to facilitate a smooth and successful visit, and
- d. following up on any agreed-upon actions, documenting outcomes, and reporting as required at clauses 22-24 to ensure continued collaboration and relationship building.

Criteria

(14) Hosting an international delegation will generally involve University resources such as staff time or University spaces, and have some financial costs for funding local activities. Accordingly, the following should be considered when deciding to host an international delegation:

- a. Whether the delegation is from one of the University's established partner institutions.
- b. Existing or previous relationship(s) with the institution (e.g., alumni, visiting academics, joint research projects, student recruitment, existing agreements).
- c. The strategic importance of the relationship.
- d. Potential outcomes aligned with the University's Strategy.
- e. The purpose, goal, or objective of the visit.
- f. Areas for collaboration already identified.
- g. Willingness and availability of key employees to meet the delegation.
- h. The reciprocal interest from the University.
- i. Capacity to host the visit.
- j. Risk considerations, including risks relating to security of the visitors, staff and students, foreign interference, foreign bribery and institutional reputation.
- k. Any other issues of which to be aware.

Planning visits

(15) Any organisational unit planning a visit from international delegates must:

- a. Notify and engage the lead organisational unit, as per clause 12
- b. Establish the purpose and objective of the visit
- c. Assign responsible staff to coordinate and support the visit
- d. Arrange for Office of Engagement and Enterprise (OEE) to complete partner vetting and due diligence checks (as per Part A of the [University Partnerships Procedure](#)) before any international delegates are invited and/or visits are confirmed
- e. Where partner vetting/due diligence checks identify that the delegates may represent a reportable international government or its entities (under the [Foreign Relations \(State and Territory Arrangements\) Act 2020](#) and [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018](#)), this must be referred to the International Office for assessment.
- f. Secure the necessary budget allocation (as required for any special requests, such as translator and transport) and may involve sharing costs between the budget centres of the stakeholder organisational units
- g. Consult relevant stakeholders. In particular, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) must be consulted where there is potential for multiple avenues of engagement with a prospective international partner
- h. Confirm availability of relevant University senior executives for meeting with the visiting delegation
- i. Coordinate with a central contact point in OEE for guidance, templates, and procedural support to maintain consistency across University engagements

Approvals

(16) Approvals and arrangements for hosting an international delegation should commence as early as possible, and generally at least six weeks before the prospective visit date.

(17) Subject to clause 18, the Band 7 approval authority of the lead organisational unit will generally assess and approve the request in the first instance, including vetting and due diligence checks and any budget considerations. However, additional approval may also be required:

- a. Depending on the parties included in the international delegation, a higher approval authority of an equivalent level should approve the visit. For example, if a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) will be one of the international delegates, the request must go to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) for assessment.
- b. Where the international delegates represent a potential reportable entity for foreign arrangements or foreign interference considerations (see clause 15e), the visit must be assessed and approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International). As necessary, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) will liaise with the Director, Security and Resilience (CSO).
- c. If it is determined that the Vice-Chancellor is required to participate in the delegation visit – typically where the visiting delegation is led by a Vice-Chancellor equivalent or a government minister – approval must be sought through the Office of the Vice-Chancellor (OVC).

Scheduling and organisation of the visit

(18) The lead organisational unit will make arrangements for the visit and develop a detailed itinerary, including academic meetings and campus tours. OEE Business Development has templates available.

(19) Arrangements include the following (note that Charles Sturt Travel cannot be used to arrange accommodation for international delegates):

- a. International delegation arrangements:
 - i. Confirmation of flight details and numbers
 - ii. Confirmation of airport transfers
 - iii. Other transportation, as required
 - iv. Accommodation (including number of people staying, budget, and preferred room type)
 - v. Provision for dietary requirement(s) of the delegation members
 - vi. Translator requirements
- b. University arrangements:
 - i. Request for presentations, meetings, or attendance by University staff
 - ii. Ascertaining the preferred room facilities for the meetings and booking appropriate venue facilities
 - iii. Organising catering or meal reservations, as required (including providing for dietary restrictions of attendees)
 - iv. Organising gifts for speakers and/or visitors, as required
 - v. Arranging appropriate flags to be flown at the relevant campus entrance (See [Protocols Procedure - Flags](#))
 - vi. Notifying Media about the visit

(20) All hospitality arrangements and activities must comply with the [Finance Procedure – Entertainment Expenses](#), [Finance Guidelines – Entertainment, FBT and Private Expenditure](#), and [Fraud and Corruption Control Policy](#) (regarding anti-bribery provisions and legislation).

Briefing prior to visit

(21) The lead organisational unit will provide a briefing note for all University representatives at least one week prior to the visit. OEE Business Development has templates available. This will include the following:

- a. The purpose of the visit
- b. The expected outcomes
- c. Any previous history or agreements with the visiting delegation or institution
- d. Any cultural protocol or sensitivities
- e. Any other background required to prepare for the meeting

Post-visit activities

(22) The lead organisational unit will complete the following post-visit activities:

- a. Sending a letter/email of thanks to all delegates
- b. Distributing a list of agreed actions to all parties involved in the visit, including University representatives
- c. Monitoring agreed actions as required
- d. Updating University information management systems with visit outcomes
- e. Providing reports to Business Development (within OEE) for the Delegation Database
- f. Conducting an internal assessment of the visit's success

Reporting

(23) Business Development must be advised of all visiting international delegates so they can update the delegation database. This database acts as a shared point of knowledge for stakeholders within the University and can be used for reporting to senior executive leaders.

(24) Outcomes and follow-up processes are the responsibility of the head of the lead organisational unit, who must prepare and distribute an allocation of actions to relevant senior executive leaders and the additional organisational units and stakeholders involved in the visit within two weeks.

Records Management

(25) Records for the visit, outcomes and actions must be kept with the partnership records and managed in accordance with the [Records Management Policy](#) and [Records Management Procedure](#).

Compliance, Monitoring and Review

(26) OEE Business Development will monitor and ensure compliance with this guide.

Section 3 - Guidelines

(27) Nil.

Section 4 - Glossary

(28) This procedure uses the terms defined in the [Protocols Policy](#), and further defines the following:

- a. Delegation – means (unless defined as a visit led by a senior member (normally Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC)

equivalent or higher) multiple participants from the foreign body, formal in nature, and typically including more than a single one-hour meeting.

- b. Ministerial and parliamentary visits - means any visit to a University campus for a meeting or event and any off-campus meeting or event by:
 - i. the Government (Australia), including: Governor-General/vice-regal representatives, Prime Minister, federal ministers/parliamentary secretaries, federal shadow ministers/parliamentary secretaries, Members of Parliament, the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council, Senators, senior federal public servants, Premiers, State Ministers/parliamentary secretaries, State shadow ministers/parliamentary secretaries, senior state public servants, mayors and local councillors, or
 - ii. Government (international), including: royalty, vice-regal representatives, heads of state and international dignitaries, foreign government ministers, and ambassadors, high commissioners, consul-generals or honorary consul-generals.

Status and Details

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