

Student Learning Abroad Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Context

(1) Western Sydney University is committed to offering students an innovative and accessible range of student learning abroad programs to support the development of students as global citizens. (Refer to the [Curriculum Design and Approvals Procedures - Graduate Attributes](#)).

(2) The purpose of this policy is to define the principles and conditions for managing and approving student participation in international learning abroad programs. This policy applies to all student learning abroad programs.

(3) In operationalising this policy and the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#), academic units may implement local guidelines, handbooks and/or flow charts.

(4) The policy should be read in conjunction with the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#), [Credit for Prior Learning Policy](#), [Critical Incident Guidelines](#), [Doctorate Policy](#), [Dual Award and Joint Research Higher Degrees Policy](#), [Graduation Policy](#), [International Partnerships for Academic Cooperation](#), [Placement Policy](#), [Progression Policy](#), [Research Higher Degree and Research Training Program Scholarship Policy](#), [Student Code of Conduct](#), [Student Misconduct Rule](#) and the [Travel Policy](#).

Section 2 - Definitions

(5) For the purpose of this policy definitions that apply can be found in the [Policy DDS Glossary](#), in addition to the following:

- a. Academic Units means a School, Research Institute (Institute) or unit such as The Academy, Scholarships and Partnerships at Western Sydney University.
- b. Credit for Prior Learning (Credit) means the same as is defined in the [Credit for Prior Learning Policy](#). Also known as Academic Credit or Recognition of Prior Learning.
- c. Exchange Learning Abroad means overseas study undertaken for one or two terms, completed under an exchange agreement between the University and another educational institution.
- d. Go Global Portal means the University's web-based application platform, recording student learning abroad programs and travel information.
- e. Host Institution means the overseas institution where a student is accepted for a program of study.
- f. International Partner Provider (IPP) means organisations that offer global study programs, including colleges, universities, not for profit organisations, for-profit businesses and consortia.
- g. Non-Exchange Learning Abroad means overseas study or other academic activity undertaken with an IPP that is not subject to an exchange agreement with the University.
- h. Research Learning Abroad means overseas research fieldwork undertaken for a current Higher Degree Research (HDR) project, including under arrangements with a third party.
- i. Short-term Exchange Learning Abroad means exchange learning abroad undertaken in breaks between teaching terms or over a period of less than one term completed under an exchange agreement between the University and another educational institution.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

- (6) Participation in student learning abroad programs provides students with opportunities to advance their intercultural competency, applied knowledge, career direction, employment outcomes, and personal and social development.
- (7) The University promotes student learning abroad opportunities that are available through international university partnerships and approved IPPs.
- (8) IPPs may make enrolment arrangements and may also arrange travel and accommodation for a fee.
- (9) All approved student travel plans must be recorded in the University or associated systems as specified in the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#) and comply with the [Travel Policy](#).
- (10) The University considers the safety and wellbeing of students undertaking an international learning abroad experience to be of primary concern.
- (11) This policy applies to students participating in international learning abroad programs and to students receiving assistance from Western Sydney International to participate in other non-exchange international learning abroad programs offered within the University, by an overseas institution or by an IPP.
- (12) The parties involved in international student learning abroad programs must be adequately prepared to meet their responsibilities as set out in this policy.
- (13) This policy does not apply to students wishing to undertake study at another Australian institution. Students seeking to undertake study at another Australian institution should refer to the Cross Institutional provisions in the [Enrolment Policy](#).
- (14) International students under 18 years of age will not normally be approved for international student learning abroad programs. Applications under special circumstances may be considered by the Pro Vice-Chancellor, International.
- (15) University staff, students and IPP staff must manage international student learning abroad programs in accordance with the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#).

Section 4 - Types of International Learning Abroad Programs

- (16) The University supports, and will grant Credit where applicable for successful completion of the following types of outbound international student learning abroad:
- a. exchange learning abroad
 - b. short-term exchange learning abroad
 - c. non-exchange learning abroad and
 - d. research learning abroad.
- (17) Exchange learning abroad is undertaken at another educational institution with which the University has a formal exchange agreement:
- a. A student undertaking exchange learning abroad must register in exchange subjects at the University and pay

all necessary tuition and other fees to the University.

- b. Exchange learning abroad is undertaken during the University's teaching terms, for a period of one or two terms.

(18) Short-term exchange learning abroad is undertaken at another educational institution with which the University has a formal exchange agreement during breaks between terms or over a shorter period than a term.

(19) Non-exchange learning abroad is undertaken at another educational institution, or through an IPP, in the absence of an exchange agreement and:

- a. Non-exchange learning abroad may be taken during or between terms
- b. A student undertaking non-exchange learning abroad does not register in exchange subjects at the University
- c. Types of non-exchange learning abroad include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Academic Unit-led offshore programs and competitions
 - ii. fee-paying study abroad
 - iii. placements (e.g., internships)
 - iv. research fieldwork not associated with an HDR research project
 - v. study tours
 - vi. university competitions.

(20) Research learning abroad is where a candidate undertakes fieldwork as part of their HDR project. This may include research undertaken to collect data as part of their HDR project, research at another educational institution, IPP or industry partner, where a formal Dual Award and Joint Research Higher Degree agreement does not exist. Candidates in receipt of a scholarship granted by the University will continue to receive their stipend under the usual conditions of their award. Candidates should note there are no special University funds for travel of supervisors or examiners to view work completed during research learning abroad.

Section 5 - Eligibility, Application and Selection

(21) To be eligible to undertake any type of student learning abroad program, a student must meet the eligibility, application and selection criteria provided in the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#) and meet any further requirements imposed by the host institution.

Credit for Prior Learning

(22) The University is committed to providing Credit for study and activities undertaken as part of student learning abroad programs wherever it is appropriate and possible to do so. The ways in which this is applied to student learning abroad is set out in the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#).

Section 6 - Risk Management

(23) All students selected and approved to participate in student learning abroad programs are covered by the University's travel insurance as per the [Travel Policy](#). The conditions and details of the policy are outlined in the [Finance Office](#) website.

(24) University staff and student travellers must refer to the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) and [DFAT Smartraveller](#) websites to obtain the latest information regarding countries for which there is a perceived risk, if travel is undertaken.

(25) Western Sydney International will not offer programs and/or support travel by students, and any accompanying staff members, to areas under current [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) warnings, 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel', or if insurance cover is not available. Special approval can be requested from the Pro Vice-Chancellor, International who will consult with the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President, Research, Enterprise and Global.

(26) The University will ensure students are provided with support services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with medical assistance, international health care and security services whilst overseas. This will include specific information about destinations prior to travel, including medical and security risks and advice on how to stay safe and well while travelling and staying overseas.

(27) Whilst participating in student learning abroad programs, students must adhere to all published requirements related to the providers of the overseas support services.

(28) Critical incidents that involve students participating in student learning abroad programs should be managed in accordance with Western Sydney University policies and procedures, including the [Critical Incident Guidelines](#).

(29) In the event of a severe critical incident or emergency the Western Sydney University Crisis Management Team will assume responsibility for the response.

(30) Western Sydney International reserves the right to withdraw support for student participation in a student learning abroad program offered by another element within the University, an overseas institution, or by an IPP if it becomes evident that adequate arrangements have not been made to protect a student's health, safety and wellbeing while overseas.

(31) Where there is a likelihood of adverse consequences arising from a student participating in an student learning abroad program, Western Sydney International must identify the concern, as a risk, to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, International so that it can be managed operationally in accordance with the health and safety and risk management policies and processes of the University.

(32) Where a student learning abroad program is offered and managed by an academic unit, the academic unit will be responsible for organising the group travel and training of the organiser, as listed in the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#).

Section 7 - Roles and Responsibilities

(33) Western Sydney International, the Office of Student and University Planning, academic units, Associate Deans, Research and HDR (or equivalent) and students all have a role to play, and responsibilities to fulfil, in relation to student learning abroad. These are detailed in the [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#).

Section 8 - Guidelines

(34) [Critical Incident Guidelines](#)

(35) [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)

(36) [DFAT Smartraveller](#)

(37) Finance Office [Overseas Travel Insurance webpage](#)

(38) [Student Learning Abroad Procedures](#)

(39) [Western Sydney International Go Global webpage](#)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	16th January 2023
Review Date	16th January 2028
Approval Authority	Academic Senate
Approval Date	16th January 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Unit Head	Jo Byng Director, International Strategy, Mobility and Operations 96859163
Author	Erin Hilaire Manager, Learning Abroad Semester Programs 96859052
Enquiries Contact	Jo Byng Director, International Strategy, Mobility and Operations 96859163

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Term" - A session at the University that runs for a set length of time during which teaching and assessments occur.

"Student Learning Abroad" - (Learning Abroad) means the study or other academic activity undertaken overseas for a limited time at another institution. Student Learning Abroad Programs at the University include Exchange Learning Abroad, Short-Term Exchange Learning Abroad, Non-Exchange Learning Abroad and Research Learning Abroad