

Travel Procedure - Staff

Section 1 - Context

(1) This procedure sets out the requirements for RMIT-related travel, including: bookings, expenses, high risk travel, travel diary requirements and personal travel.

(2) It details the specific requirements that apply to RMIT staff and RMIT-funded travellers of the University and its controlled entities (known as the RMIT Group).

Section 2 - Authority

(3) Authority for this document is established by the [Travel Policy](#).

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This procedure applies to RMIT staff, HDR candidates, and RMIT-funded travellers from all RMIT controlled entities undertaking travel for RMIT-related activities, including domestic and international travel by air and ground transportation.

(5) Where a traveller is both a student and a staff member, the primary purpose of travel should be considered when applying the relevant rules.

(6) This procedure does not apply to:

- a. travel by consultants
- b. travel by students who are not HDR candidates
- c. travel that is less than 50kms from the travellers' normal residence or workplace.

Section 4 - Procedure

Travel Quotation and Bookings

(7) Travel quotations and bookings must be made through the RMIT contracted Travel Management Company (TMC) via the RMIT Travel Portal (RTP).

(8) If travel is funded by an external body or where a necessary contractual obligation to use an alternate supplier is evidenced in writing, the traveller must ensure that travel details relating to flights and accommodation are approved by the traveller's line manager and the travel details recorded with ISOS for international travel.

(9) A new booking must be created for approval in the RTP if changes are made to an approved travel booking where:

- a. the cost of the trip increases by more than 10% and the additional cost is greater than \$300
- b. destination/s have changed

c. changes extend the travel itinerary beyond what was originally approved.

(10) Contact details must be provided at the time of booking for deploying critical incident/emergency communications if needed. This must include the traveller's RMIT email address and mobile number/s that will be used during travel.

(11) If a trip has been ticketed and then cancelled, it is the responsibility of the traveller (or travel arranger) to advise the TMC of the cancellation prior to the departure date. This will ensure that electronic tickets can be refunded if there is any value, or documented and used toward future travel if the ticket is non-refundable.

(12) Travellers who are receiving funding for their travel from an external body must ensure that their travel complies with the conditions of the relevant external body and RMIT's Anti-Corruption and Fraud Prevention Policy.

Approval for Travel

(13) All travel to be paid by RMIT must be approved in accordance with the Travel Policy.

Domestic Travel

(14) Travel that complies with conditions set out in the Travel Policy does not require pre-trip approval and can be self-booked by the traveller or travel arranger via the Online Booking Tool (OBT) launched from the RTP. RMIT travellers must ensure their People Manager is aware and supportive of the need for travel.

(15) For self-bookings via the OBT:

- a. instant notification is sent to the traveller's People Manager upon booking confirmation; unauthorised bookings will be cancelled at the People Manager's discretion
- b. costs incurred from unauthorised bookings will be recovered from the traveller.

(16) Domestic travel bookings which do not meet the conditions of the Travel Policy will require pre-trip approval.

International Travel

(17) All international travel requires pre-trip approval.

Payment of Travel Expenses

(18) RMIT staff embarking on travel for three (3) or more RMIT-related activities per annum are eligible to obtain a corporate credit card for meals & incidentals including taxi charges, subject to approval conditions in the Credit Card Policy.

(19) Payment for business-related travel expenses must be incurred and managed in accordance with the RMIT Business Expenses Policy. RMIT will not reimburse expenses that do not comply with this policy.

Per Diems

(20) Per diem allowances are prescribed in the Per Diem and Travel Expenses Guide.

(21) Staff who incur unforeseen and necessary expenditure beyond the scope of allowances specified by the Per Diem and Travel Expenses Guide will be responsible for any costs until insurance or other reimbursement is made.

(22) RMIT travellers are not permitted to seek reimbursement for costs already covered by per diems.

RMIT Australia

(23) RMIT travellers across all Australian entities including RMIT University, RMIT Training and RMIT Online may apply for a per diem where travel is:

- a. for RMIT-related activities
- b. greater than one (1) night and up to a maximum of 30 nights.

(24) The following RMIT Australia travellers are not eligible for a per diem, but can apply for reimbursement of business-related travel expenses in accordance with the Business Expenses Policy:

- a. honorary appointees or visitors of the University
- b. staff HEW10 or Academic Level D and above
- c. staff issued with a corporate credit card
- d. staff undertaking sabbatical
- e. travellers attending a conference as the main purpose of travel.

(25) RMIT Australia staff not eligible for per diem allowance, may claim a per diem by exception if they travel to countries where foreign credit cards are not widely accepted.

(26) For travel greater than 30 nights and/or staff undertaking approved sabbatical, alternative allowances such as a living-away-from-home-allowance (LAFHA) may be arranged to cover reasonable expenses.

RMIT Vietnam

(27) All RMIT Vietnam travellers travelling domestically (travel within Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia may apply for a per diem where travel is:

- a. for RMIT-related activities
- b. greater than one (1) night and up to a maximum of 30 nights.

(28) The following RMIT Vietnam employees undertaking international travel are not eligible for per diems

- a. honorary appointees or visitors of the University
- b. staff of salary grade equivalent to HEW10 or Academic Level D and above
- c. staff undertaking Sabbatical
- d. travellers attending a conference as the main purpose of travel

(29) Staff undertaking international travel on a regular basis are encouraged to obtain a corporate credit card and seek reimbursement in accordance with the Business Expense Policy.

RMIT Europe

(30) RMIT Europe travellers cannot apply for a per diem as this facility is not available to them.

(31) The daily maximum travel expense that can be incurred by an RMIT Europe employee, without incurring any additional tax, is contained in the Per Diem and Travel Expenses Guide.

(32) Staff issued with a corporate credit card must use their corporate credit card to pay for travel costs relating to:

- a. breakfast, lunch and dinners
- b. snacks, drinks (water, coffee, tea, etc.)

- c. gratuities
- d. taxis and transport costs
- e. laundry and dry cleaning
- f. work-related communication costs e.g. phone calls, fax, etc.

(33) Travellers not issued with a corporate credit card can seek reimbursement of RMIT-related expenses in accordance with the Business Expenses Policy.

(34) For travel greater than 30 nights and/or staff undertaking approved sabbatical, alternative allowances such as a living-away-from-home-allowance (LAFHA) may be arranged to cover reasonable expenses.

Private Travel and Accompanying Spouse

(35) RMIT will not pay for private travel.

(36) The private portion of travel must be less than 50% of the total duration. Where travel exceeds 50% in private portion, the travel will be treated as private travel:

- a. airfares will not be covered by RMIT; and
- b. additional approval will be required by a VCE member.

(37) Where private travel is taken as part of conducting RMIT business, the RMIT traveller must demonstrate that the RMIT business component is the dominant purpose of travel to utilise the RMIT travel processes and systems, by:

- a. using a logical flight path to travel to and from the business-related destination
- b. ensuring any private reason for travel is a secondary consideration to the business reason for travel which does not result in any additional cost to the university
- c. confirming the private travel would not have occurred but for the business-related component of the travel.

(38) RMIT is not liable for any FBT resulting from private travel. In instances where private portion is unavoidable, the individual will be liable for FBT. Recovery of FBT will be automatically deducted from the traveller's salary.

(39) Days in transit and unavoidable delays between business activities due to weekends, public holidays and scheduling issues are not considered to be the personal component where documentation is required to support the classification of these days in transit/unavoidable delays (e.g. Itinerary, explanation of scheduling limitations etc).

(40) An accompanying spouse, partner or dependant can travel with the RMIT traveller where it does not result in an additional unrecovered cost to RMIT:

- a. the RMIT traveller must ensure that the business of RMIT is not compromised, and
- b. the RMIT traveller must declare any accompanying travellers prior to travel.

(41) The TMC may be used for booking the personal or accompanying spouse, partner or dependant's travel. This must be paid separately using personal (non-RMIT) funds.

Travel Diaries

(42) The purpose of a travel diary is to show work-related and private elements of a trip. Where travel exceeds six (6) or more nights in a row, RMIT Australia travellers must keep a travel diary in the RTP to show the dates, places, time and duration of activities and travel.

(43) RMIT Europe staff are required to maintain a travel diary for all travel, no matter what length, in accordance with

EU requirements.

(44) RMITVN travellers are required to keep a travel diary for all international travel.

Air Travel

(45) RMIT has signed volume agreements with travel vendors including air carriers. The contracted TMC will offer preferred airlines unless a Lowest Practical Fare (LPF) is available on a reputable carrier.

- a. For favourable pricing on flights, where practical, book well in advance or at least three weeks prior to departure.
- b. RMIT travellers will not book flights on the Excluded Airlines List.
- c. Reasonable excess luggage charges incurred during business travel can be reimbursed with the approval of the traveller's People Manager. Every effort must be made to keep costs to a minimum.
- d. RMIT does not fund airline frequent flyer program memberships or memberships to airline clubs except in the case of individual contractual agreements to the contrary.
- e. Travel upgrades to a higher class by use of frequent flyer points and/or personal funds is acceptable where the upgrade does not compromise the lowest practical fare requirement of the University.

(46) Unless the traveller's employment contract authorises a different class of travel, travel funded by RMIT will be booked in accordance with clause 45 and the class indicated in Schedule 1. Unauthorised upgrades on alternative class categories must be paid from the traveller's personal funds.

(47) The traveller's relevant Band 3, 4, 5 & 6 delegate may use approval discretion subject to budgetary considerations to authorise fare classes other than economy where:

- a. the travel expenditure is permitted and evidenced by the relevant external funding body
- b. international travel exceeds 10 hours in continuous duration (i.e. no voluntary stops or transits) where work commences less than 12 hours after landing
- c. an exceptional circumstance (e.g. health reason/s evidenced with a medical certificate) is presented and accepted
- d. approved by a VCE member.

(48) It is undesirable for more than two (2) RMIT travellers that are VCE members or that are of Delegation Bands 3, 4, 5 & 6 to travel together on the same aircraft. Where practical, different flights should be used where more than two (2) members travel to the same destination.

(49) All chartered aircraft requests must be submitted in writing and approved by the Chief Audit and Risk Officer. Due to insurance policy provisions in non-owned aircraft and Travel Accident Insurance Policies, special chartered aircraft must meet the following minimum requirements:

- a. aircraft must have current and valid airworthiness certificate
- b. pilot must possess a valid and current certificate of competency of a rating authorising them to pilot the aircraft
- c. Aircraft Liability insurance of not less than \$100,000,000.

Ground Transportation

(50) The most cost-effective means of transportation must be used while on RMIT-related activities. The use of alternative transportation (e.g. airport shuttle, taxi, etc.) and the Business Expenses Policy should be considered before deciding to rent a car.

(51) Car reservations must be made through the contracted TMC or OBT.

- a. The preferred car rental company must be utilised where rental of a vehicle is required. Should the preferred vendor be unavailable, the most economical alternative must be booked.
- b. Insurance must be taken when renting a vehicle to cover the following minimum aspects:
 - i. liability for passengers, those in other vehicles and pedestrians
 - ii. liability for third party property damage (including other vehicles)
 - iii. damage to the hired vehicle
 - iv. insurance is not included for any personal/leisure rentals.
- c. Travellers are expected to rent intermediate size cars or smaller. A full-size car may be reserved if two (2) or more RMIT travellers are sharing a car.
- d. Fines incurred due to parking, speeding and other violations of the law are not reimbursable.
- e. All fuel option purchases must be declined. Cars must be returned with a full tank of gas. If circumstances prevent the refuelling of the car, a detailed explanation must be included on the expense report.

(52) Mileage for RMIT business-related activities plus tolls and parking is reimbursed.

- a. In Australia, mileage is reimbursed via the process and the rate set by the ATO.
- b. In all other countries outside Australia, the general country rates will apply.
- c. The traveller has the sole responsibility for properly insuring his/her vehicle against damage incurred while on RMIT-related activities.
- d. Parking at approved airport or other parking stations will be reimbursed where this is a lower cost option than taxis and when it is related to University business. Evidence may be required to substantiate the lower cost.

(53) The approved bus company for chartered road services in Victoria must be used for domestic off-site activities including but not limited to excursions, training days, conferences. Alternative chartered bus services can be booked via the contracted TMC should the approved bus company be unavailable.

(54) Daily expense for utilising a taxi must not exceed the cost of a car rental, except where the traveller is uncomfortable or unable to drive.

(55) Travellers may use rideshare companies (such as Uber in Australia and Grab in Vietnam) in cities where they operate legally.

(56) Rail travel should be booked in the most economical coach/comfort class fare if the cost does not exceed the economy airfare applicable to the given destination.

- a. Refer to Schedule 1 - Class of Travel.
- b. If overnight travel is necessary, sleeper class may be used.

Accommodation

(57) RMIT travellers must consider the Business Expenses policy when booking accommodation including reasonable costs per night and conditions when using Airbnb or other shared economy rental services without a reception desk.

(58) Accommodation must be booked via the OBT and/or TMC, unless it is funded by an external party. Where accommodation is funded by an external party, the accommodation details must be recorded in the RTP.

(59) When a conference organiser provides pre-negotiated rates for accommodation close to or at the venue the traveller may book that accommodation. The traveller must advise the RMIT TMC and record the accommodation details in the RTP and International SOS.

Other Travel Expenses and Pre-departure

(60) RMIT travellers must refer to the Business Expenses Policy for work-related incidentals that can be claimed as reimbursement or charged to the corporate credit card, providing that a per diem has not been claimed for the travel, including:

- a. vaccinations
- b. passports, visas or permits
- c. meals/entertainment and hotel minibar
- d. laundry service
- e. mobile charges
- f. fuel/tolls.

(61) Where evidenced, the traveller's relevant Band 3, 4, 5 & 6 delegate may use approval discretion subject to budgetary considerations to reimburse any staff with carer responsibilities for reasonable child/dependent care costs incurred over and above the cost of usual dependent care arrangement when the employee is required to travel for RMIT-related activities.

(62) RMIT travellers must refer to the RMIT Travel Pre-departure guideline and travel alerts issued by ISOS.

Section 5 - Schedules

(63) Schedule 1 - Class of Travel

Section 6 - Resources

(64) Approval for the maintenance of the following resources is delegated to the RMIT ED PS CPrO.

- a. RMIT Travel Pre-Departure Guideline [in development]
- b. Per Diem and Travel Expenses Guide (see [Travel](#))

Section 7 - Definitions

Per diem	A per diem is a daily travel allowance intended to cover meals & incidentals such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. breakfast, lunch and dinners2. snacks, drinks (water, coffee, tea, etc.)3. gratuities4. taxis and transport costs5. laundry and dry cleaning6. work-related communication costs e.g. phone calls, fax, etc. A per diem is not intended to cover accommodation.
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Status and Details

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Effective Date	19th October 2020
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Policy Owner	Michael Vanderheide Chief Operating Officer
Policy Author	Elise Cockerill Executive Director, Property Services Group
Enquiries Contact	Travel Team