

Guidance on research projects and DFAT travel advice

The Australian Government provides a website called smartraveller.gov.au

This site lists up to date travel advice for every country in the world. The advice levels that impact on a Western Sydney University researchers plans to travel are

1. Do not travel
2. Reconsider your need to travel

Researchers wanting to undertake travel to countries with these advice levels need to consult the University's Travel Policy. <http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00268>

The policy applies to staff and students of the University and applies irrespective of the researcher's country of origin.

They should discuss the implications of the policy on their research with the relevant Dean and, if a student, with their Supervisors.

The University has a duty of care to ensure researchers travelling under its name are safe at all times. In addition, not adhering to these advisories can make the University's travel insurance invalid for that travel.

If, after having discussed this with the relevant parties, the researcher still intends to make an ethics application s/he should provide evidence in the ethics application of consideration of these risks and show that they have acted, or plan to act, in accordance with University policy.

Researchers should note various clauses in Part A of the policy.

"Part A (15) Approval for travel¹ to destinations where the DFAT travel advisory classification is "reconsider your need to travel" must be accompanied by a risk assessment addressing the following factors:

- a. whether the travel is essential or whether it can be delayed;
- b. identification and mitigation of the specific risks involved;
- c. the traveller's particular expertise, local networks and (if applicable) language proficiency;
- d. an exit strategy to be developed by the traveller; and
- e. any other relevant factors.

(16) Where, after travel has been booked, the DFAT travel advisory classification escalates to "reconsider your need to travel" the relevant Dean or DVC must re-approve travel (including a risk assessment) before the traveller departs.

(17) The University will not approve travel where the DFAT travel advisory classification is "do not travel". Where the DFAT travel advisory classification escalates to "do not travel" the travel approval will be withdrawn.

(18) If after travel has commenced the DFAT travel advisory classification escalates, the relevant unit head should arrange to make contact with the traveller and assist in their return if warranted, and notify the Travel Office for assistance.

(19) University travellers approved to travel to destinations where a DFAT travel advisory classification of "reconsider your need to travel" has been issued, must register with Smartraveller (DFAT) prior to departure.

¹ For approval to travel information see clause 28 onwards.

Irrespective of travel warnings, all other University Travellers are also encouraged to register their international travel plans with DFAT prior to departure.”

Human Research Ethics Guidance Documents available from REDI

- Guidance for Researchers New to Human Ethics Review
- Guidance on Choosing the most appropriate PIS and Consent
- Guidance on Levels of Risk and the Ethical Review Process
- Guidance on Making an Amendment to an Approved Project
- Guidance on Questions Related to Cultural Sensitivities
- Guidance on Questions Related to Restrictions on Publication of Results
- Guidance on Receiving and Responding to Ethics Committee Assessor Comments
- Guidance on Research Projects Seeking to use Western Sydney Staff as Participants
- Guidance on Reimbursements
- Guidance on the use of ‘Opt Out’ or Passive Consent in Human Research
- Guidance on Writing Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms
- Guidance on Data Storage and Retention Questions
- Guidance on Ethics Review Exemption
- Guidance on Research Involving Young People
- Guidance on Using Focus Groups in Research
- Guidance on Complaints
- Guidance on Research being done with, or for, Organisations

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