

**University Policy on Special Studies Program (SSP)
Faculty Variations**

1. Operation of Special Studies Program

- 1.1 Applications for SSP will be considered by the Faculty of Health Sciences Special Studies and Overseas Conference Programs (SSOCP) Committee.
- 1.2 The Convenor of the Faculty SSOCP Committee will report to the Faculty Research Committee.

2. Faculty Criteria

- 2.1 The relevant Head/Dean of School for each applicant should certify that the proposed SSP is consistent with their School Strategic Plan.
- 2.2 The Head/Dean of School should also comment on the suitability of the proposed SSP and how the School will cover for the applicant while he/she is on leave. A staff member's accrued leave balance will be a factor for Heads/Dean of Schools to take into account when considering applications for Special Studies Programs. In effect should staff members have excessive levels of accrual and no agreed plan to reduce these, applications for SSP may be rejected on that basis.
- 2.3 The Faculty of Health Sciences SSOCP Committee may choose to interview applicants if additional information is required in order to determine suitability of the application.
- 2.4 All eligible staff will be encouraged to undertake SSP. Staff who accumulate 183 days entitlement (i.e. equivalent to three-years) will particularly be encouraged to undertake SSP.
- 2.5 Preference will generally be given to applicants with an overseas component in their proposed SSP.
- 2.6 Unless there is a strong case to the contrary, SSP applications will only be approved for a period of not less than 2 months up to a maximum of 12 months whether or not financial support is requested.
- 2.7 The frequency of funding for SSP for any eligible staff member will normally not exceed once every three years from the completion of the previously funded period of SSP. Allocation of such funding will be dependent on the quality of the application and the budget available in any given year.
- 2.8 An application for SSP requesting no financial support will be considered by the Faculty SSOCP Committee provided the application has the support of the Head/Dean of School and the leave periods requested conform to the SSP guidelines. The SSOCP Committee may approve intervals shorter than three years between separate periods of unfunded SSP provided each application has the support of the Head/Dean of School.
NB: Where a staff member requires time away from normal duties for professional development or other reasons and the time periods do not conform to the SSP guidelines, such leave will not be considered by the Faculty SSOCP Committee and should be negotiated with the Head/Dean of School.
- 2.9 In the event that an SSP application is approved and financially supported, the travel grant for the staff member will provide reimbursement of **one** economy-class, advance-purchase return airfare* to the furthest destination up to a maximum figure as set out in the Financial Support section of the University SSP Policy (item 7.2) at:
http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hr/policies/dev_training/ssp.html
[*For general information on travel refer to the University Travel Information for Staff site at: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/finance/travel/staff/> and for information on funding for dependents refer to the University SSP Policy (items 7.2 and 8. at: http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hr/policies/dev_training/ssp.html]
An exceptional case would have to be made for travel support from the Faculty for a dependent child over 18 at the time of travel.

- 2.10 The Faculty SSOCP Committee will rate proposals for SSP on the following three components:
- Research
 - Teaching
 - Professional development
- Within each component a rating of high, medium or low in terms of merit will be determined. Staff should indicate in their applications if they would be prepared to be involved in international postgraduate research recruitment activities should the opportunity arise. (Note: This is not mandatory and the Faculty may assist with the extra costs associated with such recruitment.)
- 2.11 According to University policy, a staff member should submit a report to Human Resources through the Head/Dean of School within one month of return from special studies. A Report should be submitted irrespective of whether the SSP is funded or unfunded. The Faculty SSOCP Committee requires the Head/Dean of School to provide his/her signature at the end of each report to acknowledge that the report has been read and approved. The staff member should send the original report to Human Resources for filing and a copy to the Faculty Research Secretariat for review by the Faculty SSOCP Committee.
- 2.12 An assessment of the outcomes of SSPs previously undertaken will also be an important factor. Applicants who have not previously taken a period of SSP will be given priority.
- 2.13 Applicants' track records relative to opportunity may also be considered. Care will be taken to ensure that academics who are early in their career and academics whose development has been hampered by special circumstances are not disadvantaged.
- 2.14 A minimum of one month must elapse between a period of SSP and a period of financially supported overseas conference leave.
- 2.15 In the event that a period of SSP is not undertaken, funding will normally lapse 12 months from the SSP completion date, as originally approved.

3. Calls for applications

- 3.1 The deadlines for receipt of SSP applications in the Faculty Research Secretariat are as follows:-
- Applications for **funded SSP** are due by **31 March in the year preceding the proposed leave** (*Please note that the Procedural Guidelines University-wide were changed in 2002 and that there is only one call for applications per year for funded SSP proposed to commence at any stage in the following year*);
 - Applications for **unfunded SSP** are due by **31 March** for leave proposed to commence in the 6 months after **1 October in the same year** or, alternatively, **30 September** for leave proposed to commence in the 6 months after **1 April in the following year**.
- [NB: From time to time the Faculty holds a second funded SSP round, which is independent from the University round. This depends on the funding available after completion of the first round.]