Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Travel Procedures

MACS School Employees

1. Purpose

These procedures outline the requirements for arranging and undertaking work-related travel, including approval processes and form part of the Travel Policy.

2. Scope

These procedures relate to all work-related travel by Employees in Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) schools. Procedures for Employees in MACS offices are set out in the Travel Procedures – MACS office.

These procedures **do not** apply to:

- contractors or volunteers
- students
- secondary school Principals who undertake work-related travel as part of their entitlement to enrichment leave. Further information regarding enrichment leave can be found in the Professional Enrichment Leave Guidelines.

3. Proposal for travel

3.1. All alternative avenues for meeting the objectives of domestic or international travel should be considered before travel is proposed (e.g., video calls, domestic professional learning, etc.).

3.2. Where official international travel is requested by Employees who have been invited to attend or present papers at international seminars and conferences, it should be demonstrated and approved that there is a direct and high-priority benefit to MACS.

3.3. Preparations for travel can be made; however, Employees should not enter binding arrangements until all required approvals have been granted. Tickets may be tentatively booked but are not permitted to be purchased.

3.4. Travel relating to professional learning is not to be booked until the professional learning application has been approved by all relevant approvers.

4. Quotes for travel

4.1. When an Employee is assessing options available for travel, they must consider booking flights and accommodation at the best rate of the day or that which is reasonable and economical considering the nature of the trip, the extent of travel required and the amount of travel that is required to be undertaken as part of their normal duties. For example, it may be reasonable for Employees to stay at a venue where a conference they are attending is taking place, if accommodation is available at this venue. In other circumstances, Employees should stay in accommodation, which is economical, practical and reasonable.

4.2. Employees should not base booking decisions on personal preferences, access to lounges or the accumulation of reward points, as this may influence impartial and transparent booking.

5. Options for booking travel

5.1. When booking flights for both domestic and international travel, Employees and approvers must have regard to the following principles:

5.1.1. all flights must be economy class unless otherwise approved in writing and in advance by the responsible approver

5.1.2. where there is a possibility that travel may be rescheduled or postponed, Employees should consider the cost variances in fixed and flexible fares

5.1.3. Employees must compare prices and routes across airlines

5.1.4. Employees must plan and book travel as early as possible to take advantage of the likelihood of the best attainable price.

5.2. When booking accommodation, Employees and approvers should have regard to the best rate of the day or that which is reasonable and economical considering the nature of the trip, the extent of travel required and the amount of travel that is required to be undertaken as part of their normal duties.

5.3. Where local public transport is a safe and economical means of travelling, consideration should be given to using this.

5.4. If public transport is not available, and a traveller is required to undertake travel by motor vehicle, Employees and approvers should consider booking a vehicle that is fit to meet the requirements of the travel that is being undertaken.

6. Processes for booking travel

6.1. In the first instance, a school-based Employees who wishes to engage in work-related domestic travel should discuss this with their Principal or, in the case of a Principal, their General Manager (Region). Such discussions should address why the travel is necessary, and the potential benefits for student learning and professional development.

6.2. Following the discussions, all work-related domestic travel by school-based Employees is to be approved in advance by the principal or, in the case of a Principal, their General Manager (Region). This includes the approval of all expenditure on fares, insurance, accommodation, allowances, conferences, and hospitality.

6.3. The following supporting documentation must be provided for travel to be considered for approval:

6.3.1. a Request for Approval of Domestic Travel form signed by the person travelling and their principal, or, in the case of a principal, the Principal and their General Manager (Region)

6.3.2. a proposed travel itinerary (quote) with the details of all expected costs associated with the travel, including explanations as to why the best rate of the day was not chosen for a particular fare or accommodation if applicable. School-based Employees should include at least two quotes for each expected cost to be incurred where this is foreseeable.

6.3.3. A risk assessment must be completed for all travel and submitted as part of the approval process. (Template for adult travel can be provided the MACS Risk Team).

6.4. When applying for approval of domestic travel, school-based Employees must provide as much notice as is reasonable in the circumstances prior to the intended travel date.

6.5. The Principal or General Manager (Region) is required to provide a decision on whether travel is approved or not within 10 working days of receiving the travel request.

6.6. Following the approval of the Request for Approval of Domestic Travel form by the Principal or General Manager (Region) , the school-based Employee can proceed with booking the travel. The school-based Employee must provide all invoices/receipts to the Principal or General Manager (Region) to be reimbursed within five business days of the booking date.

6.7. In the first instance, a school-based Employee, including a Principal, who wishes to engage in work-related international travel, should discuss this with their General Manager (Region). In the case of a non-principal Employee, Employees should consult first with their Principal. Discussions should address why the school-based Employee believes the travel is necessary, and what potential benefits it may have towards student learning and professional development. Once initial discussions are finalised, the General Manager (Region) will advise the Executive Director of the Employee’s wish to engage in work-related international travel.

6.8. All international travel by school-based Employees is to be endorsed in advance by the Executive Director of MACS. This includes approval of all expenditure on fares, accommodation, allowances, conferences and hospitality.

6.9. Employees requesting approval for international travel are to complete a Request for Approval of International Travel form to be approved by the Executive Director providing as much notice as is reasonable in the circumstances prior to the intended travel date; however, a minimum of one term's notice must be provided. The form should be signed by the person travelling and their principal or, in the case of a Principal, their General Manager (Region) and should include the following supporting material:

6.9.1. the itinerary for the person travelling

6.9.2. a breakdown of travel expenses illustrating the expected costs for airfares, insurance, accommodation, registration/conference fees, meals, hospitality and incidental expenses.

6.10. The General Manager, Group Finance can provide advice on the conversion of foreign currency if required.

6.11. Preparations for travel can be made; however, Employees should not enter binding arrangements until all required approvals have been granted. Tickets may be tentatively booked but are not permitted to be purchased.

6.12. Travel relating to professional learning is not to be booked until the professional learning application has been approved by the Principal, General Manager (Region) or Executive Director where applicable.

6.13. The General Manager (Region) or Executive Director will provide a decision on whether travel is approved or not within 10 working days of receiving the travel request.

6.14. The duration of overseas visits should be kept to the minimum required to adequately complete the aims of the visit.

6.15. Requests to add private travel onto international travel require the Executive Director's approval in writing and may only be approved if the extension does not create the impression that official travel is being used to subsidise private travel arrangements.

6.16. MACS schools are required by law to comply with fringe benefits tax (FBT) requirements that are administered by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

6.17. Leave taken may require the school-based Employee to contribute to flight costs to avoid the imposition of FBT. The school-based Employee's contribution will usually be proportionate to the number of leave days taken as part of the trip and will be determined by the General Manager (Region).

6.18. The length of leave taken is to be proportionate to the duration of the official travel. As a general guide, up to two days of leave may be taken for every seven days of official travel.

6.19. Leave or an extension of private travel taken while undertaking work-related travel is not to incur or result in any additional costs to MACS schools.

6.20. Employees may travel with their partners/family if it does not incur any costs at the expense of MACS schools and does not interfere with the business requirements of the travel.

7. Preparing for travel

7.1. Prior to departure, Employees who are travelling must provide their principal with an up to date copy of their itinerary and contact details for the duration of the trip. Employees should ensure that their emergency contact details are also up to date. The Principal should be notified as soon as possible if unforeseen circumstances result in any changes to the itinerary.

7.2. MACS will pay reasonable expenses associated with health inoculations etc. on behalf of Employees who are travelling overseas on official business.

7.3. Employees undertaking international travel are advised to have a complete medical examination prior to their departure and to consult with their doctor regarding immunisations / vaccines and medical requirements for specific countries.

7.4. It is the responsibility of the Employee to ensure they arrange the necessary immunisations / vaccines within the required timeframes for their efficacy.

7.5. It is the responsibility of the Employee to review the risk assessment and update with any new information, hazards, etc. and inform the Principal if there are major changes.

7.6. It is the responsibility of the Employee to create an Emergency Response Plan, to be shared with the Principal and MACS Office for use in an emergency. (Template available from the MACS Risk Team)

7.7. It is the responsibility of Employees to ensure they have appropriate insurance coverage. Employees are required to include the cost of travel insurance in all expense estimates presented for authorisation.

7.8. It is the responsibility of Employees to ensure there are no Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) warnings against travelling to the country(ies) the employee will visit. Employees should check the DFAT website, www.dfat.gov.au for warnings when preparing their Request for Approval of International Travel. This should be repeated in the days preceding departure. It is also important that an Employee travelling overseas understands that:

7.8.1. Travel to countries listed by DFAT at ‘Level 2 – exercise a high degree of caution’ will require careful consideration of the additional risk factors

7.8.2. Travel to countries listed by DFAT at ‘Level 3 – Reconsider your need to travel’ and ‘Level 4 – Do not travel’ are beyond acceptable risk and travel plans should be suspended and

7.8.3. They must subscribe to DFAT alerts prior to leaving Australia.

7.9. Employees can check visa / work permit requirements with the appropriate embassy or high commission for the country(ies) they will transit through or visit.

7.10. It is the responsibility of Employees to ensure they have a valid passport which is not due to expire within six months of the end of the travel and the correct visa and / or work permit for the nature and length of their visit.

7.11. If an Employee sustains an injury / illness while undertaking official approved travel, they will be covered by the provisions of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* (Vic).

7.12. As a member of the Australian Catholic Anti-Slavery Network when travelling both domestically and internationally, Employees are encouraged to source slavery-free certified products during their travels where practicable.

8. Expenses incurred during travel

8.1. Claims for the reimbursement of meals, accommodation which has not already been reimbursed and other expenses / incidentals incurred while travelling are to be submitted to the Principal or General Manager (Region) where applicable on a Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred form for processing. Original receipts and / or tax invoices are to be provided for all expenses to substantiate the claim and enable MACS schools to claim any GST input tax credits.

8.2. For domestic and international travel, reasonable rates applicable for the reimbursement of accommodation, meals and expenses / incidentals are those contained in the current year’s Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Taxation Determination, available on the ATO website.

8.3. For domestic travel to capital cities, the reasonable rates for daily travel allowance expenses according to salary levels and destinations, for the current tax year are outlined in the ATO Taxation Determination published on their website.

8.4. For international travel, reasonable accommodation rates should be determined in advance in consultation with the General Manager (Region).

8.5. If expenses are likely to be incurred for the purchase of gifts or hospitality at the destination, these expenses should be included in the employee’s travel itinerary and justification for the expenses are to be provided.

8.6. Any expenses incurred which are not related to the official travel should be paid for privately.

8.7. MACS will not reimburse the cost of paying traffic or parking fines and these are the responsibility of the traveller.

9. Travel diary

9.1. In accordance with ATO requirements, the Principal needs to have obtained a travel diary or similar document from any employee whose travel expenses are incurred for travel within or outside Australia for six or more nights in a row, when the travel is exclusively for performing employment related duties. The Travel Diary template requires information about the nature of each work or business activity, where it took place, the duration of the activity and the date the entry was made.

9.2. The diary is to be completed by the travelling Employee and approved by their Principal or Manager within 15 working days of the traveller's return to work.

10. Conduct while travelling

10.1. MACS school-based Employees are reminded they are representing MACS and MACS schools when travelling domestically or internationally. They must conduct themselves with professionalism and comply with all MACS policies and procedures while travelling.

10.2. If there is a breach of this policy, the MACS Code of Conduct or any other applicable policy, enterprise agreement or letter of appointment, MACS and / or a MACS school will take appropriate action to address the breach.

10.3. The consumption of alcohol while undertaking work-related travel is a health and safety issue for MACS and MACS Employees. Alcohol consumption while undertaking work-related travel must be kept to a minimum and employees must ensure that any alcohol consumption does not affect their ability to undertake work-related activities.

11. Delegations and authorities

There are delegations and authorities applicable to the Travel Policy and Procedures. Please refer to the Instrument of Delegation of Authority and Delegations Register for more information.

12. Related policies and documents

Supporting documents

Approval for Domestic Travel Form – Template
Claim for Travel Expense Reimbursement Form – Template
Travel Diary – Template

Related MACS policies and documents

Conflict of Interest Policy

Code of Conduct for MACS Staff

Travel Policy

MACS Instrument of Delegation of Authority

Policy information table

Responsible executive	Director, People and Culture
Procedure owner	General Manager, Employee Relations
Approving authority	Director, People and Culture
Approval date	10 June 2025
Risk rating	Moderate
Review by	May 2029

Publication	CEVN, internal school use

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION	
Assigned framework	Employment
Related documents	See list of supporting documents and related policies above
Superseded documents	
New procedure	New