Document Name

ACADEMIC STUDY LEAVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Document Number

PO-STA-01

Document Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Academic Director</th>
<th>February 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Endorsement</td>
<td>Academic Board</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval</td>
<td>Management Committee</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>Issue 5E</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>Review of Issue 5E</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Excelsia College’s Academic Study Leave (ASL) Policy is established to permit and to encourage permanent members of the academic staff to undertake academic activities outside the College which they are not able to undertake effectively while carrying out normal academic responsibilities. The College permits ASL in the expectation that some benefit will accrue to the College as a result of the person undertaking ASL.

The Policy provides for academic staff, while being paid their substantive salary, i.e. their normal remuneration package, to:

1. pursue sustained research activities in another institution or research organisation;
2. gain experience in teaching, curriculum development or research by attachment to another higher education institution;
3. upgrade their professional expertise by placement with a professional organisation;
4. undertake higher degree studies, preferably with a significant research component;
5. work towards research aimed at producing published works, whether in the form of books or journal articles.

Academic Study Leave programs are required to contribute to the professional growth of staff members in ways that will enhance their capacity to contribute to the activities of the College.

The granting of Academic Study Leave is subject to conditions as approved from time to time by the Board.

ELIGIBILITY

1. All permanent full-time and permanent part-time academic staff shall be eligible to apply for ASL.
2. Staff shall be eligible to apply for ASL normally after a period of seven years employment with Excelsia College.
3. The granting of ASL is dependent upon the availability of a replacement.
4. Service as a staff member in other positions for which the holder is not eligible to apply for ASL shall not count as service for ASL purposes.
5. Absence on leave without pay, or ASL, will not count as service for ASL purposes.

LEAVE

1. ASL will be of 24 weeks (one semester) duration and, as far as possible, such leave will span only one semester of lectures.
2. Where a member is granted ASL for a period up to 24 weeks it shall count as 24 weeks.
3. Permanent part-time staff granted ASL must undertake their leave at the same fraction of full employment at which they are employed.
4. During ASL a member is eligible for sick leave but may not apply for annual leave. Sick leave will not alter the duration of ASL.
RESPONSIBILITIES

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>Approve ASL applications. Convene appeals committee if needed.</td>
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<td>ASL Committee</td>
<td>Communicate ASL matters to Board. Advise and make recommendations concerning ASL policy. Administer the ASL policy and procedure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
<td>Chair the ASL Committee.</td>
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<td>Academic Director</td>
<td>Review ASL applications. Make recommendations to the Chief Executive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heads of Schools</td>
<td>Plan and strategise to achieve School goals through ASL, and to replace staff member on ASL.</td>
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APPLICATION

1. A person seeking ASL shall submit an application on the specified form, to the Academic Director of the College through the appropriate Head of School, who is required to comment upon the appropriateness and practicality of the proposed program and to verify that the applicant’s academic responsibilities shall be met.

2. The Academic Director shall initially determine whether or not the application is consistent with the expectation that the proposed program will ‘contribute to the professional growth of the staff member in ways that will enhance his/her capacity to contribute to the activities of the College’ and should be considered further. The Academic Director shall forward the signed form to the Principal, as Chairman of the ASL Committee, which will consider the Academic Dean’s reasons for the decision made.

3. The Board is to be kept informed of all applications and the progress made by the ASL Committee.

4. Where a staff member needs to significantly defer ASL from one Semester to another a new application must be submitted. It should not be expected that a new application will be automatically approved.

CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS

1. Approval of proposed programs will not be automatic. Academic staff will need to make a case for undertaking their proposed programs and will have to demonstrate the merit of the programs and how College expectations will be achieved.

2. Each application will be considered in the light of the:
   - Excelsia College mission and strategic direction;
   - needs of the School;
   - needs of the staff member;
   - nature of the proposed program in terms of its intended outcome and strategies to achieve College expectations;
   - capacity of the staff member to undertake the program and, on return, contribute to the work of the College as a result of that program.

3. The Chief Executive or the ASL Committee may suggest amendments to a proposed program.

4. No more than one staff member may be on ASL at any one time.
**DURATION OF ASL**

ASL shall not be less than 4 weeks and nor more than 24 weeks in duration. The onus is on the applicant to justify the period of time requested. Staff will be encouraged, however, to undertake programs of 24 weeks.

**SUSPENSION OF COLLEGE-RELATED DUTIES**

Staff members on ASL must cease all College-related duties for the duration of their leave.

**LOCATION**

Except in the case of applications for ASL to undertake higher degree studies, applications should contain specific argument in support of a program being undertaken:

- at a particular institution;
- at an institution overseas; or
- at an institution where a previous ASL program has been undertaken by the applicant.

**OBLIGATIONS**

1. A staff member granted ASL shall discharge all teaching, administrative and examination responsibilities and other duties to the satisfaction of the Head of School and the Chief Executive prior to commencing ASL.

2. Granting ASL is subject to the staff member signing an undertaking, in the form specified by the ASL Committee, to return to the College and to satisfactorily discharge all normal duties for a period of at least 12 months.

3. Within one month of return to the College after ASL a staff member shall submit to the ASL Committee, through the Academic Director, five copies of a report which should include:
   - a brief abstract which provides an overview of the program and outcomes;
   - a statement of the major objectives as set out in the original application;
   - a program description which also evaluates the extent to which the objectives of the program were achieved;
   - an assessment of the academic benefit(s) gained by the staff member and a statement of how this will impact on current teaching and/or research roles;
   - a statement of actual or expected publications, collaborative research projects, course development etc;
   - a statement of important contacts developed with other institutions and/or individuals and how these contacts assisted with the overall success of the program;
   - a statement of benefits to accrue to the College, the School and the staff member.

   • Within six months of return to the College after ASL a staff member shall submit to the ASL Committee, through the Academic Director, a substantive report of the professional content of the Program as required by ASL Committee.

**ASL COMMITTEE**

The ASL Committee:

1. shall consist of the Chief Executive as Chairman (ex-officio), the Chair of the Academic Board, and one external person appointed by the Board;
2. shall advise and make recommendations on all matters relating to the ASL policy; and
3. shall administer the provisions of this policy.

In carrying out its functions the ASL Committee shall have the power to seek comment and advice from relevant individuals.

**APPEAL**

A staff member who claims to have been disadvantaged by a decision under this policy may seek to appeal to a committee established for that purpose by the Board.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

STA-F15 Academic Study Leave Application
PO-STA-02 Staff Development Policy