

# Companion Card Procedure

## Section 1 - Context

- (1) This procedure supports the implementation of the University of Newcastle's [Travel Policy](#) and must be read in conjunction with that document and the documents listed as Associated Documents.
- (2) Using a companion card is the most expensive option when travelling overseas due to the less favourable cash exchange rates, processing costs, and the additional reporting and compliance required for cardholders.
- (3) Where possible, overseas expenditure on transport and accommodation should be booked in advance and paid for using the University's purchasing card. The University's purchasing card remains the preferred option while travelling overseas and at all times staff should seek to avoid/minimise activities that require overseas cash withdrawals and payment in cash.

## Section 2 - Procedure

- (4) Companion Cards are only available to staff who travel internationally as part of their normal duties while employed by the University, and where:
- credit card payments are not accepted or practical in the area or region in which the travel occurs; and
  - it is not practical or possible to use own cash funds and seek reimbursement on return.
- (5) Applicants for a companion card must:
- obtain an application form from Card Services within Financial Services;
  - complete the form;
  - obtain the approval signature from a delegated officer;
  - forward the signed form to Card Services; and
  - collect the card and Personal Identification Number (PIN) from Card Services when it is available - generally after seven (7) working days.
- (6) In addition to Supervisor and Pro Vice-Chancellor/Deputy Vice-Chancellor approval, companion cards also require the approval of the Chief Financial Officer.
- (7) Card holders may access available credit on their card by withdrawing cash:
- from an ATM;
  - across the counter of financial institutions displaying the Visa logo; or
  - through a foreign currency exchange.
- (8) No purchases are to be made using the companion card.
- (9) The companion card is not to be used for domestic cash purchases.

(10) Card holders are required to obtain and keep receipts and invoices documenting their use of the cash withdrawn from the companion card.

(11) When receipts or invoices are not provided, travellers must document expenditures by making a Travel Diary Note and completing the declaration template available on Fraedom.

(12) On return from each trip in which the companion card has been used, card holders must take the following actions:

- a. acquit any withdrawals of cash from the companion card using the Expense Management System - Fraedom;
- b. Surplus funds not required within the next three months are to be deposited back into NAB account via personal funds transfer from card holder's bank account.

Note: Advise Card Services of repayment transactions

Note: where card holders are travelling again within three (3) months of the previous trip, they may hold a positive float (where they owe the University money) until that amount is acquitted as a result of expenses in the following trip; or a negative float (where the University owes them money) until additional advances are accessed for the subsequent trip.

- c. Where the cardholder holds foreign coins and/or notes of low value (less than \$20 AUD after conversion), the cardholder may retain the money but is expected to acquit the amount through Fraedom. That transaction ensures that the money is accounted for and avoids the amount being recorded as money owed by the traveller.
- d. Statements are to be completed within 4 weeks of the end of the month in which the trip was completed.
- e. The account must have a zero balance by 1st Friday in December each year unless alternate arrangements are made with Card Services.

(13) Cards which are lost or stolen overseas should be reported to any bank displaying the Visa logo immediately upon discovery or by phoning the toll free 1800 number located in the cards terms and conditions, provided when the card was signed.

(14) A non-regular traveller's card limit will be set at \$1.00 while not travelling. The limit will only be increased for the months in which the traveller is travelling overseas.

## **Schedule 1**

(15) Non-Compliance Action Schedule – Refer [Purchasing, Companion Card and Petty Cash Policy](#) (Schedule 2)

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	8th July 2016
<b>Review Date</b>	31st December 2019
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Chief Financial Officer
<b>Approval Date</b>	8th July 2016
<b>Expiry Date</b>	3rd August 2022
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Michael Di Rienzo Chief Financial Officer
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Procure to Pay

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Working day"** - Any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a public holiday in Newcastle, on which business may be conducted.

**"Acquit"** - To substantiate expenses and reconcile these against cash used.

**"Applicant"** - Where referring to a student, an applicant is an individual seeking entry to a program or course offered by the University or its partner organisation/s. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Companion Card"** - A debit card provided by the University for use by international travellers to access cash withdrawals only.

**"Credit"** - When referring to course credit, credit is the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit can reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Normal duties"** - As directed or approved by a staff member who has relevant delegated authority.

**"Officer"** - Has the meaning given in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), or any replacing legislation.

**"Staff"** - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

**"Supervisor"** - Staff members with direct supervisory responsibility for other staff within the workplace (a Supervisor may also be member of Senior Management, with duties as an Officer as defined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, or any replacing legislation).