

VISITING ACADEMIC NOMINATION POLICY



Approved by Academic Board: 5 October 2012
Revised by Academic Board: None.

1. Rationale and Objectives

- 1.1 The University of Divinity welcomes scholars from around the world on a regular basis, most of whom come at the invitation of a College of the University, or of a College's denomination or Religious Order, to teach and research, and to engage with students and faculty. Some such scholars come for a few weeks. Others stay for some months. Many of these academics come to Australia as part of a sabbatical period, or under the terms of visa sub-class 428 (Religious Worker) which permits 'teaching or guidance in religion'.
- 1.2 The University of Divinity is registered as an approved sponsor of visiting academics, under the terms of visa sub-class 419 (Visiting Academic Visa). This approval means that the University itself can sponsor senior visiting academics from universities and other research institutions around the world to spend up to twelve months in the University, to participate in an Australian research project at the University. This visa is not appropriate for (lay or ordained) scholars who may be invited, or wish to come, to the University or its Colleges to teach.
- 1.3 This approval does not preclude a College itself from inviting a scholar, under the terms of other relevant visas for which it has approval to act as a sponsor, or from hosting visiting scholars who wish to spend a sabbatical in residence. In all cases, however, it is expected that the visiting scholar's expertise will in some way be made available to staff and students across the University.
- 1.4 Scholars approved under the University's sponsorship of a 419 visa are not eligible to be remunerated, but may be provided with a contribution towards living expenses and/or accommodation.
- 1.5 Notwithstanding other arrangements that Colleges may have made with visiting scholars, Colleges of the University of Divinity may apply to have a senior academic sponsored under this program. The sponsorship itself will be in the name of the University, with any invitation being issued by the Vice Chancellor.

2. Eligibility and Approval

- 2.1 For the nomination to be approved, the nominated person must:
 - a) Have an invitation letter from the University to participate in an Australian research project
 - b) Be in collaboration with other academic members of staff at a College of the University
 - c) Be employed, or have formally been employed, as an academic at a tertiary or research institution overseas and hold or have held a senior academic title
 - d) Have a significant record of achievement in their field.

- 2.2 To be eligible for sponsorship, the primary applicant of the visiting academic visa must meet all of the following requirements:
- a) Be sponsored by an approved visiting academic sponsor (in this case, the University of Divinity)
 - b) Be nominated by the University and invited to participate in an Australian research project
 - c) Have qualifications and experience which are required for the nominated position
 - d) Have a significant record of achievement in the field
 - e) Have adequate means to support themselves and any accompanying secondary applicants while in Australia
 - f) Have health insurance for themselves and any secondary applicants.
- 2.3 On receipt of a nomination from a College Principal the Director of Research, being satisfied that all relevant material has been provided, may advise the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor may invite the nominated scholar without further consultation, if he or she is persuaded of the significance of the proposed visit for the College and the University, and that appropriate accommodation and research facilities can be made available by the nominating College, or that other suitable arrangements have been agreed to.
- 2.4 The Director of Research may seek the advice of the Research Committee before presenting a nomination to the Vice-Chancellor, in circumstances where he or she needs further information about the merits of the proposed visit, the significance of the research project, the suitability of the nominee, the suitability of accommodation and other facilities provisions, or of any other aspect of the nomination.

3. Activities

- 3.1 A visiting academic who comes to the University of Divinity as a sub-class 419 visa holder is permitted:
- a) to participate in an established Australian research project
 - b) to teach or give guest lectures on an informal basis (provided it is not the main purpose of the stay, not part of a course syllabus and remains incidental to their research)
 - c) to receive a contribution towards their living expenses, including the provision of accommodation as in-kind support (provided that this is not received as a salary and does not exceed \$30,000)
 - d) to bring any eligible secondary applicants to Australia
 - e) to leave and enter Australia as many times as they wish while the visa is valid
 - f) to stay in Australia for as long as the visa is valid.

4. Procedures

- 4.1 A College Principal may, after any relevant consultations with faculty colleagues within the College have taken place, nominate a senior scholar from an overseas university or research institution to be a visiting academic at the University of Divinity, for a period of up to twelve months.
- 4.2 Before submitting a formal nomination, the College Principal must receive agreement from the nominee that she or he is willing to be nominated. In the course of those negotiations, the College Principal and the nominee must reach agreement on the following:
- a) the research project in which the visiting academic will participate
 - b) The members of faculty with whom the visiting academic will work
 - c) Any other duties (e.g. research seminar participation, delivery of a public lecture...) which will be required of the visiting academic
 - d) Any accommodation provisions, or contributions to living expenses, which the College is able to provide to the visitor and to any dependants.
- 4.3 College Principals are encouraged to negotiate with the nominee a commitment to a three to five year cycle of short-term return visits, to maximise the potential long-term benefits of the partnership.
- 4.4 The nomination must be made to the Director of Research and must be submitted by the College Principal, who should work in consultation with the Director of Research in the preparation of the nomination. It must not be submitted directly to the Director of Research by the nominee. The College Principal must include in the nomination the following information which has been provided by the nominee and which has been agreed upon with the College:
- a) a curriculum vitae of not more than three pages, including details of academic qualifications, current employment, previous employment, contact information for two referees
 - b) copies of passport ID pages for the nominee and any accompanying dependants
 - c) a letter from the nominee's home employer, including confirmation of continued employment with the home employer or confirmation of previous employment; confirmation of any continuing salary or wage payments (if applicable); confirmation of the period of leave approved by the employer (if applicable); confirmation that the nominee's period of research in Australia is fully supported by her or his home institution
 - d) a letter of support from the College providing details of the proposed visit, including anticipated commencement and completion dates, anticipated return visits (if applicable), how the College and wider University are able to provide a suitable research environment for the nominee, and anticipated short, medium and long term benefits, to the nominee, the College and the wider University of the visit.
- 4.5 Once the Vice-Chancellor has approved a nomination, he or she must write to the nominee and issue a formal invitation to come to the University as a visiting academic.

- 4.6 The University must then apply to the Department of Immigration for approval to host the nominee, using the *Nomination for a temporary resident position (Form 1378)*, on the DIAC website.
- 4.7 Once the University has received approval to sponsor the nominee, the nominee must apply for a sub-class 419 visa (Visiting Academic Visa), using the *Application for a temporary residence visa (non-business) (Form 147)* on the Department of Immigration website.