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# Mandating – a balance of guidelines and benefits



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**In academic travel, the mere mention of “mandating” can send travellers and bookers into a spin. Yet mandating is not a dirty word. It delivers a balance by giving your people direction while allowing choices, and lowers travel costs for your university.**

## What is a travel mandate?

Establishing compliance involves implementing measures to enforce your organisation’s travel policy. The aim is to ensure that every travel booking is made in accordance with your policy, to produce the best possible time and cost savings.

In some parts of Australia, academic travel is mandated under state government purchasing policies. Preferred supplier arrangements are locked in and travel bookers need to have a good reason not to be using preferred suppliers. Yet the results speak volumes, with mandated universities achieving a range of productivity and cost benefits.

By having an effective mandated travel policy, your organisation can provide clear guidelines for all who travel and book travel. Everyone will be on the same page. You will not only have stronger controls that help prevent ad hoc bookings and wasted expense, but build a better travel culture overall.

## What should we mandate?

The ideal approach is to ‘govern’ all aspects of your travel. Yet in a practical sense, this can be hard to achieve if your travel has not been previously mandated at all.

Moving to a fully-mandated culture can be a challenge, not only to implement the policy, but to comply with it as well. This is particularly the case when there is any lack of education and information for your people.

If your policy is currently weak, an effective strategy is to rein in your air travel spend first. Many universities succeed with this approach where air travel is the key driver – the element your travellers are most passionate about! It is also the highest area of expenditure.

Once your bookers and travellers have become compliant in their air bookings, you can extend your policy to other areas such as accommodation and car hire. The adoption rate will vary from organisation to organisation depending on your culture. However, if you are familiar with other environments of regulation and compliance, you may find that your people are quite responsive to the changes. Make sure they know why and how it helps overall!

## What steps are involved?

When introducing a travel mandate, the following steps will be your critical success factors.

### 1. Review and tighten up your travel policy

This step is essential if you haven’t already taken it within the past 12 months. Travel is a dynamic industry with ongoing rate fluctuations, the introduction of new suppliers, and constant regulatory changes. Your policy should be reviewed regularly in consultation with your travel company, to ensure it is driving the best value from your supplier agreements and rates.

An effective travel policy should set the parameters for all key elements of your travel bookings, including:

- who has authority to make bookings and travel, and with which travel company
- what class of travel is permissible for each traveller
- when to make the booking to achieve the best rates (ie. number of advance purchase days)
- why book with preferred airlines, hotels/properties, car hire companies and other suppliers.

### 2. Introduce an online booking tool (OBT)

If you haven’t previously used one, an OBT is a powerful tool as it works hand-in-hand with policy compliance. Campus Travel’s OBT will steer your users towards your preferred suppliers and ensure the best fare or rate of the day on every booking. This intelligent tool provides reporting on all travel activity and expenditure to give you greater insight into your costs. It also strengthens the ownership and accuracy of your travellers’ profiles, which supports your risk management processes.

By using an OBT, you can build effective compliance measures into your policy. You can generate exception reports advising who has made any out-of-policy bookings. Your travel bookers can also be required to enter reason codes for any non-compliance.

Additional measures can include blocking authorisation of the booking or reimbursement of travel expenses.

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A U S T R A L I A

## 3. Educate and train your people

This is the single most important factor in gaining overall support. Education needs to involve both your travellers and travel bookers, and help give them an understanding of:

- all aspects of your travel policy, including any changes that have been made, as well as preferred suppliers and their latest products and rates
- the benefits of complying with the policy – for your people as well as their department and your entire organisation
- booking processes, including your online booking tool and how it works
- how savings can be maximised.

Education and training can be conducted in a number of ways to suit your culture. For example, Campus Travel will assess the availability and existing knowledge of your travel bookers and travellers, to determine what type of education will work best for them. From one-to-one coaching, to small group sessions, we will tailor and facilitate the learning process to ensure your people can support the success of your mandate.

## 4. Preload your organisation's preferred rates and fares

into the online booking system of your travel company.

This will ensure your bookers are shown your preferred suppliers first, every time they use the OBT.

## What are the benefits?

Campus Travel has helped many clients around Australia mandate their travel and implement an OBT. All these organisations have experienced substantial benefits, including:

- greater control** over their travel as a whole
- high compliance levels**, providing assurance that their organisation is achieving value for money in its travel
- cost reduction** through a more strategic and consistent approach to all bookings
- reduced air ticket prices and hotel and car hire rates**, particularly from using a robust OBT, which provides access to best fares/rates of the day and specially negotiated academic rates
- substantial savings in international air travel** based on Campus Travel's Value Pledge to beat any international air fare
- resource and overhead savings** by using an OBT rather than having to recruit and train people to manage your travel and associated administration
- smoother, more efficient processes** for your travel bookers, enabling them to be more productive while giving them more control and flexibility

- enhanced duty of care** to your travellers, as mandated bookings enable you to quickly track your travellers' location in an emergency
- more time** for people in your organisation to focus on their core business, as they can rely on specialists like Campus Travel for expert travel knowledge, advice and industry updates.

## Are the savings measurable?

Yes! Campus Travel has seen its university clients achieve hard dollar results such as:

- average domestic ticket prices \$175 below their previous year's ATPs and \$75 below best practice prices, by booking more low cost economy travel and exceeding best practice with their number of advance purchase days
- average international ticket prices \$810 below their previous year's ATPs and \$330 below best practice prices, by booking more discount economy flights
- a reduction in online booking fees, through Campus Travel technology enabling the automatic fulfilment of online bookings and invoicing.

These results are among the many benefits of taking control of your travel spend. The evidence is clear...create a mandate and you are in a far better position to manage, measure and reduce your travel costs.

## Campus Travel

### Who We Are

Campus Travel provides Australia's most complete service in academic travel management.

Our trained consultants understand the distinctive world of academia and are educated in your domestic and international needs. Drawing on our vast experience in travel and our knowledge of your sector, we deliver savvy and flexible solutions, as well as global choice.

Our consultants are skilled advisors in all aspects of travel, from air and hotel bookings, to complex multipoint itineraries, to travel security. With our blend of dedicated service, industry-first technology and rate negotiation specific to academia, Campus Travel is the 'smart choice' for more than 20 universities and research organisations nationwide.

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