

Name of Policy	Pandemic Diseases Policy
Description of Policy	This policy outlines ACU's commitment to minimise its exposure to pandemic diseases. The policy is accompanied by procedures to assist the University to minimise its exposure to pandemic disease threats and manage its response.
Policy applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University-wide <input type="checkbox"/> Specific (<i>outline location, campus, organisational unit etc.</i>)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Only <input type="checkbox"/> Students Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and Students
Policy Status	New Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision of Existing Policy
Description of Revision	Replaces Zoonotic Diseases Policy

Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Governing Authority	
Responsible Officer	Director, Human Resources

Approval Date	18 December 2014
Effective Date	18 December 2014
Date of Last Revision	
Date of Policy Review*	10 February 2016

* Unless otherwise indicated, this policy will still apply beyond the review date.

Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Local Protocols	Emergency and Critical Incident Management Manual University Risk Register Work Health & Safety Risk Management Program Guidelines International Travel Procedure
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1. Background Information

A number of pandemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola, SARS and Influenza have caused regional or global epidemics that resulted in high mortality rates or economic losses. The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that “emerging and re-emerging pandemic diseases pose an on-going threat to global health security.”

Population growth and increased interaction between people, animals and the environment over the coming decades are expected to increase the emergence of new pandemic threats, including zoonotic, which have the potential to impact upon ACU's staff and students.

2. Policy Purpose

This policy outlines ACU's intent to minimise the exposure of the University community to pandemic diseases and to effectively respond to this threat should an incident occur.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 ACU is committed to providing staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors with a safe working and learning environment that is free of health hazards, inclusive of pandemic diseases.
- 3.2 The University assigns the highest priority to assessing, minimising and managing the risks to the University community of being exposed to pandemic diseases.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The University will:

- subscribe to the [International SOS advisory service](#) and monitor Commonwealth, and State health directives and advice, and assess and manage the risks that are identified in these communications;
- monitor and comply with [The Department of Trade and Foreign Affairs](#) (DFAT) 'do not travel' warnings and significantly restrict travel to destinations where DFAT advises to 'reconsider your need to travel';
- comply with current guidelines for minimising its exposure to pandemic diseases, such as the [Communicable Diseases Network of Australia \(CDNA\)](#) Infection Control Guidelines;
- make every effort to ensure that all international travellers who book through Campus Travel, attendees of ACU-sponsored overseas events and recipients of international study grants are subscribers to the International SOS service; providing these travellers with medical and security alerts;

- notify state health departments if there is a significant risk that any of its staff members, students or volunteers have been affected with a pandemic disease, and ACU will comply with any Government requests to supply the personal information that is associated with these exposures;
- comply with Australian quarantine requirements in response to advice from Government health departments when there is a significant possibility ACU's staff, students or volunteers pose an infection risk; and
- apply the University Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedures in the event of an emergency that involves a pandemic threat.

4.2 Staff members and students will:

- consult recent guidelines, issued by DFAT, International SOS and other services to assess and manage the risks of travelling to high risk locations;
- comply with DFAT's 'do not travel' warnings and obtain Senior Executive approval for any travel to locations that DFAT advises to 'reconsider your need to travel';
- ensure that they protect themselves from pandemic diseases and be aware of their health status; and
- notify the University of any actual or possible disease exposures.

4.3 Nominated Supervisor and Event Coordinators will:

- seek information and advice from DFAT and International SOS when they are assessing the overseas travel plans of staff, students, volunteers and contractors that they are supervising or overseeing;
- participate in applicable International SOS briefings prior to finalising travel plans; and
- assess and manage the risks associated with overseas travel of the staff, students, volunteers and contractors that they are overseeing or supervising.

5. Application of Policy

The policy applies to all staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors, within the workplace or engaged in University-related activities across the world.

6. Policy Review

The Policy will be reviewed by Human Resources, as necessary.

7. Further Assistance

If you require further information about this policy, you are encouraged to have an initial conversation with your supervisor. If you require additional information, please contact the Human Resources Advisory Service, hr@acu.edu.au or extension 4222.

8. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)	Previously known as Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever, it is a severe, often fatal illness in humans. The virus is transmitted to people from wild animals and spreads in the human population through human-to-human transmission.
Epidemic	Occurs when the incident rate (i.e. new cases in a given human population, during a given period) of a certain disease substantially exceeds what is 'expected', based on recent experience
Influenza Pandemic	Occurs when a new influenza virus emerges and spreads around the world, and most people do not have immunity. Viruses that have caused past pandemics typically originated from animal influenza viruses. Some aspects of influenza pandemics can appear similar to seasonal influenza while other characteristics may be quite different.
Pandemic	An epidemic of an infectious disease that spreads through human populations across a large region, like a continent.
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	A viral respiratory disease of zoonotic origin caused by the SARS coronavirus (SARS-CoV). There is a high probability that SARS coronavirus originated in bats and spread to humans either directly or through animals held in Chinese markets.
Zoonotic Disease	Can be passed between animals and humans. Zoonotic diseases can be caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites, and fungi. These diseases are very common. The WHO states that approximately 60% of pandemic diseases are zoonotic.