

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Interim - Abandonment of Employment Policy</b>
<b>Description of Policy</b>	<i>This policy describes the circumstances in which the University may deem that a staff member has abandoned her/his employment.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Revision
<b>Description of Revision</b>	

### Human Resources

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## Table of Contents

1.	<b>Background Information .....</b>	<b>1</b>
2.	<b>Policy Statement .....</b>	<b>1</b>
3.	<b>Policy Purpose .....</b>	<b>1</b>
4.	<b>Application of Policy.....</b>	<b>1</b>
5.	<b>Procedures.....</b>	<b>1</b>
6.	<b>Approvals.....</b>	<b>3</b>
7.	<b>Policy Review .....</b>	<b>3</b>
8.	<b>Further Assistance.....</b>	<b>3</b>

## 1. Background Information

This policy has been developed to address the management of abandonment of employment at ACU.

## 2. Policy Statement

The University may deem that a staff member has abandoned her/his employment in circumstances where the staff member has failed to make contact with the University regarding her/his absence from work or has failed to formalise this absence by providing written advice of her/his intentions and does not return to work.

## 3. Policy Purpose

This policy informs staff members of their obligations in relation to attendance at ACU and the circumstances in which the University may deem a staff member to have abandoned her/his employment.

## 4. Application of Policy

This policy applies to all

- general staff members whose employment is regulated by a relevant workplace agreement, and
- academic staff members whose employment is regulated by a relevant Australian Workplace Agreement, and
- teachers in Centres, and
- senior staff of the University.

## 5. Procedures

- 5.1. If a staff member is absent from work for a period of 5 working days or more without explanation, and does not make reasonable efforts to inform the supervisor or Manager/Head of School of the reason for such absence, the University may deem the staff member to have abandoned her/his employment.
- 5.2. If a staff member is absent from work without explanation or has failed to formalise this absence by providing written advice of her/his intentions and does not return to work, the University will take all reasonable steps to attempt to contact the staff member.
- 5.3. If a staff member is absent from work for a period of more than one working day, and no contact has been made with the University, the nominated supervisor will endeavour to make contact with the staff member. Normally, the initial attempt at contact will be via telephone to home and mobile numbers where provided, and email, where appropriate. The nominated supervisor should also check with the staff member's immediate colleagues to ascertain if the staff member has made contact with the University.
- 5.4. If the nominated supervisor is unable to make personal contact with the staff member via the initial attempts outlined in section 5.3, the nominated supervisor will endeavour to make contact through the staff member's nominated emergency contact. If the staff member has not provided an emergency contact, the supervisor will endeavour to contact the staff member by visiting her/his address (or arranging for an alternative staff member to visit, (particularly where the nominated supervisor is located at another campus). In such circumstances, the supervisor (or nominee) will be accompanied by another member of staff.

**5.5.** These initial attempts at contact should emphasis the University's concern for the staff member's welfare and seek advice from the staff member as to the reason for her/his absence, her/his date of return and request that she/he formalise this absence by providing written advice of her/his intentions (for example, through the completion of a leave application or other written advice).

**5.6.** If the nominated supervisor:

5.6.1. continues to be unable to contact the staff member after the staff member has been absent for more than 2 working days; or,

5.6.2. is able to contact the staff member but the staff member fails to formalise this absence after 2 working days and has not provided written advice of her/his intentions and does not return to work,

the nominated supervisor will, in consultation with the local Human Resources Consultant, formally write to the staff member at the staff member's contact address. This letter will confirm the nominated supervisor's request, as outlined in section 5.5, along with any additional relevant information identified through any contact made with the staff member (for example, advising leave balances). This letter will also request that the staff member respond within 2 working days and will inform the staff member of the possible consequences of her/his ongoing absence, including that her/his salary will be suspended if this response is not received.

This letter will be sent via registered mail (to ensure a record of the delivery and receipt of the letter). A copy of this letter will be provided to the nominated supervisor's supervisor and/or the relevant Executive Staff member, and to the local Human Resources Consultant.

**5.7.** If after 2 working days the letter being issued, the staff member fails to make contact with the University or fails to formalise the absence by providing written advice of her/his intentions and does not return to work, the University will suspend the staff member from the payroll.

The nominated supervisor will then endeavour to make reasonable attempts to contact the staff member through the steps outlined in section 5.3, 5.4 and where appropriate 5.6.

Depending on the circumstances of the situation, and particularly where no contact with the staff member can be made, consideration should be given to notifying third parties, such as the Police, of the staff member's unexplained absence.

**5.8.** If following 5 working days of issue of the letter sent in section 5.6, the staff member has made no contact with the University or has failed to formalise this absence by providing written advice of her/his intentions and does not return to work, the nominated supervisor will provide a report to the relevant Executive Staff member advising that the staff member has abandoned her/his employment. This report will detail all attempts to contact and any communication received from the staff member.

**5.9.** The Executive Staff member will consult with the Director, Human Resources prior to recommending to the Vice-Chancellor that the employment of the staff member be terminated on the grounds that the staff member has abandoned her/his employment.

**5.10.** If the Vice-Chancellor makes a determination that the staff member's employment is to be terminated on the grounds that the staff member has abandoned her/his employment, the Director, Human Resources will formally write to the staff member advising that the University has considered the staff member's continuing absence to be an indication that she/he has abandoned her/his employment with the University. A copy of this advice will also be provided to the relevant Executive Staff member. The

University will then implement the normal procedures associated with a staff member's termination of employment with the University.

**6. Approvals**

All decisions in relation to the application of this policy must be made in accordance with the University's Revised Staffing Delegations Register.

**7. Policy Review**

The University may make changes to this policy and procedures from time to time. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this Policy may forward her/his suggestions to the Director, Human Resources.

**8. Further Assistance**

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult her/his nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in her/his work area. Should further advice be needed, she/he should contact the Human Resources Consultant responsible for their campus.