What do I need to do to get approval for off-campus research meetings under the MQ COVIDSafe Plan for Research?

What is considered off-campus research meetings work?

- Research that is off-campus involving teams, collaborators or research students, including talks, seminars, workshops, conferences and all other research-related meetings.

What do I need to know before planning?

- Contact your Department Manager to discuss your plans well in advance.
- All applications are to be submitted at least 2 weeks before within-NSW work, and up to 4 weeks before interstate work is to take place. Applications without due notice will be delayed.
- Submission of documents does not mean approval.
- You must await notification of approval before making any arrangements to travel or conduct research.
- If approvals are not in place, you cannot undertake the research.
- Absence on Duty (AoD) applications still need to be approved alongside COVIDSafe applications.

What is the process I need to follow?

1) Access the word version of the Off-Campus Travel Sample Form from the Intranet (https://staff.mq.edu.au/intranet/science-and-engineering/teaching-and-research-covid-safe-guidance). This application includes a Detailed COVIDSafe travel plan, COVIDSafe emergency response plan and trip-leader signoff.
2) Fill this out and then pass it on to the Department Manager. They will review this document and discuss with you ways to improve it if needed.
3) Make sure your vaccination status is up to date with your Department/School.
4) Once the Department Manager gives you the go ahead, submit the official online Faculty form on the intranet (https://staff.mq.edu.au/intranet/science-and-engineering/teaching-and-research-covid-safe-guidance) by copying and pasting information from your approved word file.
5) This goes to the Deputy Dean Research and Innovation, and once approved you will receive an email from them confirming your approval status. Department Manager and HOD will also be on this email.
6) Attach the form with the answers you are submitting to your AoD application.
7) At this point AODs can be submitted and approved.
8) Only when the COVIDSafe and AoD approvals are place can work be considered approved.

What Stage are we in and what approvals are needed?

- Stage 1 permits small face to face meetings off campus and travel within Greater Sydney (including Central Coast, Wollongong, Shellharbour, Blue Mountains; only if located in Sydney LGA) or between regions (only if located in regional LGA). There may be a staging and prioritisation of applications based on essential need. Approval is also contingent upon group size limits and “house rules” of any relevant organisations and venues at which the meeting is being held. Masks, space restrictions of 1 person per 4m², QR check in and other COVIDSafe practices mandatory for all research and meetings. Only fully vaccinated staff and students can request approval under this stage.
- Stage 2 permits larger COVIDSafe talks, seminars, workshops, conferences and other seated events and travel between Greater Sydney (including Central Coast, Wollongong, Shellharbour, Blue Mountains) and Regional NSW. Approval is also contingent upon group size limits and “house rules” of any relevant organisations and venues at which the meeting is being held. Masks, space restrictions of 1 person per 4m², QR check in and other COVIDSafe practices mandatory for all research and meetings. Only fully vaccinated staff and students can request approval under this stage.
- Stage 3 permits a full return to talks, seminars, workshops, conferences and other seated events off campus subject to ongoing COVIDSafe restrictions. Travel is permitted within NSW. Interstate and international travel is subject to border and travel restrictions. Approval is also contingent upon group
size limits and “house rules” of any relevant organisations and venues at which the meeting is being held. Masks, space restrictions of 1 person per 4 or 2m², QR check in and other COVIDSafe practices mandatory for all research and meetings.

- Approval required by the **Deputy Dean Research and Innovation/Executive Dean**, or depending on the trip, approval from the **Vice-Chancellor** may be needed.