CARBON SMART TRAVEL GUIDE

Australian National University

TEQSA PROVIDER ID: PRV12002 (AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY)
CRICOS PROVIDER CODE: 00120C

What's in this guide?

This document compiles information related to the **Environmental Sustainability** section of the ANU Travel Policy and should be read in conjunction with the Policy and Travel Handbook. It reflects up-to-date information as of June 2025.

The guide aims to help you plan how you can reach your goals with a lower carbon footprint.

Here we list **actions you can take and things to think about** when considering and planning travel with a low carbon footprint.

Travel is part of how we work

A by-product of our work

Our unique responsibilities

Three levels of action

We are close to our goal

Actions you can take

To navigate this guide, click on the buttons or go to the next slide.

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Travel is part of how we work

We see travel as an essential part of university life. We travel to do business, build networks, conduct research, participate in events, and study.

There are two types of travel that are necessary to meet these goals:

- **University travel** - includes domestic and international travel done for university business and activities including research, conferences, fieldwork, meetings, student recruitment/marketing, philanthropy, training, outside studies and other non-specified reasons.
- **Commuter travel** - relates to the movement of staff and students from their homes to and from ANU campuses to work or study.

This guide is relevant to University travel only.

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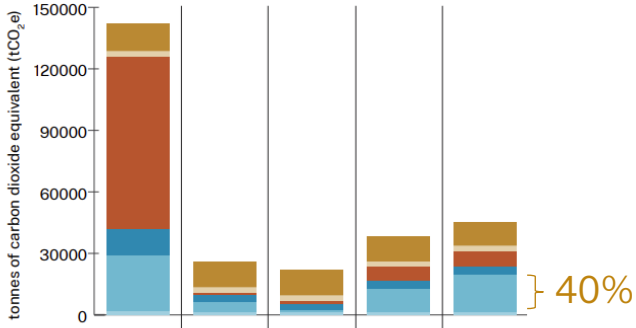
Greenhouse gas emissions from travel can be a by-product of our work.

The activities we do when we travel may be linked with positive impacts in our careers and towards reaching ANU strategic goals.

However, every flight we take and every trip we make adds to our environmental impact.

In 2024, we completed a materiality assessment to map our entire value chain (Scope 3) emissions, adding areas such as purchased goods and services, accommodation, staff and student commuting.

University travel continue to be significant, representing the 4th highest emissions source in our carbon footprint.



Emissions Scope	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Scope 1: Direct emissions	16,414	15,258	15,097	14,364	14,724
Natural gas	13,492	12,469	11,971	11,899	11,705
Other fuel	62	46	57	43	41
Fleet	397	258	279	325	335
Refrigerants	2,463	2,484	2,790	2,097	2,643
Scope 2: Indirect (electricity) emissions	83,879	1,184	1,398	7,128	7,229
Electricity - market-based method	83,879	1,184	1,398	7,128	7,229
Scope 3: Supply chain emissions	41,978	9,457	5,198	16,445	25,770
Category 3: Upstream fuel & energy related activities	13,140	3,379	3,285	4,038	3,966
Category 6: University travel	27,200	4,900	620	11,300	18,200
Category 5: Waste	1,638	1,179	1,293	1,307	1,304
Total emissions	**142,270**	**25,899**	**21,693**	**37,937**	**45,423**

Figure 1 ANU greenhouse gas emissions, ANU Environmental Sustainability Report 2024

Source: ANU Environmental Report 2024

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Reducing our emissions is meeting our unique responsibilities as the national university

ANU Corporate Plan 2025-2028

- **Climate change** will likely result in both increasing physical risks (such as extreme heat and more intense and frequent extreme weather events) and transition risks (policy, legal, technological, market, financial and reputational impacts of decarbonisation). These risks could have significant impacts on student experience, research, teaching, operations, health and safety, infrastructure, financial models and our value chain. This plan must be responsive to these challenges.

The University's long-term climate ambition is to reach below zero emissions across our entire value chain by 2040. To reach this ambition we are making progress towards interim goals that address diverse sources of emissions.

We are committed to reducing our carbon emissions across all emissions sources.

This guide covers **University travel**. To learn more about our work in other areas, visit the ANU Sustainability website.

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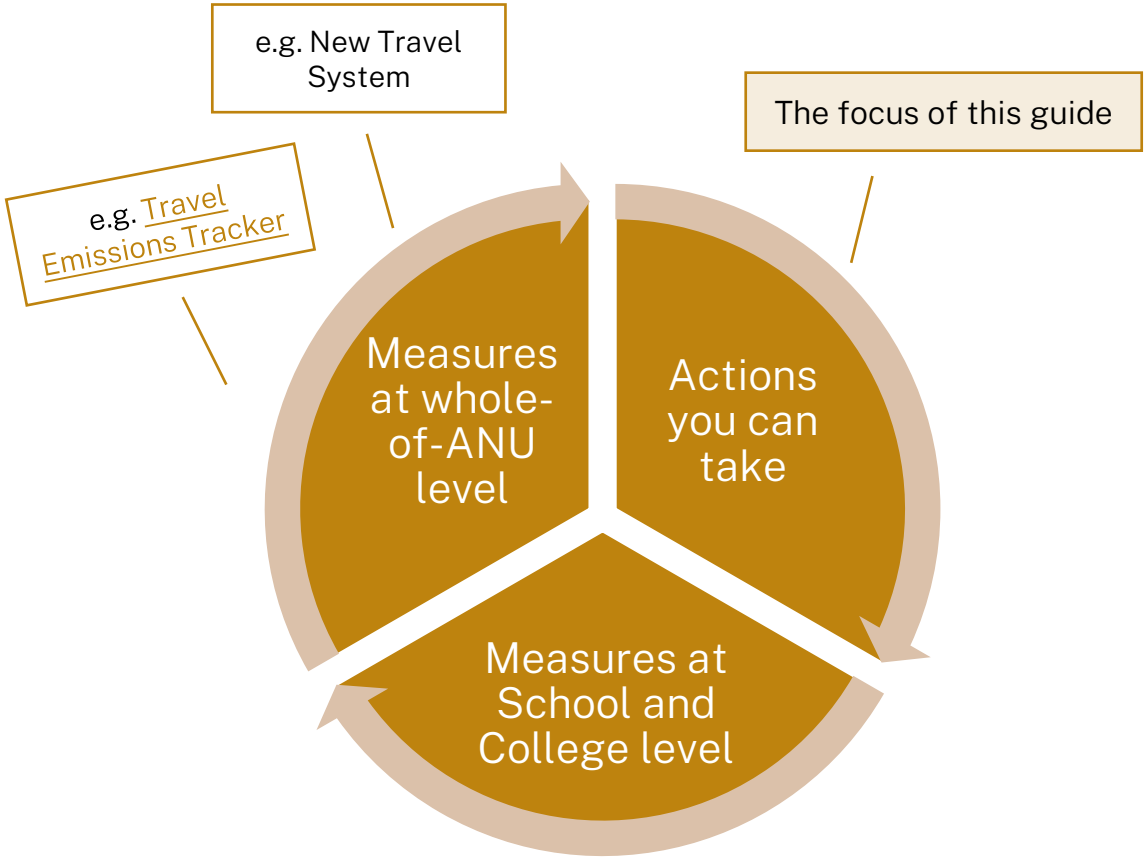
We need our combined actions

It can be challenging to balance our need to undertake meaningful travel and reduce our carbon footprint.

Travel will continue to be essential to some aspects of our work. The fundamental question guiding us is *how might we enable our staff to be successful with a lower carbon footprint?*

Research by the ANU Travel Lab highlights the need for action at individual, collective and institutional levels.



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How might we enable our staff to be successful with a lower carbon footprint?

In 2025, ANU launched a new Travel Policy and handbook.

These governing documents outline expectations for ANU systems and individuals to apply a carbon smart lens to University Travel.

Environmental sustainability

19. University travel significantly contributes to the University greenhouse gas emissions. The University is committed to a reduction of travel emissions and provides carbon smart travel resources for individuals and areas to reduce their carbon footprint.
20. To reduce travel emissions, it is recommended travellers apply a carbon smart lens to travel planning and decisions by:

a. Considering the need to travel and available alternatives (e.g. virtual meetings and conferences).

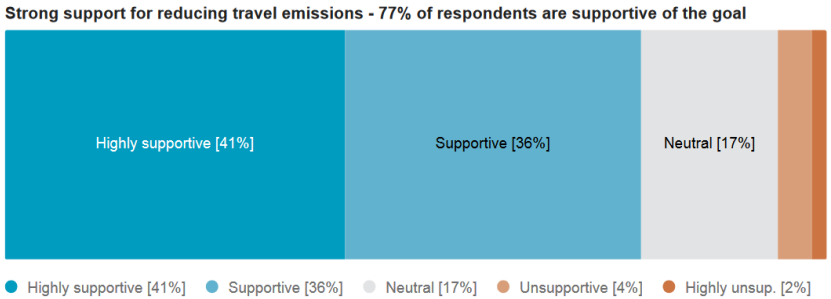
b. Making transport choices that reduce the carbon footprint (e.g. land transport, economy class, lower emissions flights, etc.).

c. Reducing their environmental footprint whilst travelling.

ANU has a target to **reduce University travel emissions** by 50% from 2019 levels, by 2025.

The ANU community supports this target[1], and the good news is that we are two-thirds of the way to achieving it.

In 2024, our emissions were 26% less than our base year of 2019[2].



References: 1 – Staff Travel Survey, 2024. 2 – Environmental Sustainability Report 2024

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Actions you can take

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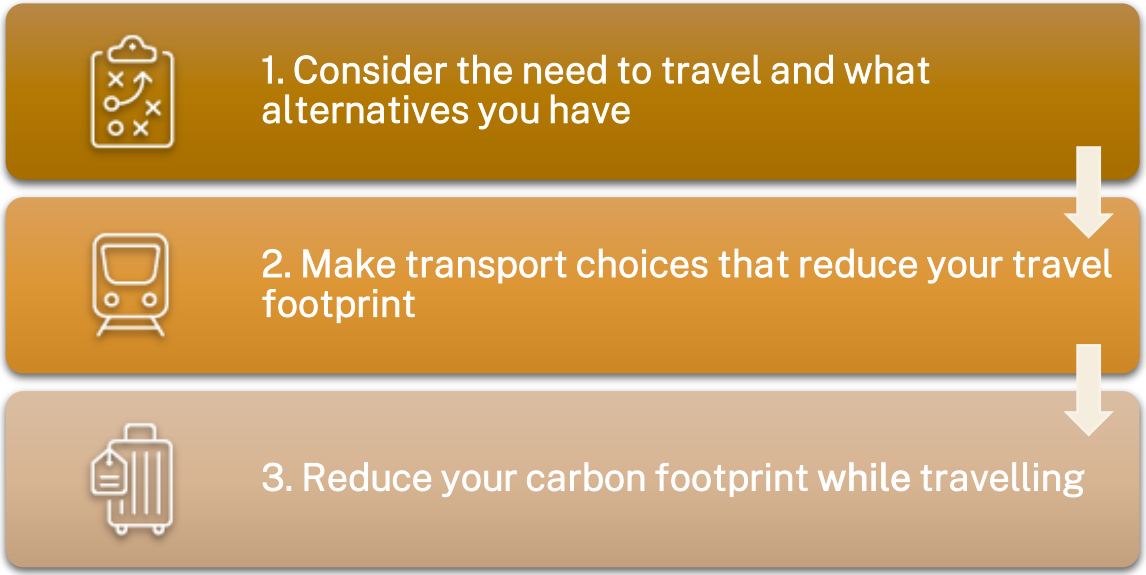

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1. Consider the need to travel and what alternatives you have

Food for thought:

- Can you do this without travel? When an opportunity presents itself, consider the need for travel.
- What is the most efficient way to achieve your goals? What will bring the most value with less impact?
- If there is an annual conference you usually attend? Consider alternating attending in person and virtually.
- Some disciplines have biennial conferences. Can you plan other business around that time and location if that's the case?
- Can you reduce the number of people travelling to one meeting/event by creating opportunities to share knowledge about the event or meeting outcomes?

Actions you can take:

- ❑ List the travel opportunities you already know of for a given period (e.g. a full calendar or financial year or a project duration).
  - You can add opportunities you plan to pursue but can't confirm yet e.g. presenting a paper.
- ❑ Check if virtual attendance/meeting would be an option for one (or more) of them.
  - If it is in a different time zone, discuss flexible work options with your supervisor.
- ❑ Continue in next page.

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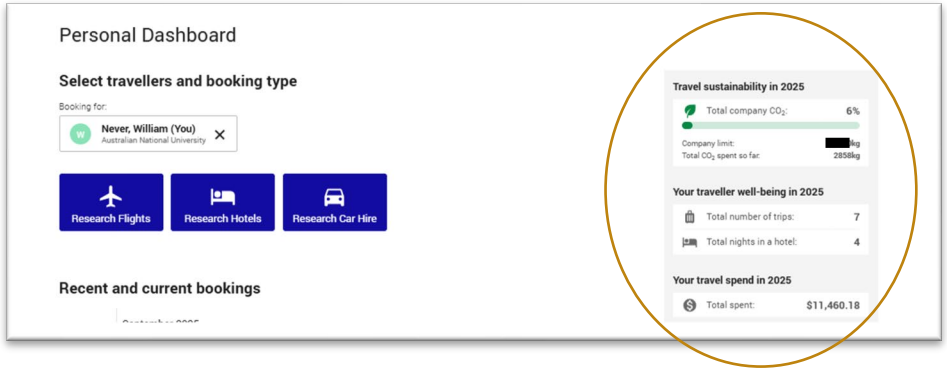
1. Consider the need to travel and what alternatives you have



Actions you can take:

- ❑ Consider your plan. If you take two long-haul flights or more per year, you are likely in the high emitter group.
  - ❑ Check the traveller profiles tab in the Travel Emissions Tracker to see more about ANU travel groups.
  - ❑ Check your University Travel emissions and how we're tracking on your personal dashboard in the new Travel System (see figure on the left).
- ❑ Collaborate with local networks. Consider travelling shorter distances to collaborate with regional partners.
- ❑ Establish a regional hub or node for a larger national or international conference, where it's possible to network with nearby colleagues on common interests and activities.

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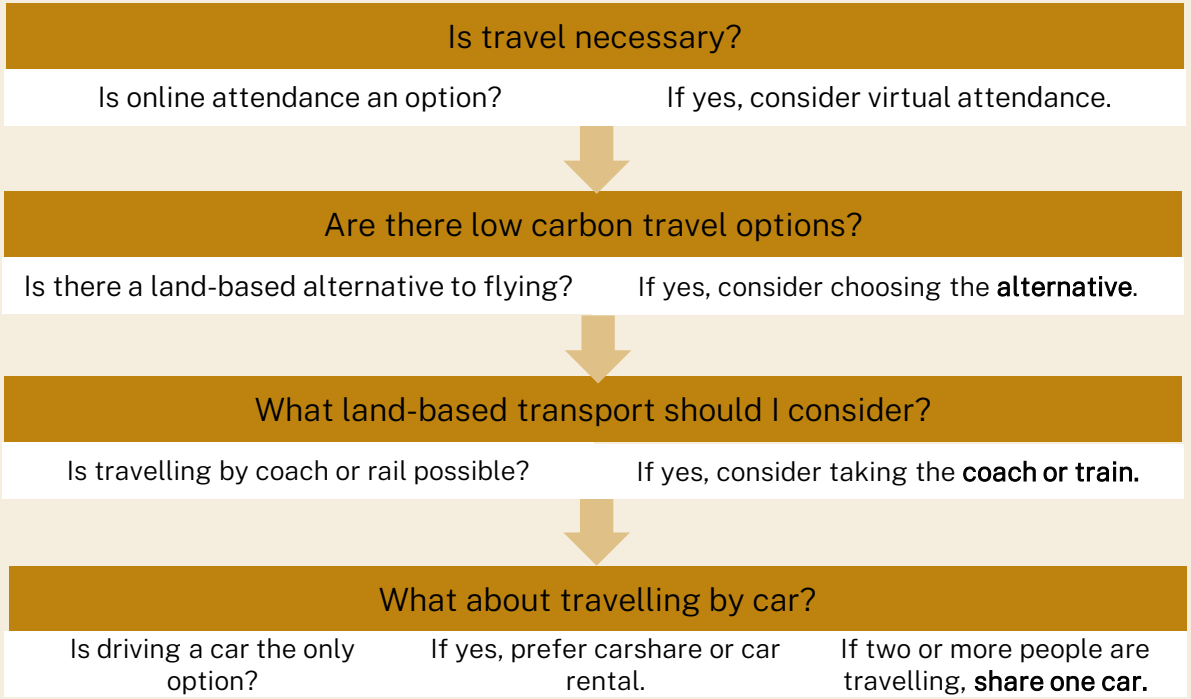
1.1. Considering alternatives

According to the new Travel Policy and Handbook (2025), travel should only take place where an activity cannot be effectively conducted via alternate methods such as teleconferencing and video conferencing.

- **Key take away:** when travel is necessary, reduce your impact with low carbon travel options.



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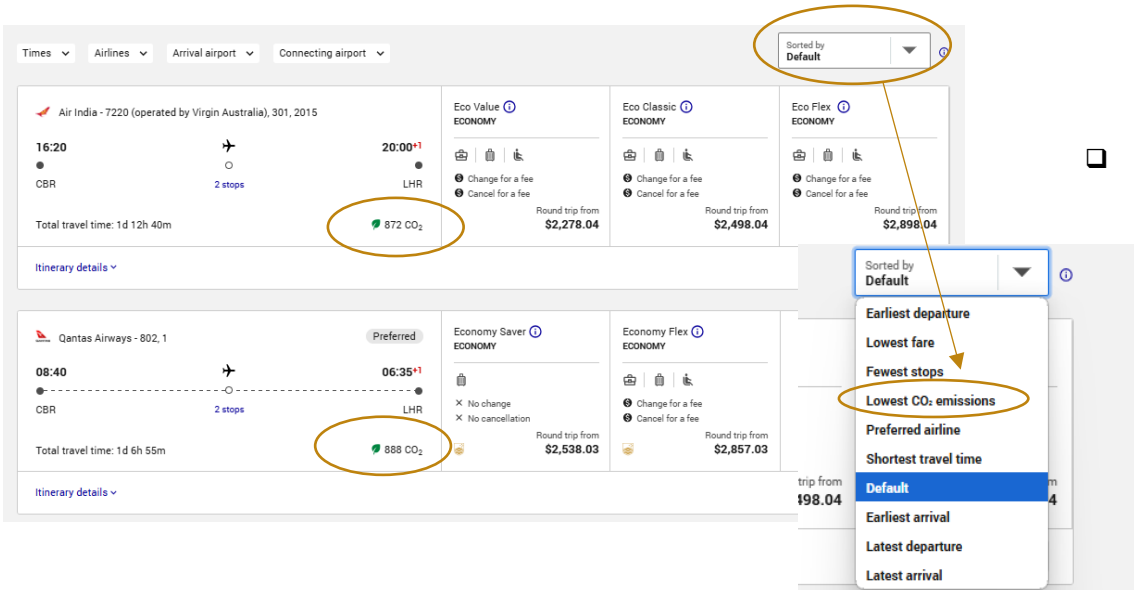
2. Make transport choices that reduce your travel footprint



Actions you can take:

- ❑ Emissions vary a lot per vehicle type. Low carbon travel options can include rail, coach and single or multi-person vehicles.
  - ❑ See next slide, for a comparison of emissions for a return Canberra-Sydney trip by vehicle type.
- ❑ When flying is the only viable option, choose lower emissions itineraries or routes.
  - ❑ Our Travel Management system – provides CO_2 emissions data of all flights in their online platform and can sort options as per their emissions (see image on the left).
  - ❑ Check the most direct routes, as these will likely have lower emissions overall.
  - ❑ Flying economy is default in the new Travel Policy and Handbook. Besides the higher cost, flying business class produces 3x more CO_2 emissions per passenger, and flying first class produces 9x more.
  - ❑ Consider taking a rest day after a long-haul flight as mentioned in the Travel Handbook.

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2.1. Comparing emissions per vehicle type

- **Under the new Travel Policy and Handbook, land-based transport must be booked instead of flights for point-to-point travel between Canberra-Sydney and Sydney-Canberra.**
- The CO_2 emissions of a trip will vary by vehicle, fuel type and number of people in a vehicle, as shown in Table 1.
- Emissions range from low (G - green), through mid (A - amber) to high (R - red)
- One person driving a car by themselves generates higher emissions than if they were travelling by coach or train or if there were more people in the car.
- **Key take away:** Shared vehicles are better as a low carbon travel option.

Table 1 - CO_2 emissions by vehicle type and occupancy Canberra-Sydney return trip.

Vehicle type	CO_2 emissions per person (pp) from low (G - green), through mid (A - amber) to high (R - red)			
Average Flight	133kg	(R)		
Rail	26kg	(G)		
Bus/Coach (non-electric)	17kg	(G)		
Vehicle type - **Cars**	CO_2 emissions pp for **one person** alone		CO_2 emissions pp for **two people** in the vehicle	
Petrol small car (Up to 1.4 litre engine)	80kg	(A)	40kg	(G)
Petrol mid-range (1.4 to 2.0 litre engine)	110kg	(A)	55kg	(G)
Petrol average large (Above 2.0 l engine)	174kg	(R)	87kg	(A)
Diesel average large (Above 2.0 l engine)	120kg	(R)	60kg	(A)
Petrol-Hybrid average small/medium car	60kg	(A)	30kg	(G)
Petrol-Hybrid large car	90kg	(A)	45kg	(G)
Plug-In Hybrid average small car	20kg	(G)	10kg	(G)
Plug-In Hybrid average medium/large	40kg	(G)	20kg	(G)
Electric – Charged with renewable energy	0kg	(G)	0kg	(G)

Source: Trip Emissions Planner (from ANU Travel Emissions Tracker data), and Carbon footprint Calculator (https://calculator.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx)

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2.2. ANU Policy and guidelines for travelling by land-based transport

1. Coach or Rail	Travellers can request coach and rail quotes and bookings directly with the travel provider.
2. Car	If travelling by car, ANU recommends that travellers consider carshare and car rental as their preferred options.
2.1. ANU Carshare	ANU Carshare is a convenient, efficient, eco-friendly way for staff and students to travel. Our partner offers a range of vehicles for short term and hourly rental at competitive rates. Prefer a hybrid or electric option if possible. Flexicar's vehicles are conveniently located on Campus, see ANU Carshare for booking information.
2.2. Rental Vehicles	When travelling by car, you can rent a vehicle from one of ANU preferred providers. ANU recommends that travellers choose an Electric Vehicle (EV) or a hybrid option whenever available, provided they suit the purpose of travel. Discounted rates are available when booking directly with our preferred car rental providers. Corporate rates include reduced excess and unlimited Km's (may exclude some remote locations). For contact info and conditions see links above.
2.3. Use of a private vehicle	**ANU recommends that travellers consider car rental and carshare as their preferred options when travelling by car.** These are available for staff at discounted rates and are insured when contracted for travel on University business. Individuals using their own personal vehicle whilst on approved University travel should be aware of the University insurance policy conditions. For specific questions about insurance cover when using a personal vehicle contact the ANU Insurance Office. The following steps apply when using a private vehicle:
2.3.1. Before travelling	1. Read the Procedure: Use of private vehicles on University business when considering the use of a personal vehicle for University business travel. ANU Policy Library - Procedure: Use of private vehicles on University business 2. Request approval for using a private vehicle for University business. Delegation - D4 for Academic Staff and D5 for Professional Staff. ANU Policy Library - Form - Approval for use of a private vehicle on official University business 3. Additionally, travellers will need to fill the form Cents per km Motor Vehicle Allowance. Delegation - D4 for Academic Staff and D5 for Professional Staff. ANU Policy Library - Form - Cents per km Motor Vehicle Allowance 4. Once forms are approved by Delegate, the traveller needs to send them to employment.services@anu.edu.au with the appropriate receipts for processing.
2.3.2. After travelling	1. Travellers are required to submit their own travel expense reimbursement claims in the self-service portal. For more information see Finance Self Service website and ANU Reimbursement Self Service - Frequently Asked Questions.

Source: ANU Travel Policy, Handbook and website. Compiled by ANU Below Zero.

3. Reduce your carbon footprint while travelling

Food for thought:

- Be a leader in your area and spread the word on sustainable travel to help your colleagues and peers make considerate choices. When making your own itinerary, lead by example.
- In addition to taking lower carbon transport options, consider the environmental impact of the activities you take part in during your trip, the meals you make and the waste you generate.
- Be mindful of the culture and heritage of the destination and take time to learn about the local history and culture.

Actions you can take:

- ❑ Use low carbon travel at your destination, where safe to do so:
  - ❑ Whenever possible, choose active travel.
  - ❑ When you cannot use active travel, choose public transportation over a private vehicle.
  - ❑ If you require a private vehicle, consider carpooling.
  - ❑ If you are renting a private vehicle, choose a low emissions vehicle.
  - ❑ Help facilitate active and public travel options.
- ❑ Choose sustainable accommodation
  - ❑ Research sustainable lodging options in the area. Some hotels and lodgings have certifications for sustainability or positive climate-related actions.
  - ❑ Enquire about sustainability commitments, strategies or policies.
  - ❑ Choose accommodation that reduces the need for travel.
- ❑ Be a conscientious visitor.
- ❑ Turn off the lights and air conditioning or heating in your room when you leave, consider taking your own toiletries, opt out of daily towel and sheet replacement and unplug unused appliances.
- ❑ Purchase local goods and services and buy local produce.

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GET IN TOUCH

For **Carbon Smart Travel** questions, contact us:

E: ANUgreen@anu.edu.au

Or visit our website for more information

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