

PROCEDURE

Procedure Title

Fitness to Study Procedure

Parent Policy

Enrolment Policy

Preamble

Monash College is committed to supporting the wellbeing of students and recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to academic progression and participation in the Monash College community. There may be occasions when a student's mental or physical health conditions result in concerns regarding their fitness to study and/or the ability to participate in the Monash College community. Monash College supports the needs of students with health related conditions by offering early intervention, providing targeted support to students and staff, and providing fair avenues for students with health related conditions to suspend studies where necessary.

Scope

The Fitness to Study Procedure is applicable to all Monash College students. The procedure will be enacted when there are concerns relating to the student's well-being in relation to physical or mental health, or psychological disorders; and where the incident is not covered by another Monash College procedure.

The procedure is invoked only in instances when the needs of the student exceeds the usual support services available, or in the instance that a student's physical or mental health impedes them from attempting to engage their studies successfully.

The procedure will ensure a consistent and sensitive approach to managing cases, providing an appropriate and fair level of intervention varying on individual circumstances.

Definitions

Unfit to Study	<p>A student is assessed as being unable to continue in their studies for a deemed period of time due to concerns for the student's or others wellbeing. A student may be unfit for study when one or more of the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A student's behaviour poses a risk to their own health, safety and/or wellbeing and/or that of others- The student is (or is at risk of) adversely affecting the teaching, learning and/or experience of other students- The student is (or at risk of) adversely affecting the day-to day activities of Monash College
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<p>Case Coordinator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student’s health or behaviour prevents the student from successfully completing the course, unit or learning activity currently enrolled in or applied for; or - When Monash College receives information from an external service and on further investigation confirms that the student may be unfit for study <p>Team Leader Student Welfare, Student Engagement Services</p>
<p>Fitness to study Advisory Group</p>	<p>A standing group of staff nominated by Monash College with experience in student health, disability, welfare or safety. The group provides advice to the case coordinator on reasonable adjustment to studies and appropriate ways for Monash College to respond to and support students with fitness to study issues. It will not make a diagnosis or provide advice on the management of a student’s physical or mental health related condition.</p>
<p>Medical Report</p>	<p>A report of results of a medical examination detailing the findings of a registered medical professional, and where appropriate a Psychologist/ Psychiatrist report. The report must be appropriate to the student’s condition. Reports in languages other than English must be submitted with a NAATI certified translation.</p>
<p>Registered Medical Professional</p>	<p>A health practitioner registered to practice by the appropriate accredited body. Australian doctors and health practitioners must be registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. Monash College reserves the right to nominate an approved registered medical professional or Medical Centre on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<p>Mandatory Leave</p>	<p>Approved leave of absence that has not been requested by the student and may include conditions that must be satisfied before the student can re-enrol in the program in which they were previously enrolled or in another program of study at Monash College.</p>
<p>Fitness to Study</p>	<p>The capability to engage with studies and/or to function more widely as a member of the Monash College community.</p>
<p>Perspective</p>	<p>A database controlled by Student Services in which all incidents are recorded. Documentation is attached and stored as required. User level access restrictions apply.</p>



Psychological Health	A state of well-being in which the student realises their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can study productively, and is able to contribute to their community.
Mental Illness or Disorder	Is a diagnosable illness that affects a student’s thinking, emotional state and behaviour, and disrupts the student’s ability to study or do the work required to meet their academic obligations or carry out other daily activities and engage in satisfying personal relationships.
Physical Health	The absence of any physical illness and that to the best of a student’s knowledge and belief, supported by an approved medical professional, that they are physically fit and there is no other medical condition likely to prevent them from meeting their academic obligations.

Procedure

Ref	Steps	Responsibility
1.	Identifying at Risk Behaviour	
1.1	Any person who considers that a student’s behaviour represents grounds for concern about their fitness to study and where the need exceeds the usual support services available must report this to the relevant Head of Studies.	Monash College Staff
	Any incident reported in the Safety and Risk Analysis Hub (S.A.R.AH.) that are a result of a student’s mental or physical health.	Monash College Staff
1.2	The incident must be reported to the case coordinator in writing within 24 hours of the relevant person’s knowledge of the situation.	Head of Studies
	The program Director is notified of the case via copy of the email notification to the case coordinator.	Head of Studies
Ref	Steps	Responsibility
2.	Addressing fitness to study	
2.1	The case coordinator will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attempt to make contact with the student within 24 hours of receiving the referral 2. Consider the student’s perception of their mental or physical health, and the response of the 	Case Coordinator

	<p>student to any steps taken by Monash College to manage the situation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Invite the student to present further relevant information, such as medical or other professional reports. The doctor of health practitioner must be registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency or the equivalent body if students are outside Australia. 4. Identify the risks presented by the behaviour to the student and/or wellbeing of the student and others by completing the Fitness to Study Checklist; and 5. Provide the completed Assessment Checklist to the Director, Student Services 6. Maintain a record of all lodged concerns for a student in Perspective. 	
2.3	<p>Upon receiving the Assessment Checklist, the Director Student Services will take one of the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm that referral to the Fitness to Study Advisory Group is not required or - Confirm that the case must be referred to the Fitness Advisory Group and the timeframe in which the group must meet or - In cases deemed severe the case coordinator may refer to the Director for immediate suspension pending investigation. <p>The Director, Student Services will communicate the required next action to the case coordinator.</p>	Director, Student Services
2.4	<p>Fitness to study – Update to Student</p> <p>The case coordinator will issue the student with a fitness to study update.</p> <p>The update will be either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) That the case is not in the Fitness to Study scope, and provides student a reminder of Monash College support services <p>Or</p>	Case Coordinator

	<p>b) That the case will be referred to the Fitness to Study Advisory Group</p> <p>Or</p> <p>c) That an urgent decision has been made.</p>	
2.5	When a student is notified the case is not to be referred to the Fitness to Study Advisory Group, the case coordinator will refer the case to the program Director for determination of next steps/ relevant procedure to apply to student.	Case Coordinator
2.6	<p>When a student is notified the case is to be referred to the Fitness to Study Advisory Group, the notice must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - grounds for concern, - outline the potential consequences of an unfit to study determination, - the opportunity for the student to provide evidence to demonstrate that they are fit to continue their studies - a five working day period to respond - Monash College Support Services available to the student - A link to the policy. 	Case Coordinator
2.7	The case coordinator will advise the Head of Studies of the outcome sent to the student.	Case Coordinator
3.0	Role of the Fitness to Study Advisory Group	
3.1	<p>The Director, Student Services and Program Director determines the appropriate members to convene for the Fitness to Study Advisory Group and advises the case coordinator.</p> <p>The group must meet within a reasonable time period determined by the student's current situation. This will be determined by the Director, Student Services.</p>	<p>Director, Student Services/ Director of Relevant Program</p> <p>Director, Student Services</p>
3.2	The Fitness to Study Advisory Group must provide an informed assessment of the student's realistic ability to meet program expectations.	

	<p>The group must take into consideration the information collected from the consultation and advice from relevant individuals.</p> <p>The group may provide advice on managing and supporting students with at risk behaviour.</p>	
3.3	<p>The Advisory Group will take one or more of the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No further action - Referral to appropriate Director for implementation of alternative policy and Procedure - Referral to the appropriate additional support services - Recommend that the student apply for an appropriate entitlement (deferral, study load adjustment) - Recommend to the Director that the student be suspended - Provide advice to the student about changes to behaviour, with a review period imposed - Refuse to re-enrol the student - Refuse to offer admission to a prospective student - Place student on mandatory leave - Withdraw the student from or refuse to approve the student attending placements, fieldwork or other Monash College activities. <p>Any action taken will be documented and communicated to the student, including reasons for the decision, any actions to be taken and the student’s right of appeal.</p>	Fitness to Study Advisory Group
3.4	<p>The Fitness to Study Advisory Group must maintain a register of all referred cases and outcomes in Perspective (via the Case Coordinator).</p> <p>All information collected regarding Fitness to Study will remain confidential for use within the procedure and is subject to the Data Protection Act and Monash College Privacy Policy.</p>	Fitness to Study Advisory Group

3.5	Program Director notifies Head of Studies of the outcome	Director of Relevant Program
3.6	Notification letter, signed by the Director, Student Services is delivered to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student - Student Administration - where applicable, with details of the impact on enrolment. 	Head of Studies
4.0	Return to Study	
4.1	<p>A student deemed unfit to study must provide a medical report, where appropriate a Psychologist or Psychiatric report from a registered Medical Professional, upon request before re-commencing studies.</p> <p>The report must state that the student is “fit for study”.</p> <p>An assessment for return to study must be provided a minimum of 21 days prior to the return to study date. If the report is dated more than 40 days prior to the return to study date the student must present a certificate stating they are fit to study no more than 2 weeks prior to commencement.</p>	Monash College Student
4.2	In receiving an application to return to study the case coordinator will notify the Director, Student Services.	Case coordinator
4.3	<p>The Fitness to Study Advisory Group will be re-convened to assess the application for return to study. The members in attendance, where possible, are those members that formed the initial Advisory Group and are familiar with the case.</p> <p>The Fitness to Study Advisory Group will make one of the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the re-enrolment of the student. - Support the re-enrolment with recommendations of additional conditions to be met by the student. - Recommend that the student apply for a further period of intermission. - Refuse to re-enrol the student. 	Fitness to Study Advisory Group
4.4	The application to re-commence studies will be decided upon by the Director, Student Services and Program	Director, Student Services and Director of Relevant Program



	Director on recommendations from the Fitness to Study Advisory Group.	
4.5	The Director, Student Services will notify the student and Student Administration of the application outcome.	Director, Student Services
5.0	Appeals	
5.1	Appeals can be made via the non-academic and academic grievances policy and procedure .	

Legislation and Standards	<p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</p> <p>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988</p> <p>General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)</p>
Reference Policies and Supporting Documentation	<p>Non-Academic Suspension and Exclusion Policy</p> <p>Monash College Student Academic Integrity Policy</p> <p>Academic and Non-Academic Complaints and Appeals Policy</p> <p>Student Code of Conduct</p> <p>Monash College Privacy Policy</p>
Responsibility for Implementation	Director, Student Services
Status	Revised
Key Stakeholders	<p>Monash College Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>Director, Student Services</p> <p>Director, Diplomas</p> <p>Director, Foundation Year</p> <p>Director, English</p> <p>Student Welfare Team Leaders</p> <p>Heads of Studies/Team Leaders</p> <p>Student Safety Manager</p> <p>Student Counsellors</p> <p>Learning Consultant Team Leader</p> <p>Manager Student Administration</p> <p>Monash College Students</p>
Approval Body	Senior Leadership Team
Date Effective	01/03/2019
Next Review Date	01/03/2021
Owner Job Title Division	Director, Student Services
Procedure Author	Academic Governance Officer, Governance
Contact	Director, Student Services

Change History

Version number	Approval date	Approved by	Brief outline of changes
1.0	01/03/2019	Senior Leadership Team	New Procedure
1.1	11.12.2019	Director, Governance	Legislation update
1.2	15.05.2020	Director, Student Services	Change of title for Diploma Senior Team Leader to Head of Studies
1.3	28.07.2020	Director, Student Services and Director, Governance	The Fitness to Study Advisory group will convene and advise on return to study requests.