

### Community Care program

Any community member who feels threatened or unsafe, who has concerns about someone else's behaviour or who is worried about someone's wellbeing, is strongly encouraged to make contact with Community Care staff in one of the ways listed below:

By phone ext 51599 or +613 9905 1599

By email [communitycare@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:communitycare@adm.monash.edu.au)

### In person on your campus (as below)

Berwick	Mondays & Fridays	10am-11am	HWD Hub Building 930
Caulfield	Wednesdays	9am-9.30am	HWD Hub Level 1 Building B
Clayton	Daily	9am-9.30am	HWD Hub Western end, Campus Centre
Gippsland	Mondays	10.30-11.30am	HWD Hub Room 102 Building 3N
Parkville	Mondays	10-10.30am	HWD Hub Ground floor, Sissons Building
Peninsula	Tuesdays & Thursdays	10am-11am	HWD Hub Level 1 Building A

Please note: in situations of immediate threat or emergency, telephone Security on ext 333.

Guidelines for responding to inappropriate,  
concerning and threatening behaviour

[www.adm.monash.edu.au/safercommunity](http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/safercommunity)

# Guidelines for responding to inappropriate, concerning and threatening behaviour

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2008 edition

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# A shared responsibility for a safer community

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This set of guidelines offers simple and practical advice for staff responding to inappropriate, concerning and threatening behaviour and stresses the importance of discussing such behaviour with appropriate University staff.

A community that provides a physically and psychologically safe teaching and learning environment is the responsibility of all participants. Therefore all staff, students, contractors and visitors have a responsibility to contribute to a safe University environment that does not interfere with or impede the ability of others to carry out their study, research or work. This includes:

- behaving with dignity, treating all community members with courtesy and respect
- reporting inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour to Community Care staff
- caring about other community members and encouraging them to seek help
- seeking help or advice about dealing with difficult situations by contacting Community Care staff

Incidents of inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour should always be discussed with a supervisor, lecturer or Head of Department within the University. In addition, staff are encouraged to seek advice from Community Care staff, particularly if they are concerned about aspects of privacy or confidentiality.

Monash University supervisors and managers have additional responsibilities by virtue of their role. Supervisors and managers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the working or learning environment for which they are responsible is free from inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour.

To do this, supervisors and managers\* must:

- be familiar with these guidelines, and with the policies and procedures referred to within the guidelines
- promote and support a safe study and work environment, ensuring that:
  - o work groups and individuals have access to training
  - o workgroups have well practiced immediate response plans in place should threatening behaviour occur
  - o the physical environment is designed with appropriate safety features
- take all reports or incidents of inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour seriously, and:
  - o ensure that advice is sought from Community Care staff
  - o support staff to act as recommended by Community Care staff and in ways that promote the safety of the community
  - o keep a confidential record of all incidents, reports and advice
- ensure that all community members affected by inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour have access to information about support services:
  - o internally – Health, Wellbeing and Development counselling service
  - o externally – Employee Assistance Program (staff only)

- develop protocols and processes that promote an environment where staff, students, contractors and visitors behave in a respectful manner

\* Faculties and departments can access a wide range of assistance in fulfilling their responsibilities as listed above. For further information or assistance staff can contact the University's Crime Prevention Coordinator (Security) and/or the Coordinator: Safer Community Programs (Health, Wellbeing and Development).

## Defining inappropriate, concerning and threatening behaviour

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As members of the Monash community, all staff, students, contractors and visitors have a responsibility to contribute to a safe University environment that does not impede the ability of others to carry out their study, research or work.

Inappropriate, concerning and threatening behaviour from staff, students or visitors requires a careful response that maximises open communication, provides firm limits on unacceptable behaviour, or prevents escalation to violence or other serious incidents thereby promoting the safety of everyone involved.

While some consideration of the motivation behind inappropriate, concerning and threatening conduct might guide the response, it is important to acknowledge that this is irrelevant until the immediate safety of everyone involved is restored. Assessing motivation often requires expertise, particularly in cases where the behaviour persists or is thought to be affected by a mental health problem or substance abuse. It is important that staff do not feel compelled to find out the reasons for inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour, or gain skills in diagnosing causes, but rather feel empowered to seek advice on responding to the behaviour.

The following guidelines are a comprehensive list of options for response, however they are not intended to restrict or direct any person to respond in a particular way. The decision on how a person should respond always remains with that individual. This information suggests actions which may be useful to consider should an individual find themselves in the circumstances listed below

Behaviours that are considered to be inappropriate or concerning include:

- unwanted attention
- unusually persistent complaining
- intentional theft
- pornography use that contravenes Monash University IT Policy and/or affects others
- sexual harassment (unwelcome sexual conduct of any kind)
- all other behaviour, not mentioned, that is concerning and inappropriate. Examples of inappropriate behaviour might be, revealing inappropriate knowledge of personal information or demanding unwarranted special consideration.

Behaviours that are considered threatening include:

- angry, aggressive communications
- an uttered threat to kill, harm another or damage property
- stalking (repeated attempts to impose unwanted communication or contact which elicit concern)
- bullying (repeated, unreasonable conduct in the workplace)
- an uttered threat to self-harm or suicide
- any act of physical violence, property damage, or production of a weapon
- violent critical incident on campus

# Responding to concerning and inappropriate behaviour

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Inappropriate and concerning behaviour differs from threatening behaviour in that the fear of imminent physical danger is not present.

Inappropriate and concerning behaviour includes behaviour that is erratic, markedly different, unusual or out of character. Sometimes you might notice unsuitable or incongruent dress or personal hygiene, strange facial expression, posture, eye contact or loudness and speed of speech. The person may be angry or agitated, may be verbose, or using confused or irrational language. If you are faced with this sort of interaction it is important to listen to your own cues. You may be feeling anxious, helpless, angry or threatened. You might also be struggling to make sense of what the person is saying. It is important to understand that the person may be feeling vulnerable and frightened and may need additional support.

- Demonstrate your concern and suggest they seek help from appropriate services
- Contact Community Care staff for confidential advice and action
- You may also find it helpful to use the SAF (Social and Academic Functioning) scale which will describe observable behaviours and guide you to the most appropriate course of action
- If they are not responding to your efforts, if you feel unsafe, or if you notice escalating behaviour or inability to close the conversation, get assistance from colleagues and contact Security.

Remember that assisting early intervention in these cases will promote positive coping solutions and the greatest likelihood of a full recovery.

Concerns for safety and security:

If the concerning behaviour that you observe also includes suspicious activity or unusual events such as finding doorways blocked or locked when they are not usually, or seeing people in restricted areas without reason,

- Do not approach suspicious people or situations if you do not feel comfortable
- Observe as much as possible from a safe distance and note your observations as soon as practicable
- Contact Security if you require an immediate response, or contact Community Care staff to report incidents of non-urgent suspicious behaviour

Remember, the accurate and timely sharing of information can lead to early prevention of serious incidents.

More specific concerning behaviour includes:

## Unusually persistent complaining

From time to time you may encounter a complainant who despite your every effort and best practise continues to complain to the extent that the pursuit of their grievance becomes emotionally and socially damaging to themselves as well as the targets of their complaints. The transition point from understandable grievance to an abnormal preoccupation may be difficult to discern however prevention, early recognition and safe effective management is essential to minimize the potential disproportionate impact this behaviour has on the person themselves and their targets. Contact Community Care staff who will assist with strategic advice and management of this behaviour.

## Intentional theft

Most thefts are opportunistic and as a result of a rational choice. Occasionally however theft and particularly repeated theft may be one of the behaviours that indicates the person may be experiencing underlying issues which they need help to resolve. Regardless of the cause of the behaviour, in the first instance in both situations the matter should be reported to Security on extn 333.

## Pornography use that contravenes Monash University IT Policy and/or affects others

Viewing of pornography on computers within public areas of the university has the potential to impact adversely on others within the area. Acceptable use of Information Technology Procedures advise that users are not permitted to utilize the University's IT facilities to access pornographic material or to create, store or distribute pornographic material. It will not be a defence to claim that the recipient was a consenting adult. Misuse of IT facilities can result in withdrawal of service or access.

Persistent, prolonged, ongoing accessing of pornographic material rather than attending to other normal life activities, tutorials and sleeping for example, may indicate that the person is struggling in other aspects of their life and needs some help and support. Contact Community Care staff for advice or if the behaviour is currently occurring and impacting on others, contact security on extn 333.

Possession and/or dissemination of child pornography is a crime under Victorian statutes. Any occurrence of this behaviour detected on campus or whilst using the university Information Technology facilities available to staff and students whilst off campus, will be reported to the Police. If you require an immediate response to concerns regarding child pornography contact Security otherwise contact Community Care staff.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is an unwelcome sexual advance or unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances in which a reasonable person would anticipate that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment might occur as a single incident or a series of incidents and may include:

- personally offensive comments
- sexual or smutty jokes
- comments or teasing about a person's alleged sexual activities or private life
- persistent unwelcome invitation/s, telephone calls or emails on campus or at home
- being followed home from campus
- offensive hand or body gestures
- physical contact such as patting, pinching, touching or putting an arm around another person
- the display of sexually-suggestive material
- unwanted declarations of affection
- sexual assault and rape
- use of University computer systems for the retention and distribution of sexually explicit material

Contact Community Care staff who after an initial confidential discussion will refer you to one of the universities trained and experienced Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Advisors for ongoing advice assistance and support under the Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures.

## Responding to threatening behaviour

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### Be prepared

An important aspect in managing potential incidents is to be prepared in terms of the physical environment and skilled in de-escalation techniques.

### Reception/waiting areas

If your workplace is a front line service area there are certain steps you can take to mitigate the risk of escalating threatening behaviour and to protect yourself. Ideally, procedures would be in place to advise staff of any previous threatening behaviour by a person of concern. Staff in the area can develop a prepared safety response which enables them to know what to do if they feel threatened or at risk of harm or violence. Collaborate with other staff in your area to produce a uniform safety response which includes their back up and assistance. Also, keep in mind the following:

- People presenting in an agitated manner should be attended to without delay.
- The first objective is to defuse the situation (please see de-escalation skills p9)
- Staff within the reception area should provide backup and assistance as long as they can do so without endangering themselves
- If the person attending the counter has been sent correspondence indicating that contact will only be by telephone/letter or if their right to be on campus has been removed, immediately report the matter to Security by telephoning extn 333 or activating a duress alarm button.
- If the defusing strategies have been exhausted and the person continues to behave aggressively, aggression increases or if the member of staff fears for their own safety, the person should be asked to leave and security services contacted on extn 333 or by activation of a duress alarm button
- If the person makes a threat or states they have a weapon, see p13, or if there is actual physical violence proceed according to p17
- Your counter area acts as an excellent barrier between yourself and the person of concern. Make sure all counter areas and service areas including desks are free of objects that could be used as weapons or projectiles such as scissors, vases and other heavy objects
- Make use of duress alarm buttons. Security services recommend these are installed at all front counter service areas within the University. Arrange with Security to test this equipment regularly. Installation enquiries can be made on extn 53059.
- Ensure that doors to staff areas are kept closed and where possible locked at all times, regularly change entry combinations to pass-protected doors and locks
- Do not leave keys or security passes unattended and report lost or stolen keys or access cards to security immediately

## Interview rooms

Where concerning or threatening behaviour is anticipated contact Community Care staff or Security for advice and support prior to the encounter.

- Procedures should be put in place to ensure that staff are aware of any previous threatening behaviour
- Ensure the room is clear of objects that can be used as projectiles or weapons. If a drink is to be offered water is suggested (cold, non staining) in paper cups
- Know the location of the duress alarm button. A temporary portable duress alarm button is available on request from security services
- Always arrange furniture in the meeting room so that you are nearest the exit. This ensures that if you decide to leave you are not trapped with the concerning person between you and the exit
- Position tables or desks between you and the person you are meeting with so that you are protected and out of immediate reach. If you decide to leave the room, the person of concern has to negotiate these obstacle to follow you
- Where possible have another staff member in the meeting. Discuss beforehand who will lead the interview
- Consider leaving the exit door open or opening the door if your concern increases during the interview
- When leaving the interview room minimise the risk of violence by walking beside or behind the person of concern

## Angry, aggressive communication

Low level aggression exhibited by raised voices, yelling and general verbal abuse can be experienced face to face or over the telephone despite efforts to prepare well and establish open communication. When people become upset and temporarily lose control, the following de-escalation skills are recommended.

De-escalation Skills:

- Be calm: the more fear and confusion you display, the more the aggressor feels in control which reinforces their threatening behaviour. Remind yourself to be calm and professional and follow your prepared procedures. Be ready to withdraw from the scene should their aggression escalate
- Be aware: assess the situation, step back and take in information – keep thinking. Avoid being drawn into the aggressor's emotional storm by concentrating on the tasks you have to perform
- Be professional: if you have decided it is safe to engage the aggressor, keep a safe distance (outside arm's length) and attempt to engage them in conversation. Use their name, if you know it, and introduce yourself, including your role, and let them know you want to understand the issue and that you intend to help them
- The aggressive person is likely to be confused and may have trouble taking in complex directions so be clear and firm. Keep them talking and ask them to help you work on finding a solution to their problem

- If possible only one person should talk to the individual to try and clarify their concern
- Convey respect and active listening, remain objective while acknowledging their difficulty.

Early acknowledgment of an emotion allows the person to attempt to regain control for example in a non judgemental unemotional way state,

“You seem very ....(name the emotion e.g. distressed).. . by this, I'll do what I can to help”

On agreement from the person on the identified emotion restate the emotion and reflect that you have heard their concerns. For example;

“You are....(emotional state)...because...(if you are certain of the cause state this otherwise be silent and allow the person to clarify what has caused the emotional state....”

Once the person agrees with your reflective listening, focus on developing possible courses of action. Describe a possible action and ask if that course or action makes sense to them, for example, “How would that work for you?”

- Discuss alternatives and let them know what you can and cannot do to help them while stressing the positives and their options
- Do not challenge or argue with their thinking if they seem irrational or delusional
- Do not react to language or gestures aimed at you
- Do not order, command, warn or threaten
- Do not moralise or ridicule
- Never touch the person as it can be interpreted as an affront or threat
- Maintain normal eye contact, deliberate staring can be seen as aggressive
- Always be aware of your own physical and emotional safety
- Where anger is specifically being directed at you, at a minor level, inform the person of your feelings of discomfort that their behaviour is causing you and clearly state that you had not intended to add to the persons upset
- Withdraw earlier rather than later, and if necessary offer to discuss the matter further at another time when the person may be calmer

## If the behaviour continues after every effort has been made to defuse the situation:

Abuse thresholds of staff vary. Be aware of your own threshold for being abused verbally and discuss with other staff and supervisors their views of what is acceptable.

### In face to face interaction

- Give a clear non emotional, non personalised message which motivates the person to control their behaviour and gives them an alternative, for example;  
“The university recognises that when people are very (... emotion ...) it is difficult to resolve matters and it can cause distress to staff. The university will not allow us to continue if you are expressing yourself this way and causing others to be distressed.

Then suggest;

a short break and offer a drink,  
or

the interview ceases with the following options;

- a future meeting to discuss the issues
- a support person to also attend
- a phone appointment to further explore the issues
- the person sends a letter listing the points they wish to raise
- other agreed option

If the person fails to cooperate and the behaviour continues or escalates:

- Advise the person that such behaviour is totally unacceptable and if it continues the interview will be terminated and the person requested to leave
- Never feel obliged to continue or persevere with interviews if you feel distressed or threatened
- If the behaviour persists or the person refuses to leave after requests to do so advise them that security services will be contacted
- Contact security on extn 333 or activate a duress alarm button
- If you are feeling distressed or fearful, remove yourself from the interview. Depending on your level of fear, do either of the following then contact security if the duress alarm button has not been activated
  - leave the room immediately (see page 17 Choosing to leave)
  - excuse yourself and move through the exit, turn and state, “The university will not allow me to continue this interview when you are expressing your distress and anger in this way as it is harmful to staff. Walk away and wait for security.

### Telephone interaction

Where all avenues of best practise customer service and de-escalation techniques have been exhausted:

- Give a warning: Advise the caller assertively that verbal abuse will not be tolerated and the call will be terminated if necessary. Examples of termination warnings are:
  - ‘I understand you have a genuine concern but the university won’t allow me to continue while you express yourself in this way’.
  - ‘I’m sorry but I don’t think we can discuss this while you are speaking this way.’
  - ‘I’m sorry but if you have no questions I’ll have to terminate the call in order to deal with other people who are waiting.’
- If threats to self, others or property are received follow the guidelines on page 13
- If feeling stressed staff should hit the mute button before letting off steam (a hand held over the mouth piece has little effect)

- If a caller continues to be aggressive they should be told that no further information can be given to them and remind the caller that they have already been asked to stop speaking that way. After restating that the call is being terminated, staff should then promptly hang up
- Make a file note of the conversation and termination
- Advise others to take a consistent approach with the caller if they call back in the same aggressive state

### Repeated aggressive phone calls

- Protocols should be developed, for example:
  - o The call should be directed to a supervisor
  - o If after discussion with other staff and supervisors the agreed approach might be to correspond in writing only if the caller has been advised previously of this, this condition should be repeated and the call again terminated
  - o Where appropriate the caller should be directed to a particular person and be advised that calls will only be dealt with by that person at a nominated time or a nominated day

### Threat to harm, kill or damage property

#### Written threats: email, text message, letter

In the case of receiving an email, text message or letter containing a threat of any kind;

- Determine if the threat is imminent if so contact Security immediately on extn 333
- If the threat is of a non-imminent nature contact Community Care staff for advice
- Save an email or text message in its original format
- Place a letter containing a threat into a plastic pocket as soon as possible and with the minimal amount of handling
- Do not attempt to respond to the threatening email, text message or letter

#### Verbal threats in person or telephone call

- If, in conversation, you hear a threat to harm, kill or damage property pause the conversation and in a non-emotive, non-accusatory tone ask:
  - “Did you just say.....(repeat the threat in their words and clarify “What exactly do you mean by that?”)
  - If the person retracts the threat, advise them of the following:
    - “The university views the uttering of threats very seriously and if the behaviour continues I will not be permitted to assist you any further”
    - Continue the interaction only if you are comfortable about doing so
- As soon as possible write down the wording of the threat and details of context in which it was delivered

When the conversation is terminated report the incident to the Community Care staff or Security.

Where you are not comfortable about continuing the conversation or the threats are repeated or escalated leave the area or terminate the telephone call. Activate a duress alarm button or call security on extn 333 for an immediate response. Further management of the person who uttered the threat will occur. This may involve advice on the management of the next encounter with the person, and a Safety Plan meeting with stakeholders. An investigation and threat assessment may be carried out in order to establish security services operations if necessary. Formal university processes under the student or staff discipline procedures or the Bullying and Occupational Violence Policy and Procedures may be indicated. Where necessary matters will be reported to the Police. Referrals to HWD Counselling Service, medical services or external specialist services may also be necessary.

Try not to escalate concern in your work environment. Understand that by contacting the appropriate service – either Security or Community Care Line, that the threat will be assessed and managed by a team of professionals who have your safety and the safety of those around you uppermost on their agenda.

### Stalking

Stalking is repeated attempts to impose on another unwanted communication or contact which elicit concern.

In cases of unwanted attention or relationship seeking do not make vague or unassertive responses. A succinct message “I do not want a relationship with you” conveys your wishes unequivocally. A stalker will misinterpret ambiguous responses and use them to manipulate you. Deliver the message in a calm respectful manner. Do not engage in any further discussions with the pursuer or indulge them in counter argument or negotiation. If you suspect the motive behind the unwelcome contact is resentment or revenge then contact Community Care staff. If you require an immediate response contact your campus Security services.

Contact Community Care staff if the behaviour continues after a clear message has been delivered.

Advice from experienced staff will be given on the management of the situation including strategies for evading the stalker and bringing the unwanted behaviour to an end, personal safety issues and preservation of evidence. Where circumstances dictate support will be given to escalate the matter to formal university student or staff discipline processes, or reporting the offence to the Police. Where an intervention order is required, Community Care staff will assist.

If you are in danger, call Security immediately on extn 333 or call on colleagues for assistance to alert Security.

If you are emotionally affected by the behaviour contact a counsellor at Health Wellbeing and Development

### Bullying

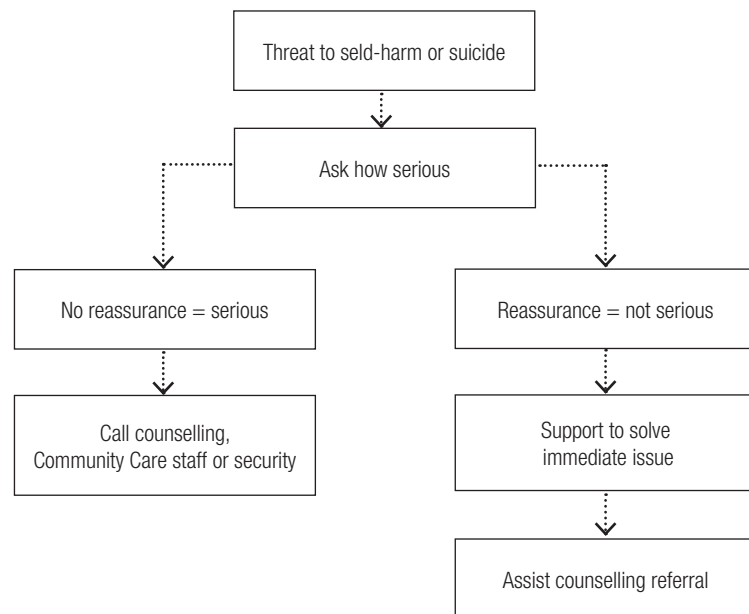
Workplace bullying is defined as: repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards a staff member or student, or group of staff members or group of students, that creates a risk to health and safety.

Bullying does not include any legitimate or reasonable use of performance management processes, disciplinary action, allocation of work in compliance with systems, implementation of organisational change or downsizing, action taken to transfer or redeploy a staff member or a decision not to promote or reclassify the staff member.

The University is committed to the provision of information and training and to manage any incidents of workplace bullying in a fair and timely manner. The university has a Bullying and Occupational Violence Policy and procedure. Contact the Community Care staff or Occupational Health and Safety for further information.

## Threats to self-harm or suicide

Threats to self-harm or suicide should always be taken seriously. The following flow-chart is designed as an example of a typical process of decision making in cases of threats to self-harm or suicide.



If someone says they intend to harm themselves or commit suicide ask them:

How seriously should I take this?

Can I organise for you to see a doctor or counsellor?

If the person gives no reassurance that they **will not** harm themselves do not let them leave alone. You can ask if they have a friend or family member who could come and be with them.

Call the Counselling Service, Community Care staff or Security for assistance.

When the threat is taken seriously, many times, people are quite surprised and indicate that they were not serious and “would never really do it.”

It is important to indicate that you realise they are very stressed and that they can get some help to sort through the issues.

Assist referral to Counselling

Mental Health First Aid training is useful for gaining a practical available of how to respond to incidents

<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/training/courses/first-aid/mental-health-firstaid.html>

## Responding to violence

### An act of physical violence, property damage or production of a weapon.

An act of physical violence, property damage or production of a weapon on campus is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at Monash University. The following university statutes, policy and procedures apply and are in addition to Victorian Legislation.

Student Discipline statute 4.1

Student Health statute 6.3

No Weapons on Campus policy

Monash University Enterprise Agreement (Academic and General staff) 2005

Bullying and Occupational Violence policy and procedure

- Any act of physical violence or production of a weapon should lead to immediate termination of an interview, conversation or other contact
- Member of staff should immediately, if it is safe to do so, withdraw to safety and activate a duress alarm button or contact security on extn 333 (see Choosing to leave below)
- If there is risk to other persons, and it is safe to do so, they should be alerted and asked to relocate immediately to a safer place. If escape is not possible, treat the situation extremely seriously, for example don't smile or appear casual as a physically violent person will often be in a highly unstable mental state and such behaviour may act as a trigger
- Obey orders quickly, a failure to do so may lead to further violence
- See also page 19 Violent critical incident on campus
- Immediate medical assistance should be given to those injured, call the campus health service, Security and an ambulance if necessary
- Make detailed file notes when the danger has abated.
- Further management of the person making threats will occur by an experienced team of Monash staff after the event has been reported to Security and Community Care staff

### Choosing to leave

If you can leave the area then it is best to do so.

If you believe that a person making threats has the capacity to carry out the threat and you feel in imminent danger of physical violence you may use such force as is reasonable and necessary to protect yourself. Reasonable force means the amount of force that is sufficient to stop an attack or to prevent injury but nothing more. Staff are expected to retreat whenever possible and if the choice is between hitting an attacker and running away, you should run away. Other staff assisting should not threaten or resort to physical violence except for their own self defence or the defence of another person. Again the force used should only be that which is necessary to ward off an attack.

- If possible activate a duress alarm button.
- Call security on extn 333 when safe to do so.

#### Who to leave

- A person with an obvious physical advantage and who appears to be looking for a fight
- Someone who appears to believe they have nothing to lose and seems intent on murder-suicide
- A person who is extremely agitated, possibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is mentally unstable
- Agitated people defending their own territory or personal space

#### When to leave

- Preferably when you assess the person is not calming down
- When you have exhausted your options to defuse the situation
- The moment the situation becomes uncontrollable
- When the threatening person drops their guard, becomes distracted or makes a mistake

#### How to leave:

- Don't leave as a panic reaction but as a positive action as per your previously thought through personal safety response
- If possible activate the duress alarm button
- Go to a place of safety, not just away from the danger
- Once started, don't hesitate or stop until free and clear
- In a confined or cluttered space, do not run at full speed and risk running in to something and causing an injury to yourself
- Place obstacles in the path of person if being pursued
- Take off your shoes if this will make running easier and quieter
- Use alternative routes if your planned route becomes blocked

## Violent critical incident on campus

In general, university campuses are safer than the communities that surround them due to the additional resources and programs designed to help reduce the incidence and impact of campus crime and promote safe environments.

Despite this, there have been instances of serious and lethal violence at universities in Australia and in other parts of the world, usually involving the use of weapons.

#### If you are immediately threatened by serious violent behaviour including potentially lethal behaviour:

It is important to get to a safe place and notify others at the earliest opportunity;

- Always contact campus security by calling extn 333 (campus phone) or 9905 3333 using an external line or your mobile
- Activate a duress alarm button if available at your location
- Contact Police by calling 000
- Advise your location, name, contact number and describe the incident
- Listen carefully and follow any directions given to you

#### If you are in a building office or room

- STAY THERE, be silent and secure the door
- If the door does not lock and opens inwards, consider jamming a wedge in the door or barricading it with heavy furniture
- If the door has a window, close any blind and stay out of view
- Listen for the building public address system or evacuation siren and where possible respond to these directions
- If you are in a ground floor location, are able and it is safe to do so, consider exiting through a window
- If the windows don't open, or you cannot break them, or you are not on a ground floor, get out of sight, stay low and quiet until you know you are out of danger
- If you manage to exit the building and no Security or Police are visible move well away from the location of the incident to a position of safety
- Where police or security officers are present on the scene, identify yourself and follow their instructions
- Once you are in a safe place, stay there until it is safe to leave

#### If you are in a hallway or corridor

- Get into a room and secure the room
- If the door does not lock and opens inwards, consider jamming a wedge in the door or barricading it with heavy furniture
- If the door has a window, close any blind and stay out of view
- Do not hide in restrooms
- Do not run long distances along corridors to exit
- If you are near an exit and it is safe to do so, exit the building

### **If you are outside**

- Stay alert and look for appropriate cover locations
- Brick walls, large trees, retaining walls or parked vehicles will provide some cover
- If safe to do so, move to the cover location
- Avoid running long distances outside cover unless necessary
- Where police or security officers are present on the scene, identify yourself and follow their instructions

### **If you are trapped by or with a violent suspect**

- Do not do anything to provoke them
- Try to stay calm
- Do what they say and do not move suddenly
- When confronted by a violent situation, only you can decide what you will do to defend yourself or others. An act of violence in self defence is lawful if it is necessary to avert the threat and the force used is reasonable to respond to that threat

### **Always**

- Notify campus security and or the police as soon as it is safe to do so
- If you are fleeing a situation, identify yourself to any police and security present when safe to do so

These safety tips and guidelines are designed to provide general options for consideration where serious violent behaviour occurs on campus. You should always consider the particular circumstances of the situation carefully before deciding how to respond.

## **Follow-up management of inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour**

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Inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour requires a response in the moment where it occurred and a response to follow-up any ongoing safety issues including a decision about what further action should be taken. Follow up should be legal, safe, humane and fair for all involved. Follow-up by the University includes

### **Communication and containment**

The Coordinator Community Care programs will coordinate communication between involved stakeholders as required to manage each case and will be responsible for informing the appropriate Divisional Director of situations where violence or other harm has occurred and where there is significant risk of violence or harm. The Divisional Director will escalate serious cases to the Vice Principal (Administration) where necessary, who will in turn inform other members of the Vice-Chancellor's Group (VCG) as required.

### **Determination about a Student**

Chapter 4 of the Monash University Calendar - Statutes outlines the applicable disciplinary procedures if it is decided to take further action. These generally fall into two categories, general or academic misconduct. Any staff member who has reasonable grounds to believe that an act of general misconduct has been committed by a student must report to a supervisor or line manager. They will report the matter to the associate dean (teaching) of the relevant faculty or the associate dean's nominee who can take disciplinary action. Discipline committees in each faculty hear charges of misconduct.

Where a student is found guilty of misconduct, the penalty can range from a fine to suspension or exclusion from the university. There is a right of appeal. Full details of the statute governing discipline are available on the web at:

<http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/calendar/statutes/statutes04.html>

### **General misconduct**

General misconduct is any behaviour in relation to people or property which is contrary to generally accepted standards of behaviour and includes behaviour which intimidates, harasses, threatens or endangers others.

### **Academic misconduct**

Academic misconduct is cheating, attempting to cheat or assisting a fellow student to cheat. Any means used to obtain an unfair advantage in work submitted for assessment may be considered as cheating. Examples may include creating a disturbance or harassing another student in an examination in order to create a diversion, or making a request for Special Consideration accompanied by a threat to a staff member.

## Exclusion on Health Grounds

Statute 6.3 of the Monash University Calendar - Exclusion for Health Reasons states that the dean of a faculty may ...suspend... or refuse to enrol or re enrol (a student), ... where by reason of the state of health or disability of that person, the dean is of the opinion that such action is reasonably necessary to protect-

- the health or safety of any person (including the person concerned)
- or property

The dean must obtain a report from a doctor or psychologist or from security before taking action.

A student who has been suspended, excluded or whose re-enrolment has been refused under this Statute, has a right to appeal. An Appeals Committee appointed by the Academic Board can request a medical examination at the expense of the university by a person or persons nominated by the appeals committees

Where mental illness has been diagnosed The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) is relevant. The Act protects the rights of students with a psychiatric disability and works towards inclusive practice so that they can be reasonably accommodated at the university. The Disability Liaison Unit can provide support for students who have a disability.

## Determination about Staff

Monash University Enterprise Agreement (Academic and General Staff 2005) provides avenues for dealing with staff exhibiting inappropriate, concerning and threatening behaviour. Staff from Workplace Relations Branch must be consulted prior to any action being taken.

## Occupational Welfare

Part F, Section 44, Occupational Welfare, applies to temporary and inappropriate behaviour that appears to have some acute psychological and medical cause. Application for leave with or without pay can be made to undertake an approved rehabilitation or counselling or treatment programme. Failure to undertake such an approved rehabilitation or counselling program at the universities request may result in the University seeking recourse to relevant provisions of the Agreement as an alternative remedy to the situation. Where the staff member refuses a request to take leave, the University may direct the staff member to attend an interview during normal working time with a properly qualified member of the University Counselling Service who may, on the basis of a report from the University and that interview (or such further interview as the Counsellor may consider necessary) refer the staff member for assessment for such rehabilitation, treatment or counselling as the Counsellor considers may be appropriate. Pending such interviews and/or assessments, the University may direct the staff member not to perform his/her normal duties. Should the staff member refuse to attend such interviews or assessments, the University may direct that the staff member take sick leave until either 14 days have elapsed or until the staff member undertakes the interviews or recommended assessment. If at the end of the 14 days, the staff member still refuses the required interview or any recommended assessment, the University may have recourse to relevant provisions of the Agreement, as an alternative remedy to the situation.

## Disciplinary and Grievance matters

Part H applies to disciplinary and grievance matters. Section 51 applies to disciplinary action of Academic staff for misconduct or serious misconduct. Section 52 applies to General Staff disciplinary procedures and includes behaviour considered to be, a breach of the university's policies, regulations or procedures, serious misconduct, or serious and wilful misconduct.

# Accessing help and support within Monash University

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## Involving Security

When faced with an immediate threat or emergency, contact Security by dialling extn 333 or 9905 3333 on your mobile, use a red emergency phone within buildings or activate the button on a help post within university grounds. The university security control room is manned 24/7 and to facilitate response times is in immediate contact via portable radio to security patrol staff patrolling within the campus grounds and buildings.

Contact Security at any time for advice and support relating to concerning inappropriate or threatening behaviour. You may wish to speak directly to the Security Investigations Supervisor on 9902 0855 or the Crime Prevention Coordinator on 9902 0087. Security will also enlist the assistance of Community Care staff, Counselling staff or other internal or external specialists.

## Involving Community Care staff

The Monash Community Care program has been established to provide confidential advice for all community members, linking them with staff experienced in the assessment and management of concerning, inappropriate or threatening behaviours within the University community. Any community member who feels threatened or unsafe, who has concerns about someone else's behaviour or who is worried about someone's wellbeing, is strongly encouraged to make contact with Community Care staff.

Telephone: Extn 51599 or +613 9905 1599 or

Email: [communitycare@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:communitycare@adm.monash.edu.au)

Drop in and speak with Community Care staff in person:

Berwick	Mondays & Fridays	10am-11am	HWD Hub Building 930
Caulfield	Wednesdays	9am-9.30am	HWD Hub Level 1 Building B
Clayton	Daily	9am-9.30am	HWD Hub Campus Centre
Gippsland	Mondays	10.30-11.30am	HWD Hub Room 102 Building 3N
Parkville	Mondays	10-10.30am	HWD Hub Ground, Sissons Building
Peninsula	Tuesdays & Thursdays	10am-11am	HWD Hub Level 1 Building A

## Involving the University Solicitor's Office

The University Solicitors Office provides legal advice and services to management and staff of the University to ensure the effective implementation of University policies and statutes, and compliance with external legal requirements (such as privacy and discrimination law), to support the operation of the University's teaching, research and management activities.

In regard to inappropriate, concerning and threatening behaviour, the University Solicitor's Office will

- Provide advice prior to any decision being made to suspend a student under Monash Statute 6.3 – Exclusion for Health Reasons
- Consider whether there is sufficient evidence for the dean to take action under Statute 6.3
- Provide advice prior to any decision being made to subject a student to disciplinary action under Monash Statute 4.1 – Discipline
- Consider whether disciplinary action is an appropriate response where mental health issues are suspected
- Consider and provide advice about privacy obligations/implications
- Consider and provide advice about any implications under anti-discrimination laws in the event that inappropriate behaviour is linked to an underlying disability to ensure that any proposed action will not directly or indirectly discriminate against a student on the basis of that disability

For advice on discipline and exclusion procedures, contact Glenda Beecher Deputy University Solicitor, 9905 4296. <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/legal/>

## Involving Health, Wellbeing and Development (HWD) Counselling

We understand it can be difficult to refer people to Counselling services, you may use some of the following ideas to normalise the need to access counselling assistance:

- The University understands that many factors, often outside the student's control, can get in the way of their academic progress. The University provides services, like counselling, to assist students to achieve their academic goals.
- You don't have to try and work this out all on your own
- I'd like you to get some help from Health, Wellbeing and Development staff who can
  - Give you some information and advice on (the present issue of concern)
  - Help you develop strategies to deal with (the present issue of concern) to make sure this doesn't disrupt your academic goals
  - Explore your options and help you problem solve
  - Help you get through this really difficult patch
- If the person is more comfortable seeing a doctor then encourage them to do so

## Pathways to counselling

- If you have a counsellor based in your faculty, call them and discuss options
- Call HWD and let them know you need to talk to a counsellor regarding a person you are concerned about
- If a counsellor is not available, leave a message asking for the next available counsellor to phone you (indicate if the matter is urgent)
- Call HWD and ask about drop-in times on your campus. Arrange to walk over with the person during that time
- By arrangement, counsellors or Community Care staff can meet with you at your location. You can introduce this idea by requesting to see them again soon, and that you wish to invite a colleague whose expertise will help develop a strategy for dealing with their current situation
- Always let the person know that there is an after hours telephone counselling service for Monash student and staff 1300 361 008

Counsellors will assess whether the person's behaviour or distress can be contained, or whether Security, health services, or psychiatric services are needed.

Berwick 9904 7019 HWD Hub Building 930  
Caulfield 9903 2500 HWD Hub Level 1 Building B  
Clayton 9905 3156 HWD Hub Western end, Campus Centre  
Gippsland 9902 6425 HWD Hub Room 102 Building 3N  
Parkville 9903 9689 HWD Hub Ground floor, Sissons Building  
Peninsula 9904 4223 HWD Hub Level 1 Building A

## Other specialist areas of the University

**Workplace Relations** - advice and assistance in the management of staff exhibiting inappropriate, concerning and threatening behaviour

**Occupational, Health and Safety** - advice and assistance in bullying and occupational violence, and hazard and incident reports on stress related issues

- Helpline 9905 1016

**Equity and Diversity** - advice and assistance with issues involving unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment, and advice and support for staff and students on disability related matters

- 9905 5704

**Health Services** - advice or attendance at medical emergencies

- Berwick: Berwick Family Medical Clinic 9769 5500 (40 Clyde Road, Berwick)
- Caulfield 9903 1177 (Level 1, B Block)
- Clayton 9905 3175 Emergencies 9905 1000 (Ground floor, Campus Centre)
- Peninsula 9904 4223 (Level 1, A Building)
- For health services in an emergency at Gippsland and Parkville, call Security.

**University Privacy Officer** - advice about the privacy principles and their objectives, complaints about privacy and monitoring privacy compliance.

- 9905 6011

## Student Rights

Student Rights officers are available through the student representative body on each campus. They can assist and represent students with academic problems, disciplinary issues or complaints.

- Berwick: Monash Union of Berwick Students (MUBS) 9904 7092
- Caulfield: Monash Student Union (MONSU) Caulfield 9903 2596
- Clayton: Monash Students Association (MSA) 9905 3118 / 9905 312
- Parkville: Monash Parkville Students Association (MPSA) 9903 9119
- Peninsula: Monash Student Union (MONSU) Peninsula 9904 4217
- Gippsland: Monash University Gippsland Student Union (MUGSU) 1800 816 620 or 9902 6248

# Privacy and confidentiality

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If you are worried about how privacy or confidentiality applies in any given situation, you can seek advice from Community Care staff – please do not let concerns about privacy stop you from discussing a case with them.

Monash University is required to comply with State privacy legislation in relation to an individual's personal or health information, and has developed a privacy policy outlining how Monash handles personal and health information, found at: <http://www.privacy.monash.edu.au/policies/privacy-policy.html>

The privacy laws limit how Monash University may use and disclose an individual's personal and health information. However, both Monash policy and privacy laws support disclosing a person's personal and health information in the following circumstances:

- Monash University reasonably believes that the use or disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare or to the safety or welfare of any other person
- Monash has reasonable grounds to suspect that unlawful activity has been, is being or may be engaged in and uses or discloses the information to investigate the matter or report its concerns to relevant persons or authorities; or
  - The use or disclosure is required or authorised by or under law; or
  - The use or disclosure is otherwise permitted by the privacy laws; or
- The information is being used for the primary purpose it was collected, or a related secondary purpose that would be within the reasonable expectations of the individual; or
- The individual has consented to the use or disclosure

Some University staff are also bound by ethics dictated by their profession and in some cases, a professional registration board. In most instances responses to threatening or inappropriate behaviour will be consistent with both privacy laws and professional requirements. In cases where there might appear to be conflict between the two eg where privacy law permits disclosure in circumstances which might be seen as a breach of client confidentiality, professional immunity exists as long as it can be demonstrated that all reasonable care was taken in deciding on a response. It is important to remember that confidential information may be released if this is reasonably necessary to prevent possible harm to the patient or others and that a decision to release such information would normally be made in consultation with a supervisor or another counsellor.

*For further advice on the privacy laws and how they may apply to a particular situation, please contact the Monash University Privacy Officer or the University Solicitor's office.*

*We wish to acknowledge that information presented in this document has been adapted from the following sources:*

*A Guide to the Management of the Unreasonable Complainant and their Behaviours, 2005 Dr. Grant Lester  
Managing Violent and Potentially Violent Situations, David Cherry and Bronwyn Upston, 2002, NSW  
Dealing with difficult complainants, 2004, Victorian Ombudsman  
Surviving Stalking, 2000 Dr Michele Pathe*