

# GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ISSUES AMONG STAFF AND STUDENTS

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. PURPOSE</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2. SCOPE</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>3. ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>4. DEFINITIONS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
4.1 CONTRACTOR .....	2
4.2 HEAD OF ACADEMIC / ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT .....	2
4.3 IMPAIRED .....	2
4.4 MONASH UNIVERSITY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH .....	2
4.5 REPRESENTATIVE .....	2
4.6 SUPERVISOR .....	2
<b>5. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>6. RESPONSIBILITIES</b> .....	<b>3</b>
6.1 HEADS OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS .....	3
6.2 SUPERVISORS .....	3
6.3 STAFF AND STUDENTS .....	4
6.4 CONTRACTORS .....	4
<b>7. MANAGEMENT OF SUDDEN &amp; UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR</b> .....	<b>4</b>
7.1 STAFF .....	4
7.2 CONTRACTORS WORKING ON MONASH UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES .....	5
7.3 STUDENTS .....	6
<b>8. LONG-TERM DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AMONG STAFF</b> .....	<b>6</b>
8.1 IDENTIFICATION .....	6
8.2 UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES .....	7
8.3 REHABILITATION .....	9
8.4 RETURN TO WORK GUIDELINES .....	9
<b>9. LONG-TERM DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AMONG STUDENTS</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>10. ILLEGAL DRUGS OR DRUG PARAPHERNALIA</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>11. PRESCRIPTION AND OVER THE COUNTER DRUGS</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>12. ACTIVITIES REQUIRING NO ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>13. ONGOING EDUCATION</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>14. DRUG AND ALCOHOL COUNSELLING AND RESOURCES</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>15. RECORDS</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>16. REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>12</b>

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide guidance on the management of drug and alcohol issues among University staff, students, contractors and visitors, in accordance with the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004).

## 2. SCOPE

These guidelines apply to staff, students, visitors and contractors at the Australian campuses of Monash University.

## 3. ABBREVIATIONS

<b>EAP</b>	Employee Assistance Program
<b>OHS</b>	Occupational Health and Safety

## 4. DEFINITIONS

### 4.1 CONTRACTOR

- A contractor is any person or business entity, engaged through Facilities & Services, IT Services Division or a Monash controlled entity who enters into a contractual arrangement to carry out work for Monash University or for a Monash controlled entity.
- All contractors must have completed: Monash University contractor registration, and the Monash University contractor induction program.

### 4.2 HEAD OF ACADEMIC / ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

For the purposes of these guidelines, head of academic/administrative unit is used to denote the head of an area. For academic areas, this term includes head of faculty, department, school, institute or centre. For administrative areas, the term includes head of division, branch, centre or unit.

### 4.3 IMPAIRED

For the purposes of these procedures, 'impaired' means adversely affected by alcohol. As a general guide a person is impaired by alcohol when their level of alcohol consumption is likely to be at, or over, the legal limit for driving.

### 4.4 MONASH UNIVERSITY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Monash University Occupational Health refers to the Occupational Health Nurse Consultants and Occupational Health Physician based in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS).

### 4.5 REPRESENTATIVE

For the purposes of these procedures, 'representative' means a person chosen by the staff member to provide support during grievance or disciplinary procedures, but not a practising barrister or solicitor.

### 4.6 SUPERVISOR

Supervisors are those who are responsible for overseeing:

- the work program of other staff;
- the study program of honours and postgraduate students; and
- undergraduate students in lectures, tutorial and practical classes and on field trips.

## 5. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

- 5.1 Monash University is committed to a safe and healthy workplace for staff, students, contractors and visitors. The University endeavours to educate, raise awareness and facilitate the adoption of healthy lifestyles.
- 5.2 Monash University expects that each staff member, student, contractor and visitor will be at all times unimpaired by alcohol or other drugs whilst attending or representing the University.
- 5.3 Unlawful, excessive and irresponsible use of alcohol and other drugs can have a negative impact on judgement, academic performance, health, personal relationships and safety, can result in damage to property and equipment, and can adversely affect the rights, comfort and enjoyment of individuals.
- 5.4 Monash University does not accept alcohol or drug abuse as an excuse for inappropriate behaviour or sub-standard performance, and has made a commitment to assist staff who develop drug and alcohol problems through appropriate rehabilitation and support programs as far as is reasonably possible.
- 5.5 The rights of staff and students to privacy and confidentiality are respected, but this must be balanced with Monash University's duty and responsibility to maintain a safe and healthy workplace for all staff, students, contractors and visitors. If there is a situation where drug and alcohol misuse may contribute to potentially significant safety, legal or performance events, Monash University will act responsibly to protect its staff, students, contractors, visitors and the community in which it operates.
- 5.6 The potential consequences of unlawful, excessive or irresponsible use of alcohol or other drugs for staff or students may include:
- direction to undertake assessment or counselling; and/or
  - an official warning, caution, suspension, dismissal or other disciplinary action under the Monash University Statute 4.1 – Discipline;
  - eviction and/or exclusion from a Monash Residential Services accommodation complex; and/or
  - referral to police.
- 5.7 Students and staff of Monash University are subject to civil and criminal laws as well as University regulations and policies.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

A comprehensive list of OHS responsibilities is provided in the document [OHS management at Monash University: Structure, functions, roles and responsibilities](#). A summary of responsibilities with regards to the management of alcohol and other drugs is provided below.

### 6.1 HEADS OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

It is the responsibility of heads of academic and administrative units to:

- address safety issues or impaired performance that may result from alcohol or drug use;
- take action if there is a risk to the wellbeing or welfare of the person or others;
- implement these guidelines in their area.

### 6.2 SUPERVISORS

It is the responsibility of supervisors to:

- identify work performance problems that may be a result of alcohol or other drugs and take appropriate action;
- take action if there is a risk to the wellbeing or welfare of the person or others;
- report any incidents on a Hazard and Incident Report Form;
- follow these procedures in addressing a potential alcohol or other drug issue among staff, students or contractors.

### 6.3 STAFF AND STUDENTS

It is the responsibility of staff and students to:

- ensure that they do not attend or represent the University if impaired by alcohol or other drugs;
- ensure that when they are in charge of Monash University vehicles and machinery, handling hazardous chemicals or undertaking hazardous activities, they are not impaired by alcohol or other drugs and that they comply at all times with relevant Victorian laws and University policies and guidelines;
- report any incidents on a Hazard and Incident Report Form;
- seek assistance if they require support in dealing with an alcohol or drug-related problem.

### 6.4 CONTRACTORS

It is the responsibility of contractors to:

- ensure that they do not attend the University if impaired by alcohol or other drugs;
- report any incidents on a Hazard and Incident Report Form.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF SUDDEN & UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR

Where a person is creating an obvious disruption, a potentially hazardous situation or where the supervisor suspects that the person may be affected by drugs or alcohol, the following procedures should be applied by the supervisor or head of academic/administrative unit.

### 7.1 STAFF

#### 7.1.1 Managing the incident

- If the staff member is seriously ill or potentially in need of urgent medical attention, call an ambulance immediately and notify Security.
- If the staff member is displaying markedly abnormal behaviour s/he should be asked to attend a medical practitioner for assessment of his/her fitness to continue working for the rest of the shift.
- Do not accuse the person of being impaired by drugs or alcohol. Focus on the behaviour, and do not make assumptions about the cause.
- If you believe that the staff member should not complete his/her shift because of safety concerns, the staff member should be sent home by the most convenient method except by the individual driving him/herself.
- If the staff member becomes belligerent and/or refuses to leave or insists on driving, contact Security on campus, or the Police off campus. Again, do **not** accuse the person of being impaired by drugs or alcohol. Focus on the behaviour, and do not make assumptions about the cause.
- Arrange to meet with the staff member and if s/he chooses, a representative of her/his choice, the next day or shift to discuss the incident.

- Complete a [Hazard and Incident Report Form](#), allowing an opportunity for a response from the affected person. Reports containing confidential issues, such as suspected alcohol and other drug incidents, can be forwarded directly to OHS, bypassing other parties as necessary.

#### 7.1.2 **The day or shift after the incident**

If, at this later meeting, there is uncertainty about the staff member's ability to return to work in a safe manner, then the staff member should be asked to attend Monash University Health Service if available, or his/her own doctor, for a medical opinion regarding fitness for work.

#### 7.1.3 **Disciplinary Action**

- The provisions of the Monash University Enterprise Agreements and other University policies for managing grievances, harassment and unsatisfactory performance may apply.
- Links to all relevant policies and agreements may be found at <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/workplace-policy/grievances/dispute-settlement/>
- Before commencing a formal investigation:
  - discuss the incident with your manager, and
  - Monash University Occupational Health, and
  - Monash Workplace Relations Branch.
- No action should be taken to dismiss or terminate the services of a staff member without prior consultation with Workplace Relations.

#### 7.1.4 **Occupational Welfare (Clause 44)**

- The Occupational Welfare clause of the Monash Enterprise Agreements and AWA Terms and Benefits Policies provide an alternative to disciplinary action for a staff member whose work performance is adversely affected by alcohol and/or drug dependency.
- Under the occupational welfare provisions, the staff member may, or the University may request, that the staff member take leave with or without pay to undertake an approved rehabilitation or counselling or treatment program.
- For more details see:
  - <http://www.monash.edu.au/entbarg/academic-general-2005/44.html>,
  - <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/workplace-policy/leave/trades-services.html>, and
  - <http://www.monash.edu.au/entbarg/awa/templates.html>

## 7.2 **CONTRACTORS WORKING ON MONASH UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES**

### 7.2.1 **Scope**

- This advice applies to contractors employing their own staff and with their own organisational structure.
- Where the contractor is an individual contractor supplying personal services, the guidelines set out above for staff should initially be followed.

### 7.2.2 **Managing the incident**

- Call for assistance (eg another supervisor or Security) and contact the contractor's organisation.
- Follow the steps above as for staff members.

- The contractor, if possible, should be responsible for logistical arrangements.
- Complete a Monash University [Hazard and Incident Report Form](#).

### 7.2.3 The day or shift after the incident

- Discuss the incident with the contractor management and ensure that the contractor follows the normal review procedure including the detailed investigation and follow up.
- In some instances it may be appropriate to contact the University solicitor's office for assistance with the management of any ongoing issues under the terms of the relevant contract.

## 7.3 STUDENTS

### 7.3.1 Managing the incident

- If a student's behaviour presents a risk to themselves or others, request assistance (including medical aid) from Security staff by phone on 333 from any campus phone.
- For incidents that occur outside a Monash University campus, contact the police, phone 000. Monash Security should also be informed of the incident as soon as possible by phone on 333.
- In a class situation, including fieldwork, the wellbeing, safety and welfare of the whole class should be the primary concern of the supervisor.
- Where a student's behaviour is inappropriate but not threatening or a risk to safety, the supervisor should discuss it with them, with another staff member present if possible, setting the parameters for acceptable behaviour.
- Complete a [Hazard and Incident Report Form](#).

### 7.3.2 After the incident

- The Monash Community Care-Line can provide confidential advice on responding to any form of threatening or concerning behaviour at Monash University, and referrals for expert assessment and support. Contact: (03) 9905 1599
- Suspected alcohol and other drug incidents among students may be dealt with under [Monash Statute 4.1](#) – Discipline: General Misconduct and [Statute 6.3](#) – Exclusion for Health Reasons.
- Monash Residential Services may also initiate Disciplinary Action in accordance with its Conditions of Residency, <http://www.mrs.monash.edu.au/on-campus/docs-uncampus/conditions-of-residency.pdf> and the Grievance Procedures at <http://www.mrs.monash.edu.au/on-campus/docs-uncampus/mrs-uncampus-grievance-procedure.pdf>.
- The Coordinator Safer Community Programs can provide initial advice about support, and disciplinary and other procedures in response to concerning student behaviour.

## 8. LONG-TERM DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AMONG STAFF

### 8.1 IDENTIFICATION

- Most long-term drug and alcohol misuse problems emerge slowly and gradually over time showing up as a pattern of deteriorating performance such as:
  - absenteeism;
  - poor time-keeping;

- poor work performance;
- interpersonal problems, etc.
- Many factors can contribute to the harmful use of alcohol and other drugs. These include:
  - personal relationship problems;
  - grief and bereavement;
  - health issues or concerns;
  - gambling or financial problems.

## 8.2 UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- Since many factors other than drug and alcohol misuse can contribute to deteriorating work performance, it is important not to assume that drug and alcohol misuse is a factor until the signs are identifiable or the staff member admits to misuse.
- Performance issues should be dealt with according to the relevant University Enterprise Agreement and other University policies for managing grievances, harassment and unsatisfactory performance.
- Links to all relevant policies and agreements may be found at <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/workplace-policy/grievances/dispute-settlement/>
- The Occupational Welfare clause of the Monash Enterprise Agreements and AWA Terms and Benefits Policies provide an alternative to disciplinary action for a staff member whose work performance is adversely affected by alcohol and/or drug dependency. The staff member may, or the University may request, that the staff member take leave with or without pay to undertake an approved rehabilitation or counselling or treatment program. See
  - <http://www.monash.edu.au/entbarg/academic-general-2005/44.html>,
  - <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/workplace-policy/leave/trades-services.html>, and
  - <http://www.monash.edu.au/entbarg/awa/templates.html>

### 8.2.1 Informal meeting with supervisor

- The University's performance management and disciplinary procedures include early, non-confrontational discussions designed to call to the staff member's attention the element(s) of performance that are deteriorating.
- Indicate that the current poor performance of the staff member is unsatisfactory. Enquire if there is any issue that the staff member would like to discuss in relation to the performance or in solving it.
- If the staff member admits to having an alcohol or drug problem explain that Monash University is interested in assisting staff members secure professional help and this can be arranged through Monash University's Health Service, Counselling service or Occupational Health, or the staff member's own general practitioner, or the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- If the staff member does not offer a reasonable explanation for his/her behaviour and you have reason to suspect an alcohol or drug problem, suggest this to the staff member and offer to arrange professional help through Monash University's Health Service, Counselling Service or Occupational Health.
- If the staff member denies any problem or offers no reasonable solution, advise him/her of the potential consequences of insufficient improvement such as formal disciplinary procedures.

- Determine a plan (if possible by agreement) to solve the problem and set a specific follow-up date.
- If a drinking or drug problem has not been raised or has been denied to this point, then the staff member may be required to commit to specific action he/she will take to improve his/her performance. Set a specific date to review progress.
- If the staff member has indicated a willingness to seek professional evaluation or rehabilitation, seek a commitment to a date for making contact with the preferred agency. It is best to have standby arrangements. Make the appointment for the staff member at that time or firmly suggest that the staff member step into an adjacent office and make an appointment.
- Express confidence in the staff member's ability to carry out the plan and offer your support.

### 8.2.2 Documentation for disciplinary action

- Where it is anticipated that counselling may be required for unsatisfactory performance, the supervisor should note the dates and other relevant details of instances of unsatisfactory performance in a file or diary to provide a factual written record.
- Where formal disciplinary proceedings are to be taken or are underway and witness statements are required to be taken, those witnesses should be made aware of the purpose of the statements being taken. They should also be informed that procedural fairness and natural justice may require that a copy of the statements be provided to the subject of the disciplinary proceedings.
- Any formal written warnings are to be attached to the staff member's personnel file, together with any relevant records pertaining to work performance, attendance and behaviour on which such warnings are based
- No reference to the medical diagnosis of alcohol or other drug problems should appear in documentation held in the staff member's personnel file.

### 8.2.3 Consultation

- When disciplinary action is planned, it should be reviewed with the next level of management, Workplace Relations and Monash University Occupational Health.
- Ensure you have information on how to arrange professional evaluation or rehabilitation in the event the staff member agrees to self-referral.
- At the outset of any disciplinary interview, the staff member is to be informed that there are concerns regarding his/her behaviour and conduct and that the purpose of the meeting is to provide him/her with an opportunity to respond to those concerns, after which a decision will be made on whether or not disciplinary action is warranted. If it is ultimately determined that disciplinary action is warranted and such action is taken, the staff member should be informed of the likely consequences of any further instances of unsatisfactory performance and/or misconduct.
- No action should be taken to dismiss or terminate the services of a staff member without prior consultation with Workplace Relations.

## 8.3 REHABILITATION

### 8.3.1 Referral

- A staff member may request assistance for him or herself through Monash University's Health Service, Counselling Service or Occupational Health or the EAP in strict confidence.
- When a staff member's work performance appears to be affected by the use of drugs or alcohol, the supervisor may refer the staff member to Monash University's Health Service, Counselling Service, Occupational Health, or their own treating doctor, or the EAP to seek help.

### 8.3.2 Agreement to undertake treatment/rehabilitation

- Where recognition of an alcohol or drug problem originates from supervisory action, the individual will be asked to undertake treatment/rehabilitation by a treating medical practitioner, or Monash University Health Service or Monash University Counselling Service. There will be liaison between management, the treating doctor and Occupational Health to monitor progress.
- The individual will consent to:
  - follow the treatment and rehabilitation regime;
  - meet agreed expectations in relation to work;
  - give Monash University Occupational Health medical authority to contact and receive progress reports from the treating medical providers.

### 8.3.3 Ongoing contact

- While the staff member is involved in treatment, the supervisor should inquire regularly about the staff member's condition and progress where suitable or as otherwise agreed by both parties.
- The supervisor's encouragement and support can be critical elements in the staff member's rehabilitation, both while an inpatient and in the after care process.

### 8.3.4 Costs

- Monash Counselling Services, the services of Monash Occupational Health and EAP counselling services are free to the staff member.
- Costs incurred in a rehabilitation program supervised by a medical practitioner should attract Medicare reimbursement.
- Any medical tests specifically requested by Monash University will be at Monash University's expense.

## 8.4 RETURN TO WORK GUIDELINES

- When a staff member has been absent from work and is due to return, a meeting with the supervisor and the staff member should be arranged to give the staff member an outline of expectations and objectives. At the meeting:
  - let the staff member know that you are concerned about him/her as an individual as well as a staff member;
  - make it clear that future evaluations, promotions etc., will depend strictly on performance;
  - finalise arrangements for time off to attend follow-up treatment, support etc.
- In all rehabilitation cases, the supervisor's performance expectation should be documented, regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.

- In general, Monash University has a right to expect improving performance from a staff member returning from a rehabilitation program. Expect an adjustment period and don't expect perfection. Patience and an attitude that is warm, friendly, optimistic and supportive makes a big difference to the outcome.
- Should a relapse that affects performance occur, action taken should be consistent with Monash University Enterprise Agreements and other University policies for disciplinary and unsatisfactory performance.
- Links to all relevant policies and agreements may be found at <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/workplace-policy/grievances/unsatisfactory-perf>

## 9. LONG-TERM DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AMONG STUDENTS

- University staff are not expected to clinically diagnose or counsel a student who appears to be under the effects of alcohol or other drugs, or has an alcohol or other drug related problem, but rather encourage students to access support and referral to expert services through the Monash University Health Service or Counselling Service.
- Free, confidential support is available for students at the Monash University Counselling Service. The Counselling Service may refer students to specific drug and alcohol services where appropriate.
- The Monash Community Care-Line provides confidential advice on responding to any form of concerning behaviour at Monash University, and referrals for expert assessment and support. Contact the Coordinator Safer Community Programs: (03) 9905 1599
- Suspected alcohol and other drug incidents among students that pose a risk to the health and safety of the student or any other person, may be dealt with under [Monash Statute 4.1](#) – Discipline: General Misconduct and [Statute 6.3](#) – Exclusion for Health Reasons.
- The Coordinator Safer Community Programs can provide initial advice about support, and disciplinary and other procedures in response to concerning student behaviour.

## 10. ILLEGAL DRUGS OR DRUG PARAPHERNALIA

- If drugs or drug paraphernalia are found or whenever there is reason to believe the staff member, student or contractor has been selling or distributing drugs on University property, advise Security, your manager and the Monash Workplace Relations Branch where relevant.
- There should be no interference with the scene of the incident, as it may provide evidence for a police case.

## 11. PRESCRIPTION AND OVER THE COUNTER DRUGS

- The use of prescription and over the counter drugs may impair a staff member's or student's ability to perform their work or study safely or efficiently.
- Staff members using prescribed drugs should ask their doctor or chemist what effects a drug or medication may have, and if there is a risk that it may cause impairment at work. If so, a doctor's letter regarding the effect of the drug should be obtained outlining any limitation on normal duties and presented to the supervisor. Monash University Occupational Health should be contacted to assist with any required modification of duties.
- Students using prescribed drugs that could cause impairment must notify their supervisor if such impairment may impact on the safety of the student or other persons at Monash University, for example on a field trip, or where the student operates equipment in a laboratory class.

## 12. ACTIVITIES REQUIRING NO ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

- Academic/administrative units in which staff, students, visitors and contractors undertake high risk activities should develop and implement local guidelines, requiring that no alcohol be consumed prior to or during the activity .
- For example zero alcohol levels would be required when:
  - Operating machinery and electrical equipment;
  - Working at heights;
  - Working in confined spaces;
  - Working with high voltage.
- Other academic/administrative units may develop and implement local guidelines prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in certain areas and at certain times, where this is appropriate. For example Monash Residential Services restricts the consumption of alcohol to certain areas and times for the safety and comfort of all residents and staff.

## 13. ONGOING EDUCATION

Drug and alcohol education is available from the University and external resources. Contact OHS to discuss the context of the training under consideration and the options available.

## 14. DRUG AND ALCOHOL COUNSELLING AND RESOURCES

### Direct Line

Alcohol and drug counselling and referral service run by Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre Inc.

[www.turningpoint.org.au](http://www.turningpoint.org.au)

Ph: 1800 888 235

### Family Drug Help

24 hour telephone helpline for families

[www.familydrughelp.sarc.org.au](http://www.familydrughelp.sarc.org.au)

Ph: 1300 660 068

Australian Government Alcohol Information  
[www.alcohol.gov.au](http://www.alcohol.gov.au)

Australian Drug Foundation  
[www.adf.org.au](http://www.adf.org.au)  
[www.alcoholandwork.adf.org.au](http://www.alcoholandwork.adf.org.au)

Australian Drug Information Network  
[www.adin.com.au](http://www.adin.com.au)

Community Alcohol Action Network  
[www.caan.adf.org.ua](http://www.caan.adf.org.ua)

DrugInfo Clearinghouse  
[www.druginfo.adf.org.au](http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au)  
Ph: 1300 858 584

Turning Point – Alcohol and Drug Centre  
[www.turningpoint.org.au](http://www.turningpoint.org.au)

Victorian Youth Alcohol and Drug Survey  
[www.health.vic.gov.au/pdpc/reports.htm#survey](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pdpc/reports.htm#survey)

## 15. RECORDS

<b>To be kept by</b>	<b>Records</b>	<b>To be kept for:</b>
<b>Academic/Administrative Unit/Controlled Entity</b>	Performance management records Records of supervision meetings	7 years
<b>OHS</b>	Hazard and Incident Report forms	Indefinitely
<b>Occupational Health (confidential files)</b>	Medical records	Indefinitely

## 16. REFERENCES

### 16.1 LEGISLATION

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

### 16.2 GENERAL UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS

Monash University Statutes  
Monash University Enterprise Agreements  
Discipline – Students Policy and Procedures

### 16.3 MONASH UNIVERSITY OHS DOCUMENTS

(<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/documents/#policies>)

Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy  
Alcohol and Other Drugs at University Events: Procedures