



Student Mental Health Support Guidelines

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Custodian: Director, Student Connect

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In developing this procedure the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B(1)(b) of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

PURPOSE:

All University staff should respond to students with mental health difficulties in a non-discriminatory, non-stigmatising and positive manner. The purpose of the Student Mental Health Support Guidelines is to provide members of the University community with information on how best to support students experiencing mental health difficulties.

PROCEDURE:

Mental Health and Student Conduct

The [University of Canberra \(Student Conduct\) Rules 2015](#) require students to behave appropriately while attending University or whenever they are/or could be seen to be representing the University. The *Student Conduct Rules 2015* describe a range of prohibited conduct, both academic and behavioural. Some of the non-academic prohibited conduct matters are:

- in connection with the provision to the University of information or documentation by the student, making a false or misleading statement or engaging in, or being a party to, conduct intended to deceive;
- obstructing, or attempting to obstruct, an officer or employee of the University in the performance of his or her functions;
- obstructing, or attempting to obstruct, the Council, the Committee or any other authority, committee, board or other body of the University established under a Statute in the performance of its functions;
- engaging in conduct that hinders or prevents the use by other students of any of the University's facilities or the attendance of other students at a class conducted by or for the University; or
- contravening:
 - a provision of any Statute or Rule established under any Statute;
 - an order or a direction of an authority, committee, board or other body of the University established under a Statute;
 - a lawful order or direction of an officer or employee of the University, or of a person acting with

- the authority of the University; or
- engaging in behaviour offensive to:
 - a member of the Council, the Committee or any other authority, committee, board or other body of the University established under a Statute; or
 - an officer
- engag[ing] in behaviour offensive to:
 - a member of the Council, the Committee or any other authority, committee, board or other body of the University established under a Statute;
 - an officer or employee of the University; or
 - a student or group of students.
- engaging in, or being a party to, conduct, either within the University grounds or elsewhere, that is likely to bring the University into disrepute or prejudice the management, good governance and discipline of the University; or
- engaging in, or being a party to, conduct or behaviour, either within the University grounds or elsewhere, that threatens, harms or causes distress, as adjudged by a reasonable person, to an officer, employee or student of the University or visitor to the University.

Serious Misconduct includes behaviour that is considered unlawful, discriminatory, sexually inappropriate, bullying, harassing, threatening, offensive, invades another's privacy or causes any person to fear for their personal safety.

These standards of behaviour apply to all students and a diagnosis of mental illness will not automatically preclude the imposition of penalties for breaches of discipline. However, it is recognised that certain behaviours may result from mental health difficulties in which case, whilst due penalty for any offence may be imposed, the student will also be referred to the relevant support services for assistance. Moreover, if the University is aware that the student has a mental health difficulty, this will be taken into account when any penalties are applied.

Services for Students

The University has a range of support services. For students experiencing mental health difficulties, the following support services may be helpful, depending on the nature of the support needed (see Appendix 1 for Contact List).

1. *Medical and Counselling Centre*

The [Medical and Counselling Centre](#) provides general medical and psychological services to all enrolled students and this includes the provision of services and care for patients with mental health concerns. The Medical and Counselling Centre is staffed by doctors, nurses, psychologists and social workers. Their work practices are informed by legal obligations to their patients, their professional associations and relevant codes of ethics applicable to their professions, especially in relation to confidentiality.

2. *Inclusion and Welfare*

[Inclusion & Welfare](#) brings together general welfare support for all students studying through the Bruce campus, support for students with disability or ongoing health conditions, as well as a range of specialist support programs.

Inclusion and Welfare coordinates and implements services and supports to assist students with disability or ongoing health conditions. This is achieved through the provision of reasonable adjustments to enable equal access and participation in university life.

Support is available whether the student's condition is permanent, fluctuating or temporary. Eligibility is determined at a registration appointment with an Inclusion Advisor.

3. **Multi-faith Centre: Chaplaincy and Pastoral Support**

Students use the Multi-faith Centre for a wide range of welfare issues, the majority of which are not related at all to religion, but instead have to do with the complexities of the human condition. Often they do so because they know they will be given sympathetic support as well as pastoral care. Details of the full range of support available through the Multi-faith Centre can be found at:

<http://www.canberra.edu.au/multifaith-centre>

4. **International Student Support Service**

The [International Student Support Service](#) (ISSS) is a dedicated and specialised advice and referral service for the University of Canberra's International Student community. The ISSS team is staffed by experienced, friendly and knowledgeable International Student Advisors (ISAs). The service provides advice, referral, and assistance with a range of matters such as:

- Australia Awards student support.
- Visa and eCoE enquiries.
- New International Student orientation.
- Complaints and grievances, both academic and administrative.
- Welfare referral.
- General enquiries.

5. **Study Skills**

For students who require additional support with their studies, the [Study Skills](#) service within Study Skills and Careers offers a range of learning and careers support, both face-to-face and online.

6. **University of Canberra Students' Association**

The [University of Canberra Students' Association](#) (UCSA) sits within the UCU. UCU employs Advocacy Officers who are available for consultation on a number of issues ranging from student grievances to academic appeals. The Advocacy Officers will always refer students with mental health issues to the appropriate service, and can assist with making contact. Students can call 6201 2000 to organise a one-on-one consultation with the Advocacy Officer or email: student.advocacy@canberra.edu.au.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Staff

All University staff should respond to students with mental health difficulties in a non-discriminatory, non-stigmatising and positive manner. If a student discloses a mental health difficulty, staff members should encourage the student to seek advice and support from Inclusion and Welfare, the service for students with a disability.

If staff members require advice in relation to a student with a mental health difficulty they should contact the University of Canberra **Medical and Counselling Centre** or, depending on the nature of the issue, **Inclusion and Welfare** or the **Dean of Students** (*for critical incidents*).

All staff members should be aware of their own personal and professional limitations. If they are concerned that a student is exhibiting behaviour that they believe may arise from a mental health disturbance they should seek advice from the Medical and Counselling Centre or suggest the student makes an appointment. If they believe that a student has mental health problems and requires additional support they should refer the student to Inclusion and Welfare.

If someone appears to be in immediate danger of seriously harming themselves or other people, staff should call Security on 6201 2222 and Emergency Services on 000 (or 112 from a mobile phone) and should refer to the University's Critical Student Incident Management Procedures (see Section 3 of this document).

Under no circumstances should a member of staff accompany a student manifesting symptoms of serious disturbance off-campus, e.g. to the Accident and Emergency Department of the local hospital.

Students

Students need to take responsibility for communicating their needs and seeking support within the University as without this information there can be no offer of support.

Students are encouraged to take care of their own mental health, for example ensuring that they get adequate rest, take prescribed medication and access appropriate support, including support available through the Medical and Counselling Centre and Inclusion and Welfare.

Students should be aware that any behaviour which impacts negatively on fellow students or staff, or is in any way disruptive or offensive, is not acceptable within the University community and will be subject to University procedures for the maintenance of good order (see Section 4 of this document).

Students concerned about a fellow student's mental well-being should be aware of their personal limitations; they should encourage their fellow student to seek specialist support at the earliest opportunity.

Students may wish to recommend to their fellow students that support is available through Medical and Counselling Centre and Inclusion and Welfare.

If someone appears to be in immediate danger of seriously harming themselves or other people, students should call Security on 6201 2222 and the Emergency Services on 000 (or 112 from a mobile phone).

Critical Student Incidents

Incidents or behaviours that are potentially “critical student incidents” are those that involve the death of a student, serious injury to or by a student, a threat to the life of a student, a threat by a student to the life of others or a major threat to property involving students. Sometimes, these things will not be deemed a “critical incident” and sometimes they may require management under the terms of the University’s [Resilience Management Framework](#) and [Business Continuity Plan](#). Whether or not a staff member believes that a critical student incident arises from a mental health issue, there are procedures to be followed in reporting a critical student incident.

For **on-campus incidents** staff or students who are first made aware of a critical incident should immediately contact Emergency Services and University Security (see Contacts List at Appendix 1). If the incident does not warrant immediate referral to Emergency Services, University Security should be advised of the incident. Once the immediate need has been addressed, University Security must report the critical incident to the Dean of Students. For acute and urgent mental health issues, staff members or students may also wish to contact Mental Health ACT Triage for reporting and advice (see Contacts List at Appendix 1).

For **off-campus incidents** involving students on University business (e.g. during a field trip or a placement) the incident should be dealt with as though the event had occurred on campus. Other incidents occurring off-campus involving domestic students which do not have an immediate impact on other staff or students of the University do not need to be reported to University personnel. Staff members who become aware of an off-campus critical incident involving an international student who is not on University business should still report the incident to University Security, who will then contact the Dean of Students as soon as possible.

If a staff member is unsure of whether or not a circumstance involving a student should be defined as a critical incident then the matter should be referred to the Dean of Students in the first instance. If the Dean of Students is unavailable the matter should be referred to the Director, Student Connect (see Contacts List at Appendix 1).

Full details relating to the management of critical student incidents can be found at:

- Business Continuity Plan <https://www.canberra.edu.au/myuc-s/business-units/vc/governance/business-continuity> (staff-only).
- Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) Plan

SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

External Contacts	Hours	Phone Number
Emergency Services	All hours	000 or 112 from a mobile phone
Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT) Mental Health Triage Service	Office hours	02 6205 1065
	All hours	1800 629 354
Lifeline (Counselling service)	All hours	13 11 44
UC Contacts		
University Security	All hours	02 6201 2222
Medical & Counselling Service	Office (9am to 5pm)	02 6201 2351
Student Welfare	Office (9am to 5pm)	02 6206 8841
International Student Support Service	Student Centre opening hours: http://www.canberra.edu.au/current-students/student-support/international-student-support	02 6201 2673
Study Skills	Office (9am to 5pm)	02 6201 2205
Director, Student Connect	Office (9am to 5pm)	02 6201 2284
Director, Student Life	Office (9am to 5pm)	02 6201 2284