



WELFARE ASSISTANCE REGULATIONS OF THE MONASH GRADUATE ASSOCIATION INC.

ABN 86 800 958 958

PROMULGATED ON 20 AUGUST 2020.

UPDATED 30 AUGUST 2024.

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WELFARE ASSISTANCE REGULATIONS OF THE MONASH GRADUATE ASSOCIATION INC.

1. Short Title

These regulations may be cited as the Welfare Assistance Regulations of the Monash Graduate Association (“MGA”).

2. Authorising Provision

These Regulations are made pursuant to the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and subject to the MGA Constitution. MGAEC may only amend these regulations in accordance with the provisions of the MGA Constitution.

3. Objective

The MGA is invested in supporting and promoting the wellbeing of all Monash graduate students. The MGA is entrusted with a portion of the SSAF amenities fee paid by most Graduate Students and is authorised to apply some to areas of greatest need and benefit to its Constituents. Financial Hardship is a situation faced by some Graduate Students for varying reasons. The objective of these regulations is to establish the rules under which the MGA may provide direct Welfare Assistance to Constituents in need.

4. MGA Commitment

The MGA is a not-for-profit, representative association for Monash University (Australian campuses) enrolled graduate students. The MGA is an incorporated entity under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) and is subject to the Constitution of the MGA. The MGA is committed to supporting and protecting the welfare of every Constituent.

5. Definitions

Advocacy Manager means the MGA Advocacy Manager or delegate.

Advocate means an advocate staff member employed by the MGA.

Constituent has the same meaning as in the MGA Constitution.

Emergency Event means a serious, unexpected, dangerous situation or Unforeseeable Event requiring immediate action.

Engagement Officer means the MGA staff member or delegate responsible for organising Welfare Assistance packages to be dispensed to Graduate Students facing Financial Hardship.

Executive Officer means the Executive Officer of the MGA or delegate.

Goods means any perishable or non-perishable item, be it food, items of clothing or homewares.

Graduate

Student means a graduate student currently enrolled at any Australian campus and has the same meaning as in the MGA Constitution.

Hardship means financial hardship or poverty or a reason for a Graduate Student being unable to afford the basic necessities and costs of living, and is consequently at risk of:

- a) homelessness;
- b) starvation;
- c) or other dire conditions.

HR & Finance Officer means the MGA HR and Finance Manager or delegate.

Major Supermarket means Coles or Woolworths.

MGA means the Monash Graduate Association Inc.

MGAEC means the Monash Graduate Association Executive Committee.

SSAF means the Student Services and Amenities Fee, imposed by Monash University pursuant to the Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Act 2011.

Unforeseeable Event means an Emergency Event which was not able to be anticipated or predicted.

Welfare Assistance includes but is not limited to travel cards, food vouchers, groceries, goods, and cash grants.

6. Eligibility for MGA Welfare Assistance

For a Graduate Student to be eligible for Welfare Assistance from the MGA, the Graduate Student must:

- a) be a currently enrolled Graduate Student of Monash University; and
- b) be experiencing Hardship; and
- c) disclose the reasons for requesting Welfare Assistance to an MGA Advocate, and provide evidence where requested; and
- d) specify the purpose of Welfare Assistance; and
- e) have completed and submitted the MGA Welfare Assistance application form to the MGA.

7. Maximum Amounts of Welfare Assistance

7.1 The *maximum* amount and type of Welfare Assistance provided to a Graduate Student is:

- 7.1.1 determined by the Advocacy Manager with regard to MGA budget, anticipated demand, and other relevant considerations; and
- 7.1.2 for individual grants, as advertised on the MGA website; and
- 7.1.3 subject to change without notice.

7.2 Graduate Students are not automatically entitled to the maximum amount of any Welfare Assistance category for which they are deemed eligible.

- 7.3 The amount and type of Welfare Assistance a may be increased beyond the maximum provided in 7.1 in exceptional circumstances, as determined by the MGA Advocacy Manager.

8. Welfare Assistance Procedures

- 8.1 Any Graduate Student who presents or has been referred to the MGA for Welfare Assistance may be required to meet with an MGA Advocate.
- 8.2 The Graduate Student must complete and submit the online MGA Welfare Assistance application form.
- 8.3 The MGA Advocate will make an initial assessment of the Graduate Student's eligibility against the eligibility criteria in section 6 of these Regulations, and the criteria of available grants.
- 8.4 A Graduate Student who lodges an application for Welfare Assistance but does not meet all eligibility criteria in section 6 of these Regulations, will have their application rejected and be so notified by the MGA Advocate.
- 8.5 A requirement may be imposed under section 10.1.8 of these Regulations, where the Graduate Student must apply for and receive a determination for the Monash University Emergency Grant Scheme and/or the Student Loan scheme, before their MGA application will be considered.
- 8.6 Upon confirming that the form is correctly completed, and the Graduate Student meets all eligibility criteria, the MGA Advocate must forward the application to the MGA Advocacy Manager, who will make a decision in accordance with section 9 of these Regulations.
- 8.7 Upon receiving the decision from the Advocacy Manager, the MGA Advocate must communicate the decision to the student.
- 8.8 Where Welfare Assistance is granted and requires Electronic Fund Transfer processing, the MGA Advocate will notify the HR & Finance Officer of relevant details for payment processing and accounting purposes.
- 8.9 Where the approved Welfare Assistance requires the purchase of specific goods, the MGA Advocate must forward the approval to the MGA Engagement Officer for implementation.

9. MGA Advocacy Manager Role

- 9.1 Upon receiving a Graduate Student's application for Welfare Assistance, that meets all eligibility criteria as determined by the MGA Advocate, the MGA Advocacy Manager will review and consider all supporting documents.
- 9.2 The MGA Advocacy Manager will, after reviewing and considering all provided material, decide to either approve or reject the application.
- 9.3 If the application is approved, the MGA Advocacy Manager will determine the nature and level of Welfare Assistance approved, in consultation with the MGA Advocate.

- 9.4 The MGA Advocacy Manager may confer with the Executive Officer before reaching a decision.

10. Powers of the MGA Advocacy Manager

- 10.1 The MGA Advocacy Manager has the power to:
- 10.1.1 Assess any Welfare Assistance application and request further information or action from the Graduate Student applying for Welfare Assistance;
 - 10.1.2 Approve or reject applications for Welfare Assistance;
 - 10.1.3 Determine the amount of Welfare Assistance, if any, being provided to an individual Graduate Student;
 - 10.1.4 Manage and distribute the MGAEC approved welfare budget;
 - 10.1.5 Determine the value, variety, and format of Welfare Assistance offered by the MGA;
 - 10.1.6 Set additional eligibility criteria for accessing Welfare Assistance, in addition to basic eligibility outlined in section 6 of these regulations, which must be advertised on the MGA Website;
 - 10.1.7 Refuse an application, revoke approval, or exclude a Graduate Student from accessing Welfare Assistance on grounds including but not limited to:
 - a) Reasonable suspicion of fraudulent conduct;
 - b) Failure to meet criteria of a specific grant as advertised on the MGA website;
 - c) Failure to meet eligibility requirements under section 6 of these Regulations;
 - d) Misuse of previous MGA Welfare Assistance;
 - e) Error; or
 - f) Insufficient MGA funds.
 - 10.1.8 Impose a requirement prior to approving any Welfare Assistance.
- 10.2 The MGA Advocacy Manager does not have a duty to consider whether or not to exercise any discretionary powers under these Regulations, such as those granted under section 7.3.
- 10.3 A decision of the MGA Advocacy Manager under these Regulations is final.

11. HR & Finance Officer Role

- 11.1 Once notified of approved Welfare Assistance, the HR & Finance Officer will implement the decision of the MGA Advocacy Manager.
- 11.2 Where the approved Welfare Assistance requires electronic fund transfer of a fixed amount, the HR & Finance Officer will arrange for the amount to be transferred as soon as practicable having regards to the urgency and special circumstances of each case.

12. MGA Engagement Officer Role

- 11.1 Once notified of approved Welfare Assistance in the form of goods, the MGA Engagement Officer will implement the decision of the MGA Advocacy Manager as soon as practicable keeping in mind the urgency of each particular case.
- 11.2 The MGA Engagement Officer will liaise with the MGA Advocate to determine the delivery mode and logistics of the Welfare Assistance being provided to the student concerned.
- 11.3 If appropriate, the MGA Engagement Officer will notify the HR & Finance Officer of any expected expenses incurred in procuring goods.
- 11.4 In the case of issuing goods, the MGA Engagement Officer must verify the Graduate Student's name and ID number, and make a note of the collection date and time the goods were collected by the student or their nominee, and notify the relevant MGA Advocate in writing.

12. Purchasing of Goods

Any staff entrusted with providing Welfare Assistance to a Graduate Student through purchasing goods will endeavour to:

- 12.1. Purchase appropriate goods which may be perishable or non-perishable depending on the Graduate Student's needs;
- 12.2. Not include purchases of tobacco or alcohol;
- 12.3. Ensure the goods purchased are fit for purpose, of good quality and from an approved retailer;
- 12.4. Ensure all goods purchased are accompanied by a receipt;
- 12.5. Ensure all goods purchased are securely and appropriately stored and able to be carried by the Graduate Student.

13. Collection of Goods

- 13.1. Where goods are approved as Welfare Assistance, the Graduate Student must advise the MGA Advocate how the goods are to be collected within two weeks of approval.
- 13.2. In the event the Welfare Assistance includes perishable goods, the items must be picked up by the Graduate Student as a matter of urgency and will not be retained by the MGA for longer than one week from the time the email notification for collection has been sent to the Graduate Student.
- 13.3. All reasonable steps must be taken to advise/notify and remind Graduate Students to collect their Welfare Assistance goods.
- 13.4. Goods must be collected and will not be delivered by the MGA.
- 13.5. At the point of collection of any goods, the Graduate Student must present their Monash University student identification card or M-Pass.

- 13.6. In the event another person is to collect the goods on the Graduate Student's behalf:
- 13.6.1 The Graduate Student must notify in advance the MGA Advocate and the MGA Engagement Officer, of the name of the person collecting the goods on their behalf; and
 - 13.6.2 The MGA Engagement Officer must verify the identity of the person collecting the goods.
- 13.7. Unclaimed goods may be either returned or made available to another Graduate Student in need of Welfare Assistance, and if non-perishable, stored at the MGA office.

14. Scope of MGA Welfare Assistance

- 14.1 Welfare Assistance from the MGA may include one or more of the following:
- 14.1.1 Goods that can include grocery items, toiletries, manchester, stationery, clothing, and personal hygiene products;
 - 14.1.2 Food or grocery vouchers, gift cards;
 - 14.1.3 Electronic money transfers, payment of costs; and
 - 14.1.4 Any other items and services as approved by the MGA Advocacy Manager on a case-by-case basis.
- 14.2 MGA Welfare Assistance will only be approved for students currently residing in Australia.

15. Unauthorised Uses of MGA Welfare Assistance

- 15.1 Unauthorised uses of MGA Welfare Assistance, include but are not limited to any acts or activities in violation of University Policy and Statutes or State or Federal Laws.
- 15.2 Welfare Assistance must not be used for gambling, betting, or gifting to others.
- 15.3 Welfare Assistance will not be provided for Thesis Editing, Proofreading or payment of tuition fees.

16. Approved Retailers

Retailers approved for the purposes of Welfare Assistance include: Woolworths, Coles, Aldi, Target, and K-Mart.

17. Record Keeping

Full records must be kept for a period of no less than 7 years of all Graduate Students who access MGA Welfare Assistance.