

MGA Feedback APC Online Progress Assessment Tool March 2020

<p>CONSENT</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consent clause may be difficult for our students (international in particular) to understand. Recommendation: be specific about what students are actually consenting to. 2. What is “special category data”? Recommendation: Provide an example of what this may be. 3. What is ‘legitimate business interest’? Anyone not familiar with the APC process will not understand what this means. Recommendation: Provide an example of who may have such an interest and what a business interest may be. 4. Will staff who are empowered to decide on special consideration, WI & RoD applications have access to the Online Progress Assessment Tools?
<p>“YES ONLY”</p> <p>“Students can <i>not</i> choose to <i>not</i> provide their data. Should they <i>not</i> hit YES, they will <i>not</i> be permitted to complete the form.”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The statement is confusing. It contains four negatives. We recommend the question be rephrased. 2. In the event of a NO answer, what are the consequences for students? Recommendation: consequences, if any, need to be specified. 3. Will non-completion of the form escalate students to the next level? Our understanding is that this questionnaire is not compulsory at level 1 but is compulsory at level 2. Recommendation: consequences of not completing the form need to be set out.
<p>STUDY</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the spirit of the APC process being remedial, we recommend that questions are more holistic. As a conversation starter "are you enjoying your course?" is helpful. However, non-enjoyment of itself, does not mean students will not benefit from support. We recommend more prompts here asking why the student believes he/she failed the unit. We also recommend a prompt, “I was affected by personal issues and could not concentrate on my

	<p>studies”. The “other” prompt could then be used to provide more details of those personal issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The prompt “do you enjoy your course?” If the answer is NO we recommend there is a link to course advice. 3. If students are brought to Stage 3 (intervention/APC hearing) the panel is likely to zero in on answers such as "this course was chosen for me”. We understand the rationale, but the questions are very leading and will likely have a prejudicial effect on students who end up before an APC. 4. By ticking ‘I am finding it boring’ or ‘the course was chosen for me’, it is implicit that the student is effectively telling the University, ‘I am not really interested in this course’ and ‘my parents are making me taking this course’. This assumption may not be correct because we have had many students come to our advocacy service who said they took their course on the basis of recommendations made to them by their migration agent as being the best fit for them. Recommendation: offer a prompt giving students the option to say why they feel the course is not right for them. For example, this could be the way the course was described in the advertised material, or the student may be disappointed in the way it is taught or assessed. We have students come to us saying the course is not what they were expecting meaning they misunderstood the description rather than meaning ‘I have found it overwhelming’ which a “yes” answer will imply.
<p>LIVING</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homesickness is where the MGA can be of direct help. We deal with these types of cases. A student came to us recently reporting they felt lonely. We put the student in touch with like-minded students, advised of activities, programs, counselling, trips and also about financial help available through Monash Connect. The student took us up on our suggestions and has much improved. We often keep in touch with students, sometimes for the duration of their degree and encourage them to be a part of our volunteering or mentoring programs or to join one of our committees. It fosters their sense of belonging. Recommendation: include the MGA contact details (see below) at this prompt. 2. The question about "stable housing" seems limited with the services provided. Homelessness, for example, is not

	<p>stable housing but no service is given for that. Monash Connect offer emergency grants and the MGA works in tandem with Monash Connect to offer top up welfare including food vouchers, blankets, and small financial grants to get students through these types of emergencies until they can find housing. Recommendation: Monash Residential Services and MGA contact details be included under all questions relating to the Living category.</p>
HEALTH & WELLBEING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The question: “Do you struggle with your mental health affecting your studies?” Recommendation: include a link to DSS here. 2. We recommend another question to be included under this heading. Ask if the student is suffering from a short-term (mental) health condition for which DSS registration may not be necessary but for which the student is nevertheless getting help from a health professional.
HOURS DISTRIBUTION	<p>The category Gaming (computer games) should be broadened to include <i>video games</i>.</p>
MGA GENERAL COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We recommend a statement be included at the start of the form such as, “the information you provide may be used in future APC processes to determine whether or not you are permitted to continue with your course at Monash University.” 2. Are the students' responses going to be kept on their student files? Our concern is that if they give an unfavourable answer (for example by saying a course is boring) then this could be negatively construed against them in all subsequent interventions and/or hearings. 3. There ought to be a statement about the consequences of not submitting the form. 4. We recommend a link is placed to all the student associations which asks all students to contact their advocacy service prior to completing the form. For example, “Are you are graduate student? Contact the MGA.” 5. In our experience international students often struggle with understanding the purpose of forms. Forms don’t pick up nuances and don’t allow for nuanced answers, which means the responses need to be correct.

	<p>6. Sometimes having a conversation with an advocate helps put students at ease after receiving forms or letters from the University which relate to their academic progress. The first reaction for students is usually panic and by referring them to us it helps calm the situation. Graduate students need to contact the MGA.</p> <p>7. MGA Contact details (we are cross-campus):</p> <p>mga-advocacy@monash.edu <u>We have 5 full time advocates and we visit all campuses and all off campus locations such as AMREP MMC Parkville</u></p> <p>https://mpa.monash.edu.au</p> <p>Clayton First floor, Campus Centre, 21 Chancellors Walk p: +61 3 9905 3197 e: mga@monash.edu</p> <p>Caulfield Level 2, Building C p: +61 3 9903 1880 e: mga-caulfield@monash.edu</p>