



ABN 86 800 958 958

**WELFARE ASSISTANCE REGULATIONS
OF THE MONASH GRADUATE ASSOCIATION INC.**

PROMULGATED ON 20 AUGUST 2020

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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. MGA is entrusted with a portion of the SSAF amenities fee paid by all graduate students and is authorised to apply same 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 its constituents.

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. Meanings

Constituent has the same meaning as in the MGA Constitution.

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

Graduate Student means a graduate student currently enrolled at any Australian campus.

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 serious related and similar conditions.

Major Supermarket means Coles or Woolworths.

MGA Advocate means an advocate staff member employed by the MGA. **MGA** means the Monash Graduate Association Inc.

MGA Senior Advocate means the MGA Senior advocate or delegate.

MGA Volunteer Program Officer means the MGA Volunteer Program Officer or delegate.

MGAEC means the Monash Graduate Association Executive Committee.

Volunteer Program Officer means the MGA staff member responsible for organising welfare assistance packages to be dispensed to graduate students facing Financial Hardship.

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

Welfare Assistance includes but is not limited to travel cards, food vouchers, groceries, goods, cash or electronic transfers.

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) *must have already applied* for financial support from Monash University through the Monash Connect Emergency Grants Scheme or loan scheme, and received a decision, positive or negative; and
- d) disclose the reasons for requesting welfare assistance to an MGA advocate, and provide evidence where requested; and
- e) specify the purpose and amount of welfare assistance required; and
- f) have completed and submitted to an MGA advocate, both the MGA Welfare Assistance Application Form (**Schedule 1**); and the MGA Consent to Disclose Personal Information Form. (**Schedule 2**)

7. Maximum Amounts of financial support

7.1. The *maximum* amount of financial support provided in a single grant is \$300.

7.2. The maximum amount of financial support provided in section 7.1 may be increased in exceptional circumstances, as determined by the MGA Senior Advocate who shall have absolute discretion on a case-by-case basis, to determine the amount of financial support, if any, provided by the MGA.

8. Welfare Assistance Procedures

8.1. Any Graduate Student who presents or has been referred to the MGA for welfare assistance will be required to meet with an MGA advocate.

- 8.2. The MGA advocate will make an initial assessment of the Graduate Student's eligibility against the eligibility criteria in section 6 of these regulations.
- 8.3. Unless the requirement is waived under section 10.5 of these regulations, the Graduate Student must be referred to, and must attend, Monash Connect and apply for an emergency grant under the Monash University the Emergency Grant Scheme and/or a loan under the Student Loan scheme.
- 8.4. Once the Graduate Student has attended Monash Connect and applied for an emergency grant or a student loan or both, he or she must attend a meeting with the MGA advocate who will then determine whether or not the Graduate Student qualifies for MGA welfare assistance under these regulations.
- 8.5. To assist the MGA advocate in assessing the Graduate Student's circumstances the Graduate student must complete the MGA Application Form and the MGA Consent to Disclose Personal Information Form.
- 8.6. Upon confirming that the forms are correctly completed, the MGA Advocate must obtain approval from the Senior Advocate, who will determine whether or not welfare assistance will be granted and if cash, the amount.
- 8.7. Upon receiving the decision from the Senior Advocate, the MGA advocate must communicate the decision to the student.
- 8.8. The MGA may post vouchers to Australian addresses.
- 8.9. Where the approved welfare assistance requires the purchase of specific goods, the MGA advocate must forward the approval to the MGA Volunteer Program Officer for implementation.
- 8.10. Once welfare assistance is approved, in the case of the assistance being goods, the onus is on the Graduate Student to advise the MGA Advocate how the goods are to be collected. In the event the assistance includes perishable goods, the items must be picked up as a matter of urgency.
- 8.11. Goods must be collected and will not be delivered by the MGA.
- 8.12. At the point of collection of any goods, the Graduate student must present their student identification card. In the event another person is to collect the goods on the Graduate Student's behalf, this must be arranged in advance by notifying the MGA Advocate.

9. Senior Advocate Role

- 9.1. Upon receiving a student's application for welfare assistance from an MGA Advocate, the Senior Advocate will review and consider all provided material.
- 9.2. The Senior Advocate will, after reviewing and considering all provided material, decide to either approve or reject the application.
- 9.3. If the application is approved, the Senior Advocate will determine the level of welfare assistance and communicate details to the HR & Finance Officer for bookkeeping purposes.
- 9.4. The Senior Advocate will notify the relevant advocate of the decision.

9.5. The Senior advocate may confer with the Executive Officer before reaching a decision. The decision of the Senior Advocate is final.

10. Powers of Senior Advocate

- 10.1. Investigate any welfare assistance application and request further information from the Graduate Student applying for welfare assistance;
- 10.2. Approve applications for welfare assistance;
- 10.3. Determine amount and type of welfare assistance;
- 10.4. Refuse an application, or revoke approval, or exclude a Graduate Student on the grounds of:
 - a) Reasonable suspicion of fraudulent conduct;
 - b) Ineligibility;
 - c) Misuse of previous MGA welfare assistance;
 - d) Error;
 - e) Insufficient MGA funds.
- 10.5. In exceptional circumstances, waive the requirement in section 8.3 and approve welfare assistance without requiring a student to first access the Monash Connect Emergency Grants Scheme or Loan Fund including for reasons of:
 - a) Emergency;
 - b) Concern for student health and safety.

11. HR & Finance Officer Role

- 11.1. Once notified of approved welfare assistance, the HR & Finance Officer will implement the decision of the Senior Advocate.
- 11.2. Where the approved welfare assistance requires a bank 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. Volunteer Program Officer Role

- 12.1. Once notified of approved welfare assistance, the Volunteer Program Officer will implement the decision of the Senior Advocate as soon as practicable keeping in mind the urgency of each particular case.
- 12.2. The Volunteer Program Officer will then liaise with the relevant advocate about the delivery mode and logistics of the welfare assistance being provided to the student concerned.
- 12.3. If appropriate the Volunteer Program Officer will also notify the HR & Finance Officer.
- 12.4. In the case of issuing goods, the Volunteer Program Officer must verify the 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 pass on the note to the relevant advocate to place on the student's file.

13. Role of all MGA staff

- 13.1. Any staff entrusted with providing welfare assistance to a student including purchasing goods will endeavour to:
- 13.2. Purchase appropriate goods which may be perishable or non-perishable depending on the student's needs;
- 13.3. Not include purchases of tobacco or alcohol;
- 13.4. Ensure the goods purchased are fit for purpose, of good quality and from an approved retailer;
- 13.5. Ensure all goods purchased are accompanied by a receipt;
- 13.6. Ensure all goods purchased, are securely and appropriately stored and able to be carried by the student.

14. Unclaimed Goods

- 14.1. All reasonable steps must be taken to advise/notify and remind students to collect their welfare assistance.
 - 14.1 Unclaimed goods may be either returned or made available to another student in need of welfare assistance and if non-perishable, stored at the MGA office.

15. Examples of MGA Welfare Assistance

Welfare assistance from the MGA may include one or more of the following: Grocery items, toiletries, manchester, stationery, clothing, food vouchers, gift cards, travel vouchers, bedding, personal hygiene products, money transfers, medical treatment costs.

16. Unauthorised Uses of MGA Welfare Assistance

Unauthorised uses of MGA welfare assistance, especially in cases where the student is provided with cash, include but are not limited to any acts or activities in violation of University Policy and Statutes, or State or Federal Laws, and include Thesis Editing, Proofreading, payment of tuition fees, gambling, betting, or gifting to others.

17. Approved Retailers

Retailers approved for the purposes of financial assistance include, Woolworths, Coles, Aldi, Target, K-Mart.

18. Record Keeping

Full records must be kept for a period of no less than 7 years of all students who access MGA welfare assistance.

Schedule 1



Application Date: _____

Welfare Assistance Application

Please PRINT text when completing this form

Personal Details			
Surname:			
Given Names:			
Student ID:	Contact Number:		
Email:			
Address:			
	Postcode:		

Enrolment Details			
Course Name:			
Faculty:			
Campus:	Commencing Year:		
Full/Part-Time:	Residency Status	Citizen	PR S Visa

Financial Status		
For each person you are financially dependant on or financially responsible for, including yourself, provide their name, relationship to you (if applicable), and their gross annual income.		
Name	Relationship	Annual Income
If you receive Centrelink benefits (e.g. youth allowance or health care card), provide your Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CCRN) (please attach a copy of the Centrelink benefits card)		
CCRN:		

Request Details

Payment Details <small>(please only complete if you have been offered cash assistance)</small>	
Account Name:	
Bank:	

BSB: _____ Account No: _____
Payment will be made within two (2) working days on submission of the completed form

Declaration

I declare that all the information I have provided in this application form and additional supporting documentation is true and correct. I understand that should the information be shown to be false at any stage, I will be required to return the received monies (or equivalent monetary value of goods received) immediately to the MGA.

I understand that this information is private and confidential, and that the MGA may only obtain information pertaining to this application with my consent. I give permission to the Monash Graduate Association staff to verify my enrolment status with Monash University and/or confirm my eligibility for benefits with Centrelink staff.

I warrant that in carrying out my obligations under this agreement I will not violate the right of any third party or use the funding granted to me for any purpose contrary to the MGA Welfare Assistance Regulations or the laws of Australia. I agree to indemnify MGA from and against any and all liability, losses, actions, proceedings, claims, demands, damages and costs (including legal costs) arising out of any third party claim of breach of its rights or privacy rights, or disclosure of any confidential information, or a breach of any law arising out of my use of the welfare grant. I herewith agree to the terms and conditions of this agreement.

Print Name:	
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Signature: _____ Date: _____

DECISION USE ONLY

REFERRED BY To be completed by referring advocate

Advocate:	
Advocate Notes:	

Signature:		Date:	
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DECISION To be completed by MGA Senior Manager

Amount Approved: <small>(Circle one)</small>	Cash	Voucher	Other
	If Other:		
Approved By:			

Signature:		Date:	
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Form Fillable PDF

Application Date: _____

Welfare Assistance Application

Please PRINT text when completing this form

Personal Details

Surname:			
Given Names:			
Student ID:	Contact Number:		
Email:			
Address:			Postcode:

Enrolment Details

Course Name:			
Faculty:			
Campus:	Commencing Year:		
Full/Part-Time:	Residency Status	Citizen	PR S Visa

Financial Status

For each person you are financially dependant on or financially responsible for, including yourself, provide their name, relationship to you (if applicable), and their gross annual income.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Annual Income</u>

If you receive Centrelink benefits (e.g. youth allowance or health care card), provide your Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CCRN) (please attach a copy of the Centrelink benefits card)

CCRN:	
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Request Details

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Schedule 2

Consent to Disclose Information Form

I,

_____ (full name) of

born

_____ (date of birth),

hereby authorise and direct you to supply to my advocate from the Monash Graduate Association Inc (MGA), any information, records, letters, images, electronic record copies and prints which you hold concerning my financial status and history.

This authority remains valid until revoked by me in writing.

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)



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Form Fillable PDF



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Consent to Disclose Information Form

I,

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