



Domestic and Family Violence (Student Support) procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This Procedure is effective from 22 May 2022.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This Procedure outlines the steps students experiencing domestic or family violence can take to access available support mechanisms.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to all students as defined in the [Deakin University Act 2009 \(Vic\)](#).

Section 4 - Policy

(4) This Procedure is pursuant to the [Domestic and Family Violence \(Staff and Student Support\) policy](#).

Section 5 - Procedure

(5) The University will adopt a collaborative approach to supporting students experiencing domestic or family violence. The University's Safer Community Services will act as the central point of enquiry for information, advice and support and will work positively with other internal and external avenues of assistance and the affected student so that the student can continue to study.

Requesting support

(6) A student experiencing domestic or family violence can elect to contact:

- a. staff within the University's Safer Community Services; or
- b. an academic or general staff member; or
- c. a harassment and discrimination contact officer; or
- d. a University health professional; or
- e. a member of [Deakin University Student Association](#)

to discuss their situation and access support.

(7) The University recognises that students experiencing domestic or family violence may also disclose their experience to a trusted friend, peer or an external support agency, or in a crisis situation may seek the assistance of Deakin Security.

Confidentiality

(8) All staff and students involved in supporting a student experiencing domestic or family violence must treat the matter as confidential. To protect the safety of others or as agreed with the student, members of the University community who are providing support can discuss the matter with the University's Safer Community Services but must not discuss the matter outside of the University unless there is a legal obligation to do so.

Managing requests for support and responding to a disclosure

(9) Any individual receiving a disclosure will:

- a. respect the right of the student to make their own decisions regarding their personal affairs and avoid judgement; and
- b. bring the [Domestic and Family Violence \(Staff and Student Support\) policy](#) and this procedure to the attention of the affected student.

(10) Additional requirements apply to specific roles:

- a. staff members or students who receive a request for support from a student experiencing domestic or family violence must
 - i. act in accordance with their responsibilities under the [Health, Wellbeing and Safety policy](#) to manage operational health, wellbeing and safety matters and notify or directly engage with the University's Safer Community Services
 - ii. offer support to the student, as well as any affected colleagues or students, by referring them to the University's Health and Wellbeing services or [Employee Wellbeing Support \(EWS\)](#).
- b. Staff members, Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officers and University health professionals should notify the University's Safer Community Services in order to provide appropriate support for the student.
- c. The University Safer Community Services will work directly with the person and other areas of the University to coordinate the support provided to the student by the University.

(11) Students may request a support person to attend any meetings in relation to matters of domestic or family violence.

(12) The University will co-operate with all legal orders protecting students experiencing domestic or family violence.

Types of support available to students

(13) Safer Community Services, in consultation with other relevant areas of the University, will consider any request for support from a student experiencing domestic or family violence. Students experiencing domestic or family violence may have access to a range of support measures, which may include:

- a. academic accommodation to facilitate ongoing study, which may include applications for special consideration; intermission and withdrawal
- b. accommodation regarding attendance
- c. where available and reasonable transfer of tutorials/lectures
- d. changes to student email address
- e. assistance from University Security while on campus or arriving or leaving campus
- f. safety provisions, support and accommodation where reasonable for students on placement
- g. the right to have a support person accompany them when attending any internal matters or issues arising out of domestic or family violence, and

- h. other reasonable provisions determined on a case by case basis, such as advice, information and referrals to appropriate support agencies.

Academic accommodations

(14) A request for academic accommodation can be submitted to the student's Head of School or other nominated Faculty staff member.

(15) The Head of School or other nominated staff member will take into account the individual's situation in consultation with the student and the University's Safer Community Services in assessing and determining any academic accommodation.

(16) Academic accommodation may be granted for a range of reasons, including but not limited to:

- a. seeking medical, legal and financial assistance
- b. attending court appearances
- c. making arrangements for children or other people for whom the student has carer responsibilities
- d. organising alternative accommodation
- e. counselling or other related appointments.

Safety Plans

(17) When a student raises a concern regarding domestic or family violence, Safer Community Services, with input from the Head of School or nominated staff member, may be required to put in place strategies to ensure the safety of the student and other members of the University community.

(18) When developing a personal safety plan the following must be considered:

- a. the plan must have the student's consent
- b. it must be reviewed with the student member on a regular basis
- c. the student's emergency contact details must be kept up to date
- d. all reasonable attempts should be made to ensure the student is able to participate in ongoing study
- e. compliance with legal orders (e.g. Intervention or Personal Safety Orders)
- f. the plan may require consultation with other areas within the University such as Security and Digital Services, which will be coordinated by Safer Community Services on a confidential basis, and
- g. what action will be taken if the student does not respond to contact and there are reasonable concerns for their safety.

(19) If a member of the University community becomes aware that a person is in attendance at a University precinct and reasonably believes that person to be in breach of an intervention order or personal safety order, the University member should:

- a. initiate the University's emergency response procedures by contacting security by dialing 222 and request assistance and immediate police attendance if necessary;
- b. notify the University Safer Community Services or the General Counsel as soon as practicable
- c. document any incident as soon as possible.

(20) Safer Community Services will follow up with impacted members of the University community by ensuring all relevant notifications, referrals and documentation, including lodgement of Incident Form (OHS) are made to support students and staff.

(21) In situations where there is a report of domestic and family violence occurring between two members of the University community, the University will make reasonable arrangements to support and maintain the safety of both parties.

(22) When applying for support under this procedure evidence may be required by Safer Community Services or the Head of School or nominated staff member. Evidence can be in the form of a document issued by:

- a. the police
- b. a court
- c. a medical practitioner
- d. a government agency
- e. a counselling professional, or
- f. a statutory declaration from the student.

Record keeping

(23) Any notes of meetings, discussions and actions proposed or taken must be stored in a secure location in accordance with the [Privacy policy](#). All information pertaining to a student's personal circumstances in terms of domestic or family violence must be kept confidential and not be placed on their student file.

Responsibility of Head of School or nominated staff member

(24) Heads of School or nominated staff members are responsible for:

- a. offering support to students who have disclosed and may require assistance as a result of experiencing the effects of domestic or family violence;
- b. providing advice to students about the University's Health and Wellbeing services;
- c. seeking advice as necessary from specialist staff such as the University's Safer Community Services;
- d. being familiar with processes to support people who may be experiencing domestic or family violence and participating in relevant training provided by the University, and
- e. ensuring that all personal information concerning the student's circumstances is used solely for the purpose of assessing the student's needs and determining and applying the appropriate support mechanisms and is otherwise kept confidential.

Section 6 - Definitions

(25) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. domestic or family violence: is defined in the [Domestic and Family Violence \(Staff and Student Support\) policy](#).
- b. Safer Community Services: is an in-house University service that acts as the central point of enquiry for information, advice and support in managing problem behaviours affecting staff or students that have, or could, cause offence, fear or trauma (physical and or psychological).

Status and Details

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Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Responsible Executive	Kerrie Parker Executive Vice-President Resources evpr@deakin.edu.au
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