

## Plain Language Statement

### **Routine linking of basic assessment and analytics data (*Understanding Medical Students' Learning Behaviour Through Analytics* research program)**

The purpose of this document is to describe how automatically generated data relating to the normal operation and use of the MD Connect student learning and administration platform will be combined with basic assessment data to support research into medical students' learning behaviour. Detailed usage data are routinely and incidentally captured (in the form of server logs) by virtually all online systems. These data contain information about which services within the system are being accessed, which user is requesting the access, and how the service is being utilised. Assessment data are also routinely produced throughout a course to provide information to students and staff on students' academic performance and progression. The term analytics typically refers to the processing and analysis of such data to provide information on how the system and its users are behaving or performing in a readily interpretable form. Learning analytics refers to the application of analytics data to interpret, evaluate and support learning activities, processes and performance.

As a user of the MD Connect platform, analytics relating your use of the platform and its services are generated each time you interact with the system. These data, which are anonymised and are stored on a secure server, are primarily intended to support the normal operation of the MD Connect platform. However, selected elements of these data may also be used to support evaluation and research related to students' use of MD Connect in relation to the delivery of learning and teaching programs and activities within the medical curriculum. As part of this project assessment data (in the form of simple scores or grades) will also be collected and compared with the MD Connect usage data through an anonymised linking process. These combined data will be used to model user behaviour against student outcomes with a view to providing improved and individualised access to learning activities and resources and feedback on assessment tasks through MD Connect and within the MD curriculum more generally.

## Participation

All MD students and MD Connect users are potential participants in this research. Participation does not involve or require any additional time, effort or activity on your part other than occurs during your normal course-related activities. The data that are collected and utilised as part of this project are the same anonymised data that are routinely collected to support the delivery of the MD curriculum and the functioning and administration of the MD Connect system

## Confidentiality

All analytics data related to this project and program of research are anonymised and securely stored. Access to these data is restricted to named researchers and because of its anonymised nature, published or communicated reports based on these data will never include personal or identifying information. It is important that you recognise that this data will not (and cannot - due to its anonymised nature) have any influence on your marks, assessment, or any other component of your MD program in any way. There is absolutely no relationship between your use of MC Connect, the analytics data generated by it, either alone or in combination with any anonymised assessment data, and any progress related decisions within the MD program. All combined data files (analytics and assessment data) will be permanently deleted at the completion of the research.

## Findings

The findings from this project and its parent program of research will be disseminated through various presentations and publications, details of which will be freely available to MD students and MD Connect users through the MD Connect website (<https://mdconnect.medicine.unimelb.edu.au/html/research.html>).

## Further information

The researchers involved in this project are:

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Should you require any further information about this program of research, or have any concerns about the capture, storage or application of analytics data (including assessment data) related to you, you can contact the research team at [mdc-research@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mdc-research@unimelb.edu.au) or named researchers via their individual emails.

Should you have any further concerns about the conduct of this project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, The University of Melbourne, on phone: 8344 2073 or fax: 9347 6739.