



c/o ANU Sport Building 19  
North Road, ACTON ACT 2617

communication@anufc.org.au  
ABN: 14 338 276 791

facebook.com/anufc

## ANUFC Anti-Gambling Policy

The following policy is provided by the ANU Counselling Centre. ANU Students and staff can access the services of the ANU Counselling Centre by phoning (02) 6178 0455. More information is available on the [ANU Counselling Centre website](#).

### WHAT IS PROBLEM GAMBLING?

Gambling has been a part of Australian culture for a long time, in fact some people argue that colonising Australia was a huge gamble in itself. Statistics on gambling in Australia show that since the 1972/73 financial year gambling expenditure (player losses) has risen from \$2.7b to over \$13b in 1999/2000. So, gambling is a normal and accepted part of our culture. Yet, those people who are experiencing problems due to gambling often feel rejected, misunderstood and isolated because there is little knowledge in our community about the potential dangers of gambling.

Anybody who gambles has the potential to develop problems. People often begin to lose control when difficult personal issues arise, and gambling becomes a coping strategy. Problem gambling is characterised by a strong pull or compulsion towards gambling that becomes more and more difficult to resist. People describe the urge to gamble and say that despite all the logical arguments they have against gambling this urge will not go away until it is satisfied (by gambling). People often become frustrated with themselves about this and carry feelings of guilt, shame and embarrassment. Excessive gambling can lead to significant problems that may harm relationships, finances, work, physical health and mental health. At this point gambling is defined as problem gambling.

### WARNING SIGNS

The following are some signs that gambling has become a problem:

- Gambling more money than is affordable
- Being preoccupied with gambling (reliving past gambling experiences, thinking of ways to get money for gambling etc.)
- Making repeated, unsuccessful attempts to cut down or stop gambling and being irritable or restless during these attempts.
- Gambling to escape from problems or to relieve negative feelings.

- Chasing losses (i.e. after losing money, gambling more to try to win back losses)
- Lying to others to conceal the extent of gambling
- Obtaining money illegally to gamble
- Risking relationships and work or educational opportunities due to gambling
- Borrowing from friends, family or financial institutions to finance gambling or gambling related debt.
- Gambling alone
- Gambling a significant proportion of income on pay day
- Feeling stressed during and/or after a gambling session
- Gambling being the only source of fun

## **GAMBLING CAN AFFECT**

**Personal Life:** Feeling depressed and gambling to escape pressure or conflict. Feelings of loneliness and isolation from family and friends.

**Family Life:** Relationships suffering. Family members covering up addictive behaviour by paying debts. Lying to keep the extent of gambling a secret.

**Financial Situation:** Borrowing money to delay disaster. Gambling until all the money is gone. Gambling to chase losses even when in debt. Financial difficulties possibly leading to legal problems.

**Work life:** Loss of concentration. Lost time from work due to gambling. Decreased work productivity. Working long hours to obtain money to gamble.

**Health:** Stress related illness, such as headaches, back pain, inability to sleep, mood swings, hypertension. Loss of control over gambling can trigger feelings of guilt and desperation that can lead to thoughts of suicide.

**Values:** Thoughts of “borrowing” from employers or friends, committing fraud or forgery. Lying about the amount of time and money spent on gambling.

**Social life:** Preferring to gamble alone. Little time for socialising. Avoiding friends who have lent money.

## STRATEGIES TO CONTROL GAMBLING

Following are some suggestions for reducing the harm associated with gambling:

- Work out how much you can afford to spend on gambling and budget for it.
- Be careful to stick to your gambling budget. One way to do this is to only take the amount of money you have budgeted for gambling.
- Use only your own money.
- Practice delay in responding to the urge to gamble by doing something else or finding long-term enjoyable activities.
- Gamble in company, not alone.
- Develop a support network of family or friends to talk to when you want to resist the urge to gamble.

Sometimes, even after trying some of these strategies, dealing with gambling problems can be too difficult to do alone. This is when the extra support of someone who specialises in gambling counselling can be very helpful.

ANU Students are welcome to use the ANU Counselling – a free and confidential service to discuss any gambling concerns.

Also, there is a gambling counselling service in the ACT offered by Mission Australia and they can be contacted on 6129 6100.