

<b>Policy Hierarchy link</b>	<i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (as amended)</i> Student Code Policy		
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education and Vice-President		
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Director, Student Life and Learning		
<b>Superseded Documents</b>	Student Critical Incident Procedure [v1.1] approved on 15 July 2015		
<b>File Number</b>	2016/08773		
<b>Associated Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AVCC Provision of Education to International Students Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities</li> <li>• The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (2007)</li> <li>• Student Code Policy</li> <li>• UNSW Emergency Procedures Flip Chart</li> <li>• Critical Incident Management Strategic Framework</li> </ul>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Authorised by</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
1.2	Administrative update by Head of Governance	18 February 2016	29 February 2016

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## 1. Purpose and Scope

This procedure outlines the process for managing serious student incidents, including any situation meeting the definition of a “critical incident” under the provisions of Standard 6.4 of the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (the National Code). The procedure is intended to ensure each incident is managed effectively and compassionately and to enable a ‘whole-of-University’ approach. The University aims to ensure that appropriate resources are available to respond to all aspects of a student incident including:

- The physical and psychological safety of individuals affected;
- The provision of continuity of emotional and physical support for all those involved;
- Interventions required at different phases of the aftermath of an incident.

The procedure applies to all UNSW students in Australia, whether on or off campus. It is primarily intended to address situations affecting international students and domestic students who do not have access to adequate social support. International students may require additional support because they will often not have family available to assist. It also applies to incidents involving students in University student accommodation.

In all cases the response needs to be timely and professional. Incidents may vary in terms of scale, the level of response required and the level of media interest. The response of university officers should be adapted within this procedure to meet the needs of each incident.

The procedure is in accordance with the *Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee Provision of Education to International Students Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities (2005)*, the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (as amended) and the National Code.

The scope of Student Critical Incidents addressed by this procedure excludes ordinary student welfare concerns and relatively more minor incidents for which the University provides routine support through the normal service operations of Student Life and Learning (SLL).

The procedure should be read in conjunction with relevant documents of the University relating to responses to emergencies, including fire and other emergencies in university buildings including *UNSW Emergency Procedures Flip Chart* and the *Critical Incident Management Strategic Framework*. The procedures to be followed by the University are at all times subject to applicable privacy laws and the University's Privacy Statement.

## 2. Definitions

**Student Critical Incident:** A tragic or traumatic event or situation (within or outside Australia), or the threat of such, which affects, or has the potential to affect a student, his/her family members and/or other persons including staff and friends, in a traumatic way, including extreme stress, fear or injury.

Student Critical Incidents include any situation deemed to be a "critical incident" under the provisions of the National Code.

Student Critical Incidents can include, but are not limited to:

- Death, serious injury or serious threat of these
- Death of a student
- Missing student
- Attempted suicide
- Serious injury or health problem which prevents the student continuing with or completing the course
- Mental health episode requiring hospitalization
- Natural disaster located away from UNSW
- Student arrested or detained
- Assault, including sexual assault, domestic violence or robbery, severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Other serious events

**DVCE:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education and Vice-President.

**SLL:** Student Life and Learning.

## 3. Student Critical Incident Procedure

### 3.1 Reporting Incident

In the event of a Student Critical Incident, the University Security Services should be contacted on the emergency line 9385 6666. Security Services will formally log the incident and notify the Director, SLL, the Unit Manager in the office of the SLL and the Manager, Security Services. It is the responsibility of

these officers to assess whether the circumstances are such as to warrant any further immediate action.

### **3.1.1 Inform Relevant Senior Staff**

The Director, SLL will ensure that the President and Vice-Chancellor, Vice-President, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and DVCE and other senior staff, as appropriate, are informed of the situation when required.

Where the incident involves a postgraduate research student, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Vice-President and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Training) are notified.

The Director, SLL will notify, if relevant, the Dean of the Faculty of the affected student, the Director, Media Office, the Manager, Student Records, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) and the University Legal Office.

If the Director, SLL is unavailable, the responsibility for informing relevant staff will fall on the Unit Manager in the office of the SLL.

## **3.2 Case Management**

The Director, SLL will appoint a Case Manager who is responsible, with appropriate liaison, for the implementation of immediate and ongoing response strategies.

### **3.2.1 Individual Management**

The Director, SLL will ensure coordination across support teams. Where necessary, a meeting of a case-specific 'Student at Risk Group' will be convened by the Director, SLL. When convened for the purpose of responding to a Student Critical Incident, this group shall:

- Establish a means of communication, and meet on an 'as needed' basis;
- Manage the incident until its resolution, providing advice to the Case Manager to ensure a consistent and effective response;
- Identify needs for information, tasks to be performed, and external agencies to be involved, whilst allocating responsibility for tasks;
- Contribute to documenting the history of the incident;
- Arrange any recommended post facto operational debriefing, and meet as a group to debrief to ensure that future responses are informed by current experiences.

### **3.2.2 Cohort Management**

For incidents involving large cohorts of students (such as an overseas natural disaster or political upheaval) the Director, SLL may recommend the DVCE convene a meeting of the 'Cohort at Risk Group' to oversee development of a response strategy. The following strategies may be considered: provision of payment plans, one off grants (for example \$200 per student), loans or short term accommodation.

## **3.3 Ongoing Intervention**

For incidents requiring ongoing intervention, the Director, SLL will appoint another case manager. In the case of international students this will usually be the Manager, Student Development International. In the case of domestic students this will usually be the Director, Counselling and Psychological Services. Overall coordination of support and follow up will remain the responsibility of the Director, SLL. Regular updates will be provided to the DVCE who will ensure relevant senior officers are kept informed of progress.

The Case Manager will:

- Establish a clear understanding of the known facts before any contact occurs with next of kin/family, including confirming the student's identity

and determining whether a third party may be involved (for example, whether the student is an AusAID or other sponsored student, a Study Abroad or Exchange Student);

- If contacting the NSW Police, this will occur in consultation with UNSW Security Services;
- Plan an immediate response in consultation with relevant others;
- Plan ongoing strategies in consultation with relevant others;
- Provide daily updates to Director, SLL who in turn will brief DVCE as needed.

### **3.3.1 Case Manager Duties**

The Case Manager's role will include:

- Coordinating, monitoring and recording the ongoing management of the student;
- Liaising with UNSW Security Services where appropriate;
- Case managing the cooperation of instrumentalities involved, such as police, hospital and other emergency services;
- Contacting family/next of kin when appropriate;
- Contacting third parties, where necessary;
- Liaising with Embassies and Consulates to ensure contact with, and support for, the family in the student's home country (but see section 3.4 in the case of student death);
- Arranging to inform relevant staff and students;
- Providing guidance to staff about what information to give to students and other staff;
- Identifying students and staff members most closely involved and, therefore, most at risk;
- Arranging counselling and/or other support for the student involved in the Student Critical Incident, if appropriate;
- Arranging group/individual debriefing sessions for students and staff affected by the Student Critical Incident;
- Following up with external agencies, if appropriate;
- Engaging relevant support services off campus, if required;
- Ensuring academic related administrative actions (such as special consideration, withdrawal without penalty) are managed;
- Providing accurate and up-to-date information to relevant persons;
- Confirming access to emergency funds, if necessary;
- Managing Overseas Student Health Cover issues, where appropriate;
- Assist in arranging a visit from next of kin (international students) where appropriate;
- Ensuring appropriate compliance issues (international students) are attended to promptly;
- Documenting the incident and the action taken on file according to the relevant Unit's procedures

### **3.4 Additional Matters to be Considered in the Case of Student Death**

The Director, SLL will inform the DVCE who will advise relevant senior staff.

The Case Manager in the office of the SLL will coordinate letters of condolence for signature by the President and Vice-Chancellor and advise the Manager, Student Records.

Student Records will activate student records amendments and other student administration requirements (for example fee reimbursement).

In the case of death of an international student, the NSW Police will inform the next of kin. No contact by the university should occur until official notification has occurred. The Director, SLL (or nominee) will make contact with the relevant

Embassy. The Case Manager may be required to assist with funeral arrangements, repatriation of the body, packing up of the student's possessions and other matters as required.

### 3.5 Handling Media Enquiries

In cases where it is possible that the incident will generate media interest, the Director, SLL will ensure that the DVCE and the Director, Media Office are briefed. All media enquiries should be directed in the first instance to the Director, Media Office, who will be responsible for coordinating responses to such enquiries and will, where appropriate, make statements on behalf of the University.

### 3.6 Subsequent Responses

A Student Critical Incident may have long-term effects on those who experience it, including physical and psychological effects. The response to the Student Critical Incident may need to consider future management issues for those affected.

Staff involved in the management of a Student Critical Incident will have access to appropriate professional support for themselves through the University or external community resources.

## 4. Review & History

The Student Critical Incident Procedure will be reviewed after one year, then every three years after that.

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	Vice-President and Deputy-Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	14 November 2013	14 November 2013	New procedure
1.1	Vice-President and Deputy-Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	15 July 2015	15 July 2015	Section 3.2.2 amended and Appendix 1 added
1.2	Administrative update by Head of Governance	18 February 2016	29 February 2016	Administrative Amendments to senior leadership roles.

## Appendix A

### **Actions – Critical Incidents relating to country cohorts.**

The following actions will be put in place:

1. The SLL Office will email all students (when a country cohort) affected by the critical incident and will invite them to a meeting held by the Case Manager, usually the Manager, Student Development International. Students will receive relevant advice and perhaps share with other students who have encountered similar difficulties.
2. The SLL Office will update relevant staff in the UNSW community of ongoing actions, eg General Managers and Associate Deans (Education, Research and International).
3. The SLL Office will inform the UNSW community through social media of University actions including where aid donations can be made (to counter any negative publicity). Arc student leaders are likely to fund-raise for the affected country.
4. Students will be connected with student administration staff to discuss payment plans as tuition fees cannot be waived.