STUDENT CRITICAL INCIDENT PROCEDURES 2022

Issued by: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Dated: 30 March 2022

Last amended:

Signature:

Name: Professor Adam Bridgeman

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1   Purpose and application

(1)   These procedures:

      (a)   support University actions and decision-making in response to critical incidents involving students; and

      (b)   may be applied as part of the *University of Sydney Emergency Response Plan; and*

      (c)   give effect to the *Risk Management Policy 2017*.

(2)   These procedures apply to:

      (a)   students, staff and affiliates; and

      (b)   all critical incidents involving students, wherever occurring including:

            (i)   on University lands;

            (ii)   elsewhere in Australia; or

            (iii)   overseas.

2   Commencement

These procedures commence on 31 March 2022 or the day after the day on which it is registered.

3   Interpretation

Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander student
has the meaning given in the *Confirmation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identity Policy 2015*, which at the date of these procedures is:

> means being an Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander person, who is of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which they live, or formerly lived.

affiliate
has the meaning given in the *Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021*. At the date of these procedures this is:

> a person appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf, including but not limited to:
>
> - an honorary title holder engaged under the *Honorary Titles Policy 2013*;
> - a consultant or contractor to the University; and
> - an office holder in a University entity, a member of any University committee, board or foundation.
>
> An affiliate is not an employee of the University.

clinical school
has the meaning given in the *University of Sydney (Governance and Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016,* which at the date of these procedures is:

> a clinical school within the University of Sydney Medical School in the Faculty of Medicine and Health, established consistently with Part 5 [of the Rule].

critical incident
has the meaning given in subclause 4(1).

DVC ISS
means the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Strategy and Services.

emergency response team
means the team in Campus Protective Services whose primary responsibility is to provide services for emergencies on campus.

Incident Manager
means:

- the Head of Student Wellbeing; or
- a University staff member nominated by the Head of Student Wellbeing.

internal emergency	has the meaning given in the *University of Sydney (Emergency Powers) Rule 2020,* which at the date of these procedures is:
	means:
	• long-term disruption to significant business systems;
	• fire, flooding, smoke, destructive weather or other long-term damage to buildings or premises or threat to life;
	• spill or release of poison or hazardous materials;
	• mob violence or armed protest; and
	• attack on staff or students using a weapon or firearm.
special consideration	means consideration given to a student in circumstances where well-attested illness, injury or misadventure occurs during a semester or at the time of an examination.
	Note: See clauses 82 and 83 of the *Coursework Policy 2021.*
student	means a person who:
	• is currently admitted to candidature in an award course at the University;
	• is a non-award student, exchange student or study abroad student enrolled in a unit of study at the University; or
	• is currently enrolled in a course offered by the Centre for English Teaching.
	Note: For definitions of non-award student, exchange student and study abroad student, see the *University of Sydney (Student Discipline) Rule 2016.*
student association	has the meaning given in the *Student Associations Policy 2020,* which at the date of these procedures is:
	any student representative organisation, student club, or student society (regardless of how they are named).
student critical incident response team	has the meaning given in clause 9.
University lands	has the meaning given in the *University of Sydney (Campus Access) Rule 2009.* At the date of these procedures, this:
	includes any land or roads occupied or used in connection with the University including the whole or part of any building or structure and any land or roads occupied or used in connection with the whole or part of any building or structure.
University mental wellbeing support line	means the phone support line (1300 474 065) delivered by Lifeline which is available:
	• from 5pm to 9am on weekdays;
	• 24 hours on weekends and public holidays; and
	• during the University's closedown period.

4   Defining critical incidents affecting students

(1)   A critical incident means an event or situation, or the imminent risk of such which causes serious illness, fear, harm, injury, extreme stress, or other trauma to the person. This may include:

(a)   death;

(b)   attempted suicide or self-harm, or imminent risk of suicide or self-harm;

(c)   serious injury or life-threatening illness;

(d)   drug, alcohol or psychoactive substance overdose;

(e)   reports of an alleged indictable offence, including physical or sexual violence;

(f)   a missing student;

(g)   significant mental-ill health issues threatening the safety of self or others;

(h)   witnessing a serious incident;

(i)   natural disasters;

(j)   event of cultural significance; or

(k)   war or civil unrest;

(2)   Non-critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:

(a)   incidents that have not resulted in significant risk or harm to a student or students, staff or members of the community, or the community with which they identify;

(b)   reports of harassment;

(c)   accidents where students are unharmed;

(d)   theft or loss of property;

(e)   student homelessness; or

(f)   student immigration issues.

5   Reporting critical incidents

(1)   Critical incidents involving students that occur on University lands, and that have caused significant injury or harm, or involve imminent risk to the individual or others, must be reported to:

(a)   NSW Police, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Ambulance, or other appropriate local emergency service;

(i)   In the case of sexual assault, the assault survivor must, if possible, decide whether to report the matter to authorities.

and

(b)   Campus Protective Services, who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Note: See Schedule Two for contact details to report incidents or receive support.

(2)   Campus Protective Services will inform the Incident Manager or Head of Student Wellbeing regarding a student critical incident that has occurred on University lands.

(3)   If necessary, the Incident Manager will:

    (a)   notify the Emergency Response Team in Campus Protective Services;

    (b)   follow the directions of the Emergency Response Team; and

    (c)   provide updates to this team.

(4)   Student critical incidents that do not occur on University lands, including outside Australia, must be reported to the Head of Student Wellbeing, and if appropriate, the Australian Embassy or Consulate.

6   Action on receiving reports of critical incidents

(1)   The Head of Student Wellbeing or Campus Protective Services will determine whether to inform emergency services or other relevant authorities about:

    (a)   the contents of any report;

    (b)   whether the incident is reportable conduct under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019;* and

    Note: See the *Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy 2021*.

    (c)   whether to report the issue to the Office of General Counsel.

(2)   On receiving a report of a student death, the Head of Student Wellbeing or a staff member designated by the Head of Student Wellbeing will notify:

    (a)   the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Life), and the Office of the Vice Chancellor;

    and

    (b)   if the incident involves an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student, the DVC ISS;

    (d)   if the incident involves a student or students inbound or outbound as part of a University exchange program or as part of another mobility experience, the Associate Director, Sydney Global Mobility; or

    (e)   if the incident involves an international student, the Head of International Partnerships and Development.

(5)   Upon being notified of a report of a critical incident, the Head of Student Wellbeing must appoint an Incident Manager to manage the response or take on this role themselves.

(6)   If the Head of Student Wellbeing determines that a critical incident may impact the wider University community, they may convene a student critical incident response team to coordinate a welfare response.

    Note: See clause 9 and Schedule One.

7   Role of the Incident Manager

(1)   For each incident, the Incident Manager will:

    (a)   assess the need and arrange for internal or external support for the affected students, including, as required:

        (i)   emergency accommodation for a student or family members;

        (i)   travel assistance for a student, or family members;

        (ii)   medical assistance or consultations;

        (iii)   counselling or other psychological consultations;

        (iv)   financial assistance; or

        (v)   registration with Inclusion and Disability Services.

    Note: See Schedule Two for contact details.

    (b)   contact the Associate Dean (Student Life) within the relevant faculty or University school about the status of the student's course and assist with special consideration requests or other necessary academic adjustments or arrangements.

    Note: See the intranet site for special consideration.

    (c)   if the incident involves an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student, consult with the Director of the Gadigal Centre to ensure responses are culturally appropriate; and

    (d)   comply with privacy legislation, the *Privacy Policy 2017* and the *Privacy Procedures 2018* when accessing, providing and recording all information.

(2)   To prevent or lessen a serious or imminent threat to the life or health of a person, the Incident Manager may:

    (a)   liaise with NSW Police or other emergency services, including co-ordinating and delivering on requests for information;

    (b)   request access to University-held information about the person's recent history of:

        (i)   logging into University ICT and learning systems (from ICT); or

        (ii)   accessing buildings on campus (from Campus Protective Services);

    (c)   If the incident involves an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student, seek guidance from the Director of the Gadigal Centre regarding culturally appropriate approaches to student engagement and risk mitigation;

    (d)   if relevant, liaise with University managed accommodation, colleges and student accommodation to establish last sighting of student or request room check;

    (e)   liaise with internal services and external providers of 24/7 student safety and wellbeing support; e.g., University of Sydney Crisis Line;

    (f)   if the student is an international student, contact the Head of International Partnerships and Development and the Director, Student Affairs and Compliance to conduct a visa entitlement verification (VEVO) check;

    Note: VEVO is an online visa verification system provided by the Department of Home Affairs;

(g) liaise, as required, with government departments, agencies, and representatives, including overseas jurisdictions; and

(h) communicate, as appropriate, with a student's family or next of kin.

Note: For the avoidance of doubt, the Incident Manager may disclose private and personal information if disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of a person. See sections 17 and 18 of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*.

(3) If the critical incident requires communication in a language other than English, the Incident Manager may:

(a) engage a National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited interpreter or translator; and

(b) require confidentiality as a term of their engagement.

Note: See the NAATI website.

(4) If the critical incident involves hazards, incidents and injuries associated with University activities, the Incident Manager will:

(a) arrange for the incident to be recorded in RiskWare;

(b) liaise with the Chief Health and Safety Officer;

(c) if the critical incident involves an international student, contact the relevant embassy or consular representative in Sydney, if appropriate;

(d) if the student is an inbound study abroad or exchange student, coordinate with the Associate Director, Sydney Global Mobility to notify the student's home university; and

(e) create records of the incident and its management, and enter them into the University's recordkeeping system, as required by the *Recordkeeping Policy 2017*.

8 Communication by the Incident Manager

(1) Each critical incident is unique. Communication about the incident will depend on:

(a) the nature of the incident;

(b) the location and scale of the incident;

(c) who has been affected;

(d) consideration of cultural and language factors;

(e) any relevant Commonwealth or state legislation or guidelines;

(f) advice from police or other emergency services; and

(g) the needs of the people affected.

(2) If the incident involves an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student, the Incident Manager will seek guidance from the Director of the Gadigal Centre regarding culturally appropriate approaches to external and internal communication.

(3) The Incident Manager will:

    (a) determine the need to communicate internally with individual University officers; and

    (b) manage all internal communications in accordance with the *Privacy Policy 2017* and *Privacy Procedures 2018.*

9 Student critical incident response team

(1) The Head of Student Wellbeing may convene a student critical incident response team to coordinate the wellbeing response to a critical incident.

(2) A student critical incident response team will be constituted, and have the terms of reference and operation, as specified in Schedule One.

10 Support services

Contact details for support services available in the event of a critical incident are specified in Schedule Two.

11 Recordkeeping and reporting

(1) All records relating to a critical incident response will be generated, stored and maintained as required in accordance with the *Recordkeeping Policy 2017*.

(2) Statistical data derived from records of incidents may comprise all or part of executive and management reporting for members of the:

    (i) Senate; and

    (ii) Wellbeing Services, The Safer Communities Office and the Student Affairs Unit prepare a quarterly report on safety incidents for the People and Culture Committee.

    (a) University Executive and its relevant committees.

12 Review

(3) On a yearly basis, the Head of Student Wellbeing will consult with key stakeholders and:

    (a) review the management of critical incidents;

    (b) identify any lessons learnt; and

    (c) if necessary, recommend amendments to the policy or these procedures.

13 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the *Critical Incidents Involving Students Procedures 2018*, which is rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document.

NOTES

Student Critical Incident Procedures 2021

Date adopted: 30 March 2022

Date commenced: 31 March 2022

Administrator: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Review date: 31 March 2027

Rescinded documents: *Critical Incidents Involving Students Procedures 2018*

Related documents: *[Children's Guardian Act 2019](#)*

[Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#)

[Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021](#);

[Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)

[University of Sydney (Campus Access) Rule 2009](#)

[University of Sydney (Emergency Powers) Rule 2020](#)

[University of Sydney (Governance and Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016](#)

[Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021](#)

[Confirmation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identity Policy 2015](#)

[Coursework Policy 2014](#)

[Student Sexual Misconduct Response Procedures 2018](#)

[Under 18 International Student Procedures 2016](#)

[Privacy Policy 2017](#)

[Privacy Procedures 2018](#)

[Recordkeeping Policy 2017](#)

[Risk Management Policy 2017](#)

[Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy 2021](#)

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing

SCHEDULE ONE

STUDENT CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OPERATION

1   General Principles

(1)   The Head of Student Wellbeing may determine that it is necessary to convene a student critical incident response team to:

    (a)   allocate roles and responsibilities to team members to manage the wellbeing response to the critical incident;

    (b)   determine appropriate processes to respond to the specific circumstances of the incident;

    (c)   meet, as soon as possible, preferably the same day the incident occurs or is reported, to:

        (i)   assess the severity of the situation; and

        (ii)   discuss the priorities and actions taken, or to be taken, over the first 24 hours, one week, two weeks or longer and following the incident;

        and

    (d)   as appropriate, report back to the Emergency Response Team.

2   Constitution

(1)   This team will comprise the:

    (a)   Chair, being the Head of Student Wellbeing, or in their absence, the Incident Manager;

        (i)   the Chair is responsible for oversight of the critical incident response and management of all internal communications in accordance with the *Privacy Policy 2017* and *Privacy Procedures 2018*;

    (b)   Incident Manager;

    Note: See clauses 7 and 8.

    (c)   Team Lead, Student Counselling Service; and

    (d)   Manager, Staff Health Support.

(2)   Depending on the incident type or location, the team may include the following additional advisory members, as determined by the Head of Student Wellbeing:

    (a)   Associate Dean(s), e.g., Student Life, Indigenous Strategy and Services or Head(s) of School;

    (b)   Manager or principal of accommodation or colleges;

    (c)   General Counsel;

    (d)   Manager, Privacy Compliance;

(e)   if the critical incident involves an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student, or an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community member, the Director, Gadigal Centre and Executive Director, DVC ISS;

(f)   if the critical incident involves an international student, Director, Student Affairs and Compliance;

(g)   if the incident involves an international or partnership student or a student on study abroad or exchange or other mobility experience, Associate Director, Sydney Global Mobility;

(h)   Director Communications;

(i)   Operations Controller, Campus Protective Services;

(j)   Chief Health and Safety Officer;

(k)   Director, Asset Management and Operations;

(l)   Director, Student Administration Service;

(m)   Manager, Disability and Inclusion;

(n)   Manager, Safer Communities Office;

(o)   Manager Wellbeing Services;

(p)   if the critical incident occurs in a clinical school, Faculty General Manager, Faculty of Medicine and Health;

(q)   if the critical incident involves a Centre for English Teaching student, Director, Centre for English Teaching;

(r)   if the critical incident occurred during activities held by a student association, as appropriate, either the Clubs and Societies Manager, University of Sydney Union, or the General Manager, Sydney University Sport and Fitness Limited;

(s)   if the critical incident involves a student who holds an international sponsorship, the Head of International Partnerships and Development;

(t)   if the incident involves a partnership student, a senior representative from the University's Education Partner Provider; or

(u)   any other person deemed necessary due to the nature of the incident.

3   Operation

(1)   Student critical incident response team members may undertake any of the following actions depending upon the specific circumstances of the incident:

(a)   access the student record to verify student details, and gather information about the student, including:

(i)   emergency and next of kin contact details;

(ii)   address;

(iii)   email;

(iv)   phone numbers;

(v)   nationality;

(vi)   primary contact;

      (vii)   sponsor or agent;

      (viii)   and any other relevant information;

(b)   establish facts about the incident in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.

Note: If the critical incident involves an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student, or an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community member, consult with DVC ISS or staff from the Gadigal Centre for advice on cultural factors to inform the critical incident response.

(c)   communicate that the Incident Manager will be available 24 hours a day during the incident response phase and is the main point of contact for:

      (i)   family members;

      (ii)   friends; and

      (iii) external parties such as the consulate, police and medical services providers;

(d)   inform the emergency contact or next of kin:

      (i)   if possible, negotiate with the impacted student about alerting their emergency contact prior to doing so; and

      (ii)   if the incident involves the death of a student within Australia, the police are responsible for informing the next of kin.

(e)   liaise with external parties, which may include medical services providers, emergency services, government departments, or the relevant embassy;

(f)   consider whether the critical incident meets the criteria for trauma incident funding redemption to cover costs such as international travel for next of kin, repatriation of remains, or funeral and burial costs;

(g)   inform the University's Media and Public Relations team:

      (i)   in the event the critical incident results in media attention; and

      (ii)   to assist with the development and dissemination of internal communications to staff and students;

Note: See Schedule Two for contact details.

(h)   if the student is under 18:

      (i)   where required, undertake mandatory reporting as regulated by the *Children's Guardian Act 2019*;

Note: See the *Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy 2021*

      (ii)   if appropriate, enact approved support and welfare arrangements.

Note: See the *Under 18 International Students Policy 2016*

(i)   make appropriate referrals for staff and student wellbeing support services;

(j)   monitor the post incident response and support needs of impacted individuals for up to two weeks after the incident, and ensure that those affected receive care commensurate with the severity and complexity of their need, in line with current best practice guidelines;

(k)   notify the University's Mental Wellbeing Support Line that a critical incident has occurred which may trigger a higher volume of calls; and

(I)   for reporting of hazards, incidents and injuries associated with University activities, log the incident in the University's incident reporting system, RiskWare.

SCHEDULE TWO

Contact details and support services

(1) **Emergency services in NSW** (police, ambulance, fire and rescue): call **triple zero (000)**

(2) **Campus Protective Services**: call **+ 61 2 9351 3333**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

(3) **Head of Student Wellbeing**: call +61 2 8627 8433 or +61 2 8627 8437. Email student.wellbeing@sydney.edu.au

(4) **Incident Manager:** call +61 2 8627 8816. Email student.incident@sydney.edu.au

(5) **Information and Communications Technology:** call +61 2 9351 2000

(6) **University of Sydney Media and Public Relations Team:** call +61 2 8627 0246 or email: **media.office@sydney.edu.au**

(7) **University Mental Wellbeing Support Line**: call **1300 474 065,** available from 5pm to 9am weekdays, 24 hours on weekends and public holidays and during the University's closedown period

(8) **Student Counselling Service** call **+61 2 8627 8433**, 9:00am-5:00pm, Monday to Friday

   Note: Calls to the Student Counselling Service when the University is closed are automatically redirected to the University Mental Wellbeing Support Line.

(9) **The Gadigal Centre** call **+61 8627 8619** between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

(10) **The Aboriginal Counselling Service: call 0410 539 905**

(11) For disclosures or complaints about an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment, call **1800 SYD HLP (1800 793 457)** and select option 2.

   Note: Calls to 1800 SYD HLP when the University is closed are automatically redirected to Rape and Domestic Violence Australia.

(12) **Benestar Employee Assistance Program**, call:

   (a) **1300 360 364**, available 24/7;

   (b) **1800 816 152**, a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support line;

   (c) **1300 089 972**, a dedicated hotline for staff supporting a student sexual assault disclosure; or

   (d) **+61 2 8295 2292**, an international line for staff based overseas.

(13) **NSW Rape Crisis Service** call **1800 424 017**, available 24/7.

(14) **1800RESPECT** call **1800 737 732,** available 24/7.

(15) **Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) Hospital Sexual Assault Service** call **9515 9040** (Monday to Friday) or **9515 6111** (after hours). Counselling and medical services are available for anyone who has been sexually assaulted. Campus Protective Services can arrange transport to RPA.

(16) **Safer Communities Office**, call **8627 6808** or email safer-communities.officer@sydney.edu.au 8.30am-5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

(17) **Student Accommodation Services** call **9351 3322**, 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday for on-campus emergency accommodation. For after-hours emergency accommodation, contact **Campus Protective Services** on **9351 3333**

(18) **University Health Service** call **9351 3484**, 8:30am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

(19) **Student representative associations:**

    (a) [Students' Representative Council](#) (SRC) for undergraduate students call **9660 5222,** 9:00am-5:00pm, Monday to Friday; and

    (b) [Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association](#) (SUPRA) for postgraduate students call **9351 3715**, 9:00am to 5:00pm (closed 12:00pm1:00pm), Monday to Friday.