



Document: Critical Incident Policy and Procedures		
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Overview

Wentworth Institute of Higher Education (WIN Higher Education) owes a duty of care to its staff, students, visitors and stakeholders that recognises that appropriate infrastructure must be in place beforehand to ensure the provision of all necessary support services in the event of a major event, critical incident or crisis (incident). This policy will ensure that WIN Higher Education has a framework for its response to, during and in the period immediately following the event and for management of the longer-term consequences of such incidents.

The management of WIN Higher Education has produced these guidelines and procedures to clearly articulate a process that is simple but efficient and easily implemented when an incident occurs. All WIN Higher Education staff need to be familiar with and cognisant of the process so that when they become aware of an incident involving a student(s), staff member(s), visitor(s) or stakeholder(s), they can alert the appropriate person(s) and initiate remedial action. This will minimise the risk of independent and possibly inappropriate action and ensure that each case is managed effectively and compassionately. It will also minimise the risk of animosity from or conflict with the family of the student, staff member, visitor, or stakeholders and the emergency services such as paramedics. Responses need to be timely and professional, and also to be as personal and sincere as possible. The incident may vary in terms of the scale of the emergency, the level of response required and the level of media interest.

The Critical Incident Intervention Guidelines and Procedure applies to all WIN staff, students, visitors, and stakeholders unless otherwise stated.

WIN Higher Education will provide additional support to any students who may have special needs or whose family is overseas or interstate thus lacking the family and emotional support required during the time of the incident.

Definition

Major event, critical incident, or crisis (incident)

A major event, critical incident, or crisis (incident) refers to a particular incident, episode or crisis or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury that may result in a 'high' level of risk, directly or indirectly to the core operations of WIN Higher Education. It may include, but not limited to the following:

- Natural calamities and human-made disasters;
- Pandemic which is a widespread occurrence of an infectious disease over a whole country or the world at a particular time;
- Death, serious injury, robbery, missing students or staff, deprivation of liberty;
- SASH (sexual assault, sexual harassment) and any form of violence towards any students, staff, visitors, or stakeholders.
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Other incident that may be deemed major event, critical incident, or crisis.

A critical incident may occur at WIN Higher Education, to members of the WIN community outside of WIN operating hours, or to friends/acquaintances of members of the WIN community.

Domestic student

You are an Australian domestic student if you are:

- an Australian citizen;
- an Australian permanent resident (holders of all categories of permanent residency visas, including humanitarian visas), or
- a New Zealand citizen.

International or overseas student

You are an international student if you are:

- a temporary resident (visa status) of Australia,
- a permanent resident (visa status) of New Zealand, or
- a resident or citizen of any other country.

If you are unsure whether you fit into any of the above categories you can get clarification from Department of Home Affairs.

Recommended Response Procedure

- In the event of death, serious injury or illness, arrest or other serious incident involving a student or a staff of WIN Higher Education, the police or other relevant emergency service agency should contact WIN Higher Education's Registrar.
- Where the situation is first identified by (or referred to) WIN Higher Education, the Registrar (or Nominee) should contact the relevant emergency service agency. The Registrar (or Nominee) has access to student records and may verify details to assist emergency services. Particulars of the student's home address are to be provided only in cases where the individual is incapacitated and unable to provide these particulars themselves.
- The Registrar should immediately inform other members of the Executive Management Team ("EMT"), the Marketing Manager and any other relevant staff.
- It is the responsibility of the EMT to judge whether the circumstances are such as to warrant any further immediate action.
- Where further action is deemed to be required, the EMT, under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer, will devise an appropriate strategy to deal with the incident to be implemented and coordinated by the Registrar (or Nominee).
- Where the matter arises after WIN Higher Education's operating hours, students may contact the Registrar (or Nominee) directly and will then inform members of the EMT.
- After receiving notification and conferring with EMT, the Registrar (or Nominee) will assess the situation and organise any additional support required. This may involve liaison with the student's immediate family and/or the appropriate emergency service provider i.e., police, ambulance, hospital, welfare etc.
- The Registrar (or Nominee) will ensure that affected students and staff members have support and counselling if required.
- Where an international student is involved, access to an interpreter may be required to facilitate communication with the family.
- All communication is coordinated through the Registrar (or Nominee).
- All external communication involving the media is coordinated through the Registrar (or Nominee).
- Any direct contact with the family/next of kin in an official capacity is to be through the Registrar (or Nominee) or Chief Executive Officer.
- The EMT will meet regularly on advice from the Registrar (or Nominee) to review the situation and provide assistance and support to the Registrar (or Nominee) until the incident reaches its conclusion.

Preliminary Action by Registrar's Division

The following actions should be taken by the Registrar (or Nominee):

- Verify student details available in WIN Higher Education records, including contact information.
- Gather background details of the incident from the student(s) and/or from the informing source if possible and should include, but not limited to the following:
 - (a) time of the incident;
 - (b) location of the incident;
 - (c) nature of the incident (e.g. threat, accident, assault);
 - (d) names and roles of persons involved, if known; and
 - (e) any known contact details (e.g. of witnesses, next of kin, the hospital where the person has been taken to, the police station responding to the incident).
- Identify what immediate action should be taken to reduce the significance of the Critical Incident;
- the current needs of the people involved or affected;
- what resources may be required to address the incident;
- any other risk factors;
- agencies that need to be notified (if relevant, confirm that the police or the relevant emergency services agency have been in contact with next of kin/family);
- identify if counsellor, psychologist, interpreter, next of kin, and/or other WIN Higher Education staff will need to be contacted;
- Where the circumstances are considered to have some implications in relation to or arising from WIN Higher Education's public profile, the Chief Executive Officer, members of the EMT and the Marketing Manager are to be briefed on possible implications by the Registrar or nominee.
- The Registrar (or nominee) will provide timely advice to the following:
 - Counsellor
 - Student Support Officer
 - Marketing Manager
 - Relevant academic staff
 - Library (for action regarding any loans)
 - Where the student is an international student, advise the Consulate/Embassy (where support such as travel for the family of the student may be available).

Ongoing Liaison

The Registrar or nominee will be responsible for managing the case and communicating with the student's family members as well as relevant external agencies that will assist in the resolution of the incident, where appropriate, it includes the following:

- Police;
- medical and hospital services;
- government representatives or any other public/private organisation/individual involved in resolving the incident;
- host family, any sponsor, any agent, the relevant consulate or embassy, Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Department of Education and Training;
- interpreting and translating services;
- support services from appropriate cultural community organisations;
- arrangements for visits to/from the student's family;
- any financial assistance available for families of victim;
- insurance matters and Overseas Student Health coverage;

- arrangements concerning the student's personal items and affairs (household and academic);
- any refund of student's fees;
- repatriation or associated expenses;
- liaison with relevant academic staff or supervisors;
- formal interventions in relation to tuition or assessment, e.g. release from classes, leave, rescheduled assessment deadlines or examinations; and/or any legal issues, including assisting students to access to legal assistance.

Steps In the Event of a Student Death

In the event of a student's death, the Registrar or nominee will determine what actions are required in relation to obtaining death certificates and notices and arranging funeral/memorial services.

- An appropriate person, who has had some relationship or contact with the student, is to compose a letter conveying condolences.
- The relevant Course Director will be consulted to assist in identifying someone who was familiar with the student.
- The Registrar or nominee will recommend whether the Chief Executive Officer or another senior person, such as the Dean, should sign the letter of condolence. The final decision will depend on the circumstances.
- Student System details should be adjusted (and arrangements for refunds of fees as entitled).
- Financial Services, the Library and Information Technology Service should be informed to enable adjustment of relevant records.
- Ensure that any personal effects are returned to the next of kin. For international students, WIN Higher Education may seek advice from the Legal Services in relation to the student's financial and property matters.

Recommended Procedure for Missing Persons¹

From time to time, parents or other family members of a student or recent graduate may contact WIN Higher Education to report that a student or graduate as missing. These enquiries should be referred to the Registrar or nominee.

- In the first instance, the relative should be referred to the NSW Police. However, there are circumstances where the family may be reluctant to pursue that option and if so, the following charitable organisations may be a suitable alternative:
 - The Salvation Army (13 SALVOS (13 72 58)) offer a family tracing service. However, due to its international protocol, it will not initiate enquiries in Australia for international students. The student's relatives should be advised to contact the Salvation Army in their home country. The Salvation Army operates in other countries. This applies even if the family has arrived in Australia to look for their relative. If the Salvation Army locates the "missing" person, it will request the person to let their family know they are safe.
 - Mission Australia (24 hours Support Line - Freecall 1800 951 123) has a Family and Friends of Missing Persons support line. It offers support and a referral service.

¹ Section adapted and amended from University of Wollongong Critical Incident Policy

- Depending on the advice provided by the family, the Student Support Officer and the Counsellor should be consulted to ascertain whether they have had any contact with the student and/or have current contact with the student, through which a message may be passed.
- WIN Higher Education may offer to send a letter to the student's family at the student's current address on the Student Management System or by telephone using the last known contact numbers on the student's record. Generally, there are privacy constraints in passing any information to the family.

Roles & Responsibilities

- The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the overall coordination of the Critical Incident Procedure.
- The Registrar, who will have access to up-to-date details of WIN Higher Education's support services, is responsible for managing the case, for disseminating information to appropriate people within WIN Higher Education, for responding to any special needs that might emerge and for documenting details of the incident. The Registrar is responsible for responding to all enquiries related to the incident including press releases as appropriate and will make public statements on behalf of WIN Higher Education, as required.
- For any incident, a record of circumstances, events and actions is kept, along with any recommendations established at the Evaluation and Review phase with the EMT included in the response to any critical incident.
- All records will be maintained in accordance with WIN Higher Education's Privacy Policy and Procedures.
- On conclusion of the incident and its resolution, EMT will conduct a review, evaluate the process and outcomes, and produce a report, under the Direction of the Chief Executive Officer, for submission to the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Publication

This policy and procedure will be published on WIN Higher Education website at www.win.edu.au.

Legal and Policy Framework

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)

Related document

- Records and Security Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Refund Policy International Students
- Refund and Re-Credit of FEE-HELP Policy and Procedure for Domestic Students
- Student Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy
- Risk Assessment and Management Policy and Procedure

Version/Date	Changes	Approval
V2.2 05.2017		EMT
V3 09/2022	General and full review of the currency of the policy and procedure.	EMT

Appendix (Emergency Numbers and Contact Details)

ORGANISATION	PHONE
Police Fire Ambulance	000
Police (Darlinghurst) Level 3, Sydney Police Centre, 151-241 Goulburn Street DARLINGHURST 2010	9265 4144
Redfern Fire Station 113 George St, Redfern 2016	9698 1161
Saint Vincent's Hospital, 390 Victoria St, Darlinghurst	8382 1111
Dentist Sydney Dental Hospital, 2 Chalmers St, Surry Hills	9293 3333
Poisons Information Centre	13 11 26

Issues	Website	Phone no
Alcoholism	www.aa.org.au	1300 222 222
Alcohol and Drug Information Service NSW		1800 250 015
Asthma	www.asthmansw.org.au/	1800 278 462
Crime stoppers (report crime anonymously) https://nsw.crimestoppers.com.au/contact/		1800 333 000 131 444
Counselling (St Vincent de Paul)	www.vinnies.org.au/	13 18 12
Depression (National Initiative)	http://www.beyondblue.org.au/	1300 22 4636
Disabilities	www.ideas.org.au/	02 6947 3377
NSW Domestic violence	https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/domestic-violence/helpline	1800 65 64 63
Domestic violence	www.1800respect.org.au	1800 737 732
Drug addiction: Narcotics Anonymous	www.na.org.au	1300 652 820
Drug addiction (Christian help)	www.naranon.com.au/	02 8004 1214
Drugs and mental health	www.thewaysidechapel.com/	02 9581 9121
Eating disorders	www.edf.org.au/	9412 4499
Eczema	www.eczema.org.au/	1300 300 182
Epilepsy	www.epilepsy.org.au/	1300 37 45 37
Food bank Foodbank NSW & ACT Limited	Glendenning NSW 2761	P: 02 9756 3099
Floods and Storms SES	www.ses.nsw.gov.au	132 500
Gambling Counselling (Wesley)	www.wesleymission.org.au	13 11 14
Gambling Help Online	www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/	1800 858 858
Gay & lesbian counselling line	LGBTQI Life Support	1300 735 030

Grief support	www.solace.org.au/	9519 2820
Grief support	Bereavement Care Centre	1300 654 556
Hepatitis C	www.hep.org.au	1800 803 990
NSW HIV/AIDS		02 6809 8600
NSW Telephone Interpreter Service	https://www.tisnational.gov.au/	1300 575 847
Legal information and advice	www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/	1300 888 529
Lifeline Australia	www.lifeline.org.au/	13 11 14
Mental Health Line NSW		1800 011 511
Pregnancy counselling	www.pregnancysupport.com.au/	1300 139 313
Rape Crisis Centre	www.nswrapecrisis.com.au/	1800 424 017
Relationship counselling	www.interrelate.org.au/	1300 473 528
Schizophrenia	https://www.onedoor.org.au/	1800 843 539
Smoking - Quitline		13 78 48
Suicide Prevention	www.suicideprevention.com.au/	1300 659 467 13 11 14
Tenants' Rights	www.tenants.org.au	02 9698 5975
Victims of crime support NSW		1800 656 463
Women's refuge referral service	Women and Children First NSW	02 9971 4499