Student Critical Incident Procedure

Section 1 - Executive Summary

(1) This Procedure supports the University of Newcastle (University) community to recognise and manage critical incidents (not defined as an 'emergency') that involve University of Newcastle students, in a compassionate and culturally sensitive manner.

(2) This Procedure has been developed in accordance with Standard 5 and 6 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This document establishes how the University will plan for, respond to, and manage student critical incidents in a timely and coordinated manner and to ensure these incidents are:

a. responded to or resolved in the best possible way for the student(s), their families, and the University;
b. documented in a University business system;
c. reported to relevant officers within the University, relevant international and Australian government agencies, and other stakeholders (as required);
d. communicated to the student's family in an appropriate and culturally sensitive way; and
e. managed in a manner that upholds the University's reputation, domestically and internationally.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This document applies to student critical incidents where the incident:

a. involves any individual or group of enrolled students (e.g. non-award, undergraduate, postgraduate and research, domestic and international) of the University and occurs at any University campus including shared campuses;
b. involves any individual or group of enrolled students of the University and occurs during an approved University related activity either onshore or off-shore;
c. involves an international student regardless of whether at the time of the incident, the international student is:
    i. engaged in an approved or non-approved University related activity;
    ii. on or off campus; or
    iii. engaged in an approved University related activity off-shore through a University of Newcastle outbound mobility program.
d. involves a situation that, without warning, disrupts the welfare arrangements of an overseas students who is under the age of eighteen.

(5) This document does not apply to:

a. local critical incident management arrangements that apply at transnational program partner organisations; or
b. incidents that constitute an ‘emergency’ under the Emergency Management Plan.

(6) In the case of incidents that involve sexual assault and/or harassment the University's Prevention and Response to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure will apply.

Section 4 - Audience

(7) This document is designed to assist those with primary responsibility for the management of student critical incidents, and other staff and students to respond appropriately in the event of a student critical incident.

Section 5 - Definitions

(8) In the context of this document:

Defined Term	Meaning
Student Critical Incident	Means a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear, or injury. This does not include serious academic misconduct. Student critical incidents could include, but are not limited to: - missing students; - severe verbal or psychological aggression; - death, serious injury or any threat of these; - natural disaster; - issues such as domestic violence, physical, sexual or other abuse; and - other non-life threatening events including those that may involve police, emergency services and/or hospitalisation.
Student Critical Incident Director	The Chair of the SCIT and Critical Incident Director is normally the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation as the delegate of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global).
Student Critical Incident Team (SCIT)	Means the team that may be formed in the event of a student critical incident to coordinate and manage the University's response to the incident.
Student Critical Incident Manager	Means the University officer appointed by the Student Critical Incident Director to manage and operationalise the recommendations of the SCIT in response to a student critical incident, including liaison with the Critical Incident Manager of partners at shared campuses.
Student Critical Incident Response	Means the initial response to the incident. The response may be managed by an external party (eg the police or fire brigade) because of the nature of the incident; or, by the University internally.
Emergency	See the University’s Emergency Management Plan. An emergency, event or circumstance that impacts on a campus', people, operations, and environment which is of a size and complexity that requires a structured response to resolve the situation. Emergencies require the application of resources beyond that of the initial immediate response and pose higher levels of risk to the University.
Crisis	See the University's Emergency Management Plan and Crisis Management Plan. An adverse incident or series of events that have the potential to severely damage the University's people, operations, environment, and its long-term prospects and/or reputation’.
University related activity	University related activities include but are not limited to field trips, placements, internships, study tours.

Section 6 - Principles

Privacy

(9) Personal information and health information collected under the terms of this document must be managed in

accordance with the University's Privacy Management Plan, the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 NSW (PPIPA) and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (HRIPA). The University may disclose personal information or health information, where permitted under these Acts, to notify the Police, the student's next of kin, statutory services, the Department of Home Affairs, or other agencies in the event of a student critical incident.

Record keeping

(10) The University will maintain written records of student critical incident, and any remedial action taken.

(11) All records relating to student critical incident's must be managed in accordance with the University's Record and Information Management Policy. For international students, records of the incident must be kept for whichever is the greater period of:

a. two years after the student ceases their University program; or
b. the timeframe prescribed for student records under the Records Governance Policy.

Relationship management – shared campuses

(12) The University has shared occupancy arrangements with other organisations. Where relevant, relationship management plans have been implemented that direct to a single process that each party must follow in the event of a student critical incident.

Student centred approach

(13) The University will take a compassionate and culturally sensitive approach to the management of student critical incidents.

Health & Safety

(14) In all decisions the University will act in compliance with Health and Safety legislation.

Section 7 - Immediate Response Procedure

Life threatening incident – emergency services

(15) If a situation is life threatening immediately call emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance) on 000 first, then contact University Security on (02) 4921 5888.

Non-life threatening incident – University Security

(16) If an incident is not life threatening contact the University of Newcastle Security Services team on (02) 49215888. Security officers are available 24/7, 365 days a year. More information about Security and emergencies is available on the University website. The University Security service may refer the incident to the SCIT Director.

Inappropriate or concerning behaviour

(17) If a situation involves inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour of any kind, then contact the University's Campus Care Coordinator on (02) 49218600 (see Campus Care) or campuscare@newcastle.edu.au or via the secure online form. Campus Care is not an emergency service. Campus Care may refer to the incident to the SCIT Director. The University also provides a range of supports for current students on the Student Support webpage.

Managing a student critical incident

(18) The SCIT Director will receive notifications of a potential student critical incident and will consult as appropriate to assess the referral and potential impact. The SCIT Director will:

a. either appoint the Campus Care Coordinator to act as Student Critical Incident Manager to coordinate the University's operational response to the incident, including any required follow up; or
b. if appropriate, call a meeting of the SCIT.

(19) The Office of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global) will:

a. arrange and support meetings of the SCIT.

(20) The SCIT will have responsibility for:

a. appointing a Student Critical Incident Manager to coordinate the University's operational response to the incident, including any required follow up;
b. maintaining a register as a record of the incident;
c. coordinating development and distribution of all incident-related communications to student and staff in line with University delegations;
d. recommending referral to external parties such as Police and the Department of Home Affairs as well as other relevant international and Australian government agencies;
e. coordinating communication with the overseas student's family and other relevant organisations, e.g. community organisations or counselling services;
f. coordinating a post-incident review of the University's response to the incident to evaluate lessons learned and ensure continuous improvement;
g. appropriate storage of records of the incident; and
h. coordinating annual training and crisis rehearsal opportunities for key staff.

(21) After the SCIT deems that the critical phase has passed, the CIT may refer the follow up management of the incident to the Campus Care Coordinator.

Section 8 - Under 18 International Student Critical Incidents

(22) When a student critical incident involves an international student under the age of 18, the University staff and/or the approved homestay family must report the critical incident to the University Registrar who will also refer the matter to Campus Care.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global)
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Academic misconduct" - Means conduct by a student that is defined as academic misconduct in the Student Conduct Rule.

"Campus" - means any place or premises owned or controlled by the University, but may also specifically refer to a designated operating location such as the Callaghan Campus.

"Campus Care" - The program which has been set up as a central point of enquiry for information, advice and support in managing inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviours.

"Personal information" - Has the same meaning as in the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW).

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"External parties" - Any individual or organisation external to the University.

"Health information" - As defined in the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002, or any replacing legislation.

"Officer" - Has the meaning given in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), or any replacing legislation.

"Postgraduate" - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

"Program" - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Undergraduate" - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.

"International student" - A student (as defined by the University) who is not an Australian citizen, Australian Permanent Resident or New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand). This includes students who will be studying offshore and those who will be studying onshore and have a student visa, provisional residency, temporary residency, bridging visa, or any other category of non-permanent visa for Australia.

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