

International Students - Critical Incident Procedures

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') is committed to providing a safe environment for education and recognises the duty of care the University has to international students.

(2) Critical incidents and emergencies create particular challenges for international students, and the University recognises the need to provide particular responses and support for international students during these incidents.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This Procedure outlines the response of the University in the event of a critical incident or emergency involving and international student. It should be read in conjunction with the Emergency Management Procedure, which outlines the University's wider response to critical incidents and emergencies.

(4) This Procedure is a requirement under the [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Act 2000](#).

Section 3 - Scope

(5) This Procedure applies in all situations where there has been a critical incident involving an international student, including incidents that may not directly involve the student but that may lead to some form of harm, such as witnessing a traumatic accident.

(6) This Procedure applies to international students and all staff involved in the education and administration of international students. It also applies to all staff involved in responding to and resolving critical incidents and emergencies.

Section 4 - Procedure

(7) For the purposes of international student management, a critical incident is defined by the ESOS National Code as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'. Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:

- a. serious injury, illness or death of a student or staff member;
- b. students or staff lost or injured during fieldwork experiences;
- c. a missing student, staff member or member of the University community;
- d. severe verbal, psychological or physical aggression or violence;
- e. mental health episode requiring hospitalisation or attempted suicide;
- f. student or staff witnessing a serious accident or incidence of violence;
- g. natural disaster e. cyclone, earthquake, flood, or extreme temperature, within Australia or home country for international students;

- h. fire, bomb-threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard, water leak; and
- i. social issues e.g. sexual assault, drug use and alcohol abuse.

(8) For the purposes of this Procedure, the Critical Incident Controller (CIC) is a senior executive of the University appointed to have overall responsibility for overseeing the University's preparedness and capacity to manage emergencies and critical incidents, as defined in the Critical Incident Policy.

Reporting a Student Critical Incident

(9) As outlined in the Emergency Management Procedures, in the event of an immediate threat to the life of a person, serious injury, or a serious threat to property (such as a fire), call 000 and report the incident to the relevant emergency service.

(10) Other relevant crisis response services may include:

- a. NT Mental Health Line 1800 682 288
- b. Sexual assault referral centres Darwin 08 8922 6472
- c. 1800 RESPECT (sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service) 1800 737 732
- d. Department of Home Affairs – 131 881

(11) Critical Incidents should be reported to CDU Security, including those which are not an immediate threat to life or property either by telephone or in person at the Security office on campus. Where a Critical Incident has potential to impact on the wellbeing of a student, such as a disclosure of sexual assault, suicidality or domestic violence, contact should be made with Student Support. Security or Student Support will then notify the CIC or delegate.

(12) It is the responsibility of the CIC to review the Critical Incident and assess whether the circumstances are such as to warrant any further immediate action.

(13) In accordance with the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\) Act 2011](#), the CIC will determine Critical Incidents that require reporting to TEQSA. This should be done no later than 14 calendar days following the University's knowledge of the incident.

Inform Relevant Senior Staff

(14) When a critical incident is reported, the CIC will form a Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) may be to assess and manage the response. Not all critical incidents will require the formation of a CIRT and may be resolved by actions of the Student Engagement and Success and/or CDU Global team

(15) The Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) will be led by the CIC may include the following members dependant on the type of critical incident:

- a. Vice-Chancellor;
- b. Director Student Engagement;
- c. Director CDU Global (international student related);
- d. Security (campus related);
- e. Associate Director Student Engagement;
- f. Director, Marketing, Media and Communications;
- g. Senior Manager Work Health and Safety;
- h. Director People and Culture(staff related);
- i. DVC Research; and
- j. Manager Accommodation Services.

(16) The members of the CIRT will be allocated roles and responsibilities as appropriate and actions may include:

- a. establishing the facts relating to the incident;
- b. informing the emergency contact/next of kin;
- c. in the instance of a student death, ensuring that counselling services are made available to the family or next of kin;
- d. verifying student details such as address, email, phone numbers, nationality, primary contact, sponsor, or agent etc;
- e. nominating a member of the CIRT to be the main contact, specifically for the police, hospital, relatives, friends, consulate, and Government agencies; and
- f. consideration of fee refund, intermission, or deferred examinations where appropriate.

(17) Where the critical incident involves an international student, the Director, CDU Global or nominee may take the following additional actions:

- a. notify the Overseas Student Health Cover provider;
- b. hire independent interpreters (if required);
- c. inform the [Department of Home Affairs](#);
- d. liaise with Embassies and Consulates to ensure contact with, and support for, the family in the student's home country. In the case of a serious accident, illness, or death, discuss allocation of roles and responsibilities;
- e. if the student is under the age of eighteen, confirm welfare arrangements in place and enact mandatory reporting to the Department of Home Affairs, as per the [International Students - Welfare of International Students U18 procedure](#);
- f. if the student is a Study Abroad or Exchange student, contact their Home University or Agent to confirm if contact has been made with the emergency contact/next of kin;
- g. if the student is an AUSAID sponsored student, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) must be notified immediately including out of hours, on weekends and on public holidays. Phone +61 2 6261 3888 and email australiaawardsdelivery@dfat.gov.au. Refer to Section 15 of the Australian Awards Scholarships Policy Handbook;
- h. establish the student's religion and contact relevant group/organisation to inform them of the situation and discuss appropriate support;
- i. where required, funds may be available through the Traumatic Event and Accident Management (TEAM) program via the University's agreement with Allianz; and
- j. in the event of a missing international student, determine whether the student is located onshore or offshore on the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

(18) In the event of an international student death, the Director CDU Global or delegate may need to determine if additional supports are required. This includes:

- a. liaison with the next of kin to determine repatriation requirements. The TEAM program may be accessed to assist;
- b. where necessary, assist with funeral or memorial service arrangements;
- c. prepare a letter of condolence from the University to the student's family;
- d. assist with packing of personal effects and delivering them to the next of kin, if necessary; and
- e. request to obtain the death certificate and related documents.

Evaluation

(19) The CIRT team will conduct a debriefing session to ensure allocated tasks have been actioned and that any new

or outstanding issues are documented and resolved.

(20) Procedures and responses will be evaluated to determine any changes for improvement.

Records management

(21) All documentation relating to the critical incident will be retained, maintained, and disposed of in line with the University's [Records and Information Management Policy and Procedure](#) and [Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#).

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(22) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the [Code of Conduct – Staff](#) or the [Code of Conduct – Students](#), as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the [Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2022](#) and the [Code of Conduct – Students](#).

(23) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the [Code of Conduct – Staff](#) and [Code of Conduct – Students](#).

(24) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the [Fraud and Corruption Control Policy](#) and [Whistleblower Reporting \(Improper Conduct\) Procedure](#).

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st March 2022
Review Date	22nd November 2024
Approval Authority	University Secretary
Approval Date	1st March 2022
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Steve Rogers Critical Incident Coordinator +61 8 89466890
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