

Protocol for Managing Critical Incidents Involving International Students at The University of Sydney

Rationale

This protocol outlines procedures to be followed in the event of a critical incident involving an international student and is in accordance with the AVCC Code of Ethical Practice, the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* as amended [ESOS Act] and the National Code 2007.

Definition

A 'critical incident', for the purpose of this protocol, is a tragic or traumatic event or situation (within or outside Australia), or the threat of such, which affects, or has the potential to affect students, their family members and other persons including staff and friends, in a traumatic way (including causing extreme stress, fear or injury). 'Critical incidents' can include the following:

- 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 hospitalisation;
- natural disaster;
- student arrested or detained;
- assault, including sexual assault, domestic violence or robbery, severe verbal or psychological aggression;
- drug or alcohol abuse; and
- other serious events.

An 'international student', for the purpose of this protocol, is a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act.

Overall Coordination

In the event of a critical incident involving an international student(s), the student should contact **the University Security Service on 9351 3333**. The International Student Support Unit (ISSU) at **9351 6818**, will assume the role of coordinating and managing the situation, in liaison, when appropriate, with the University Security Service. This Protocol is primarily intended to address situations affecting international students. This Protocol should be read in conjunction with other policies of the University relating to responses to emergencies, including the Fire and Other Emergencies in University Buildings and First Aid policies as amended from time to time.

Immediate Action

With respect to critical incidents involving international students, the staff member receiving the notification will immediately contact the Head, International Student Support Unit (ISSU), who will:

- (1) investigate the incident involving the international student; and
- (2) advise appropriate persons from the list below:
 - Director, Student Administration and Support
 - Manager, Security Services
 - Director, International Office
 - Deputy Director, International Office
 - Deputy Director (Government & Student Relations), International Office
 - Dean of Faculty of the affected student

The Head, ISSU, will appoint a Case Manager who will be the main point of contact within ISSU. The Case Manager will ensure appropriate liaison with the University Security Service and will be responsible for the implementation of immediate and ongoing response strategies. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the Head, ISSU, to act as the Case Manager.

The Director, Student Administration and Support, will ensure that the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and other senior staff, as appropriate, are informed of the situation when required.

In the case of death of a student, the Director, Student Administration and Support, on the advice of the Head, ISSU, will communicate advice to the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and other appropriate senior staff.

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, or a Study Abroad or Exchange Student;
- plan an immediate response in consultation with the Head, ISSU; and
- plan ongoing strategies in consultation with the Head, ISSU.

The Case Manager's role will include:

- coordinating, monitoring and recording the ongoing management of the critical incident response strategies incorporated in this document and attached appendices;
- liaising with the University Security Service where appropriate;
- case managing the cooperation of the various instrumentalities involved, such as police, hospital and other emergency services;
- contacting family/next of kin when appropriate;
- contacting third parties, where necessary, via responsible International Office staff. For example, the AusAID Coordinator or the Manager, Study Abroad and Exchange;
- liaising with Embassies and Consulates to ensure contact with, and support for, the family in the student's home country;
- 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 Counsellor contact with the student involved in critical incident;
- arranging group/individual debriefing session with Counsellor for students and staff affected by critical incident;
- following up with external agencies, eg, police, hospital, emergency services, if involved;
- engaging relevant support services, on and off campus;
- providing accurate and up-to-date information to relevant persons;
- confirming access to emergency University funds, if necessary; and
- documenting the incident and the action taken on the critical incident file held at ISSU, including recording outcomes of the incident or evidence of sending to external agencies.

The procedures to be followed by the University in this Protocol are at all times subject to applicable privacy laws (including the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW)) and the University's Privacy policy.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency (Fire, Ambulance, Police)	000
University Security Service	9351 3333