

Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedures

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1. PURPOSE

This policy and procedures establish a framework for the effective management of critical incidents at Barton Business School ("BBS"). By implementing this policy and procedures, BBS aims to manage critical incidents in a manner that ensures the safety and well-being of all members of the BBS community, while minimising the risk of harm to individuals and the wider community.

This *Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedures* align with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, specifically Standard 6.2, which pertains to the management of critical incidents.

2. SCOPE

The *Critical Incident Management Policy and Framework* applies to:

- a. all staff, students, Board and Committee members, contractors, and visitors;
- b. all operations and activities under the direction or control of BBS, whether conducted on campus or off campus.

3. DEFINITIONS

Refer to BBS's *Glossary of Terms*.

4. POLICY

- a. BBS is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all people who engage with BBS in some way.
- b. To comply with the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standard 6.8](#), BBS has developed this *Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedures*. The policy and procedures establish a framework for the management of critical incidents. They provide guidance to all members of the BBS community.
- c. BBS is dedicated to promptly reporting, investigating, and responding to all critical incidents with professionalism and care.

- d. Under the *Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)*, BBS will inform the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education and Training (DET) as soon as possible following a critical incident that involved an international student. This obligation encompasses situations where a student's absence from a course affects their progress, as well as instances of student death. BBS is responsible for reporting these events through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

4.1. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- a. *Preparedness*: BBS is committed to being prepared to respond to any critical incident that may affect its business continuity. The objective is to minimise the impact on students, staff, and operations.
- b. *Scope*: BBS recognises that critical incidents can affect BBS in different ways, including effects on students, course delivery, administration, information, human resources and reputation. Therefore, BBS must respond to any critical incident in a coordinated way.
- c. *Duty of Care*: BBS has a duty of care to provide appropriate health and safety support to those affected by a critical incident. BBS must take appropriate actions to try to prevent the recurrence of any incident.
- d. *Flexibility*: BBS acknowledges that it is not possible to provide a response plan for every type of critical incident. Nonetheless, BBS will use the guidelines provided to manage critical incidents.
- e. *Planning*: BBS's critical incident policy is integrated into BBS's overall plans to ensure a rapid and effective response to emergencies.
- f. *Student and Staff Awareness*: BBS must ensure that all students and staff members are aware of the critical incident management policy and procedures through induction procedures and the BBS Student and Staff Handbooks. An up-to-date copy of the BBS critical incident management policy and procedures must also be maintained on the BBS website.

4.2. WHAT IS A CRITICAL INCIDENT?

- a. A critical incident refers to a traumatic event, or the threat of such, which causes extreme stress, fear, or injury and potentially affects the safety and well-being of individuals. Examples of critical incidents include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, serious accidents or injuries, bomb threats, serious health or environmental issues, severe verbal or psychological aggression, loss of a building or key utilities, serious sexual assault, serious drug use and/or alcohol abuse, mental health issues impacting safety, the death of a student or staff member, attempted suicide, and the threat of terrorism.

- b. Critical incident management is the process of planning and preparing for potential critical incidents, effectively responding to them when they occur, taking necessary steps to recover from their impact, and, if possible, reducing the risk of them occurring in the future.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1. PREPARING FOR CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Preparation entails providing training to all staff involved in critical incident management, which encompasses occupational health and safety training, first aid training, critical incident workshops, and fire drills. BBS will employ diverse strategies, including staff and student orientations, meetings, and policies and procedures, to increase awareness of critical incident responses among its staff and students.

Safety Audit

Occupational Health and Safety Standards require Safety Audits of the campus to be conducted by qualified auditors. The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) must discuss the scope of each audit with the auditors. The ARC must also use the findings to develop rectification and improvement policies, as well as any necessary changes to policies and practices. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), ARC, and Board of Directors (BoD) must review the findings of each audit and the actions taken in response to an audit. The ARC will use the results to inform regular risk management processes and risk ratings.

5.2. IDENTIFY AND INFORM THE CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM (CIMT)

In the event of critical incidents needing an immediate response, such as fire, students and staff who first witness the incident must promptly notify the Emergency Services (000) and a member of the CIMT without delay. The contact details for CIMT members are shared through various channels, including noticeboards, handbooks for both students and staff, and organisational charts.

The membership of the CIMT must include at least the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Dean, the Administration and Human Resources Manager, and the Student Wellbeing Officer.

The CIMT is responsible for overseeing emergency response procedures, which may include coordinating building evacuations, communicating with emergency services or other relevant personnel as necessary, and planning business continuity.

5.3. PRELIMINARY EVALUATION AND SUBSEQUENT ACTION

5.3.1. PRELIMINARY EVALUATION

The CIMT must perform several crucial tasks during a critical incident.

- a. Provide immediate support and a secure environment for those affected.

- b. Review the incident details and assess the scale and impact of the incident based on the Risk Management Plan.
- c. Identify required specialised professional expertise.
- d. Notify external agencies as necessary.
- e. Allocate specific roles and responsibilities to effectively address the critical incident.
- f. Maintain a detailed log of all events that occur during the critical incident.
- g. Collect data from diverse sources such as security agencies, law enforcement, medical facilities, and friends.
- h. Obtain detailed information on any affected individuals, including their student or staff identification, residential address, emergency contact, citizenship, documented health conditions, and, for foreign students, particulars concerning the Overseas Student Health Cover provider.

5.3.2. ARRANGEMENT AND RESPONSE

The CIMT assigns distinct duties and accountabilities to each individual. A designated representative from the CIMT must be assigned the role of primary liaison with various stakeholders, including the hospital, acquaintances, kin, and external entities such as law enforcement and consulate.

- a. The CIMT compiles a comprehensive list of individuals who require notification regarding the incident.
- b. The CIMT establishes protocols for communication that will be sustained throughout the response phase.
- c. The designated liaison person from the CIMT communicates with all parties involved in the incident. They must have round-the-clock availability for communication purposes during the duration of the incident response.
- d. The CIMT strives to ensure that each staff member possesses adequate information to effectively execute their duties and obligations in relation to the incident.
- e. The CIMT plans and enacts suitable measures to be taken in response to enquiries from both staff and students regarding the incident. Responses must strike a balance between offering precise details and upholding confidentiality.
- f. The CIMT convenes periodically during the response phase to ensure that all team members are equipped with current information pertaining to the incident, possess a clear understanding of their individual duties and obligations, are afforded the chance to engage in debriefing sessions, and are offered mutual support on a continuous basis.
- g. The responsibility for managing any press-related matters lies with the CEO or a designated representative.

In the event that a critical incident results in the demise of or critical injury to an international student, the family of the student must be notified and appropriate support arranged. Possible actions are:

- a. Contact the next of kin and emergency contact of the international student.
- b. Engage the services of certified interpreters to facilitate effective communication with the family of the student or the emergency contact.
- c. If needed, facilitate travel arrangements and coordinate provisional lodging for family members or the student's emergency contact.
- d. Establish communication with and coordinate assistance from personnel who specialise in counselling, legal aid, and religious support.
- e. Arrange for hospitalisation, funeral services, repatriation, rehabilitation, and memorial services.
- f. Acquire or expedite the procurement of a death certificate and any other essential documentation.
- g. Assist with the coordination and disposal of personal effects, as well as the administration of personal matters, which may include the health insurance of an international student.
- h. Communicate with the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection in relation to matters concerning visas.

5.3.3. REPORTING CRITICAL INCIDENTS

- a. The CIMT must provide a timely, comprehensive report on all critical incidents to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and the Board of Directors (BoD). This report must include a description of the critical incident, the measures taken in response to the incident, and any suggestions for averting future occurrences of the incident.
- b. In the event an incident involves an international student, the report provided by the CIMT must be kept securely for a minimum of two years following the graduation of the student.
- c. In the event of death or other circumstances that result in physical harm to international students, such as severe injury, and which result in the student's absence, a comprehensive record of the incident must be created and promptly communicated through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).
- d. In the event of a student's demise, the Student Management System must be updated to prevent any subsequent correspondence from being sent to the student.
- e. The settlement of any outstanding tuition fees owed by the student must be addressed. Reimbursement of prepaid tuition fees to the student's next of kin must be done promptly.
- f. Any enquiries from the media must be directed in the first instance to the CEO.

6. RECORD KEEPING

- a. The confidentiality of all critical incident documentation must be maintained. Access must be restricted to authorised individuals who require the information to discharge their responsibilities under this policy and procedures or as mandated by legal obligations.

- b. The maintenance of records about the critical incident is intended to protect the rights and interests of all involved parties.
- c. BBS must preserve written accounts of all critical incidents and any corresponding corrective measures considered and implemented for a minimum duration of two years following a student's discontinuation as an enrolled student.
- d. Preservation of confidentiality pertaining to records disseminated to individuals authorised to access such information by virtue of their involvement in the process, as well as the student file, must maintained in compliance with the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* and *Records Management Policy*.

7. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

If a student or staff member wishes to appeal a decision made in accordance with this policy and procedures, they may do so by following BBS's *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures* (for students) or the *Staff Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures* (for staff).

8. VERSION CONTROL

Document title	Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedures	
Approved By	Board of Directors (BoD)	
Date of Review	This document is to be reviewed every two years at a minimum from the date of final approval.	
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, Bullying, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy • Records Management Policy • Risk Management Policy and Framework with Register • Staff Code of Conduct • Staff Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures • Student Code of Conduct • Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures • Student Handbook • Workforce Plan • Terms of Reference - Board of Directors • Terms of Reference - Audit and Risk Committee 	
Related Legislation and References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 • Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011 • TEQSA's Risk Assessment Framework Version 2.3, March 2019 	
Version	Notes	Date Approved
1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first draft tabled in the BoD meeting • BOD approved this document subject to minor changes in sections 5.2 and 5.3. 	13/06/2023