Critical Incident Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the framework and principles to support the timely, systematic and effective management of critical incidents affecting students at UNSW College (The College). The management of specific types of incidents may be the subject of specific procedures.

2. Scope

With respect to critical incidents affecting current or prospective students of the College, this policy applies:

(a) to all students, where the incident occurs on College premises or on approved College activities off College premises (e.g. field trips, placements, internships and study tours); and

(b) to international students:

   i. whether the incident occurs on or off College premises; and

   ii. whether or not the incident occurs during approved College activities.

3. Policy statement

The College is committed to ensuring that critical incidents are managed effectively, compassionately, in a timely manner, and that appropriate resources are available to respond to critical incidents. In this context, the following principles apply:

(a) the Manager, Student Life is the College Critical Incident Response Manager. Any person can and should notify the Response Manager of a critical incident by emailing criticalincident@unswcollege.edu.au or calling (02) 8936 2200; emergency contacts and other key information are on the College website;

(b) the College will tailor its response to critical incidents within the framework of this Policy and other policies that may apply, depending on the circumstances of the incident;

(c) the College will ensure there are adequate processes, systems and support to manage critical incidents effectively and that College staff are suitably trained;

(d) timely medical treatment, counselling, interpreter services or other support will be arranged as needed;

(e) follow-up and ongoing interventions will be provided where necessary;

(f) where a critical incident concerns an international student under 18, the College will take additional steps to ensure the student's care and welfare, including by allocating dedicated staff to support the student and alternative accommodation if necessary;

(g)   affected students' parents, guardians or next of kin will be contacted where appropriate;

(h)   the College will liaise with police, health services and other service providers if required;

(i)   the College will report the incident, or consequences of the incident (such as an international student's failure to attend classes), to government agencies such as the Department of Home Affairs and TEQSA, if required;

(j)   for more complex critical incidents, a Critical Incident Coordinating Committee will be established to coordinate the response and senior College Staff and UNSW stakeholders will be informed;

(k)   information about critical incidents will be reported quarterly to the College Executive, Board of Directors, UNSW Management Board and UNSW Council, including an evaluation of how incidents have been managed, recommendations for improvements and training needs;

(l)   the College will maintain records of the critical incident and its management, including risk assessments (see Appendix 3), plans for remedial action and a Critical Incident Register with key information about the incident;

(m)   personal information will be managed in accordance with the College Privacy Policy and applicable privacy law, including principles that permit the disclosure of personal information where necessary to lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to the life, health or safety of a person;

(n)   the incident and impacted students may be managed in conjunction with other College policies at the discretion of the Response Manager;

(o)   specific processes with respect to the management of critical incidents are set out in the Critical Incident Management Procedure.

4.   Reporting critical incidents

Any person may report a critical incident to the Response Manager by emailing criticalincident@unswcollege.edu.au or by calling (02) 8936 2200.

5.   Responding to critical incidents

5.1.   Incident Manager appointed

The Response Manager will appoint an Incident Manager(s) to investigate and coordinate the response to critical incidents, other than for incidents of a more complex nature (see Section 5.2 below). Given critical incidents require immediate intervention, the Incident Manager will investigate and coordinate the College's response to the incident on an urgent basis.

5.2.   Complex critical incidents

The Response Manager may determine that the critical incident is complex, requiring more detailed oversight and reporting, for a wide variety of reasons, including where:

(a)   the incident is particularly serious or severe;

(b)   multiple students of the College are affected;

(c)   the circumstances of the incident are novel or fall outside established processes;

(d)   the incident indicates a serious gap in College policies or processes;

(e)   the incident poses a risk of reputational damage to the College or UNSW Sydney;

(f)   the incident indicates significant or long-term remedial action by the College is necessary.

If the Response Manager determines that the critical incident is complex, they will convene the Critical Incident Coordination Committee to coordinate the response to the incident.

5.3. Critical Incident Coordination Committee (CICC)

For the management of complex critical incidents, a Critical Incident Coordination Committee will be convened by the Response Manager, comprising:

(a)   the Executive Director, Student Life and Academic Services (Chair);

(b)   the Response Manager; and

(c)   the Incident Manager for the incident in question.

The CICC will determine whether and in what manner senior stakeholders such as the College Chief Executive Officer, the College's UNSW Management Board member or UNSW Director of Risk need to be notified and kept informed about the incident. The Response Manager will be responsible for taking minutes, monitoring actions and coordinating the Committee.

6.   Privacy and confidentiality

Critical incidents will often involve highly sensitive information concerning students or others, including personal and confidential information. The College will protect the confidentiality of students and others affected by critical incidents wherever practicable and in line with the College Privacy Policy and applicable privacy law.

The College may disclose personal or confidential information relating to a critical incident to such College staff and UNSW stakeholders as need to know for the College to manage the incident appropriately. The College may also disclose personal or confidential information about the incident outside the College, such as to doctors, nurses and counsellors, to ensure students receive appropriate support. The College may also report the incident to police and government agencies such as the Department of Home Affairs or TEQSA, where this is appropriate or required.

7. Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Role	Responsibility
Response Manager (Manager, Student Life)	Manages critical incidents including appointing Incident Managers to individual incidents, convening the Critical Incident Coordinating Committee and managing ongoing reporting and review of the management of critical incidents.
Incident Manager	Investigating and coordinating the response to individual critical incidents, including arranging support for affected students, liaising with family / next of kin, service providers and government agencies.
Critical Incident Coordination Committee	Coordinating the response to more complex critical incidents.

8. Definitions

Definitions and Acronyms	
Critical Incident	A traumatic event, or the threat of such, within or outside Australia, which causes extreme stress, fear or injury and requires immediate intervention by College staff: (a) including the examples in the Appendix; and (b) excluding emergencies, events or circumstances that impact the College's people, operations or environment which are of a size and complexity that requires a structured response to resolve the situation; and (c) excluding an adverse incident or series of events that have the potential to severely impact the College's people, operations, environment or its long-term prospects and / or reputation.
Complex critical incident	has the meaning given to that term in Section 5.2 above.

9. Related Policy and Supporting Documents

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents	
Legislation	• Education Services for International Students Act 2000 (Cth) • National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to International students 2018
Policy	• Risk Management Framework Policy • Privacy Policy
Procedures	• Critical Incident Procedure
Forms	• Critical Incident Risk Assessment Template (see Appendix 3)

10. Policy Governance

Critical Incident Policy	
Category/Business Group	Student Experience
Published Externally (Yes/No)	Yes
Approver	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Officer	Executive Director, Students
Contact Officer	Head of Student Experience
Effective Date	17 August 2023
Next Review Date	17 August 2026
Version	1

Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1	Chief Executive Officer – Sarah Lightfoot	11 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

Please visit our website to ensure that you have the latest version of this Policy. Policies are available at: unswcollege.edu.au/about/policies
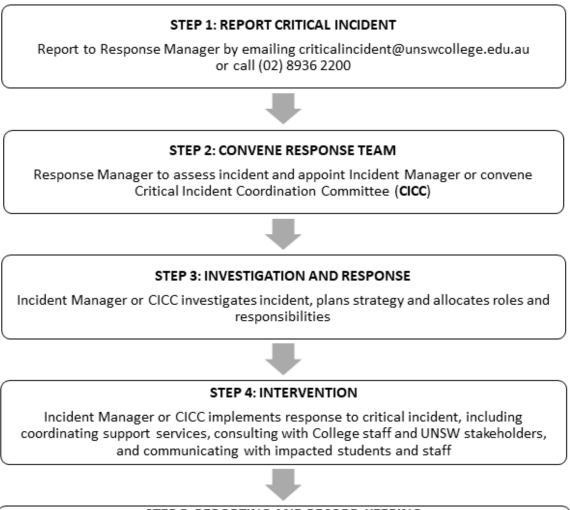
Appendix 1

Table – Critical Incident Examples

Critical incident type	Example
Personal	- death of a student - attempted suicide or self-harm - life-threatening illness or injury - sexual assault - missing student - off-campus hostage situation / kidnapping / terrorism - domestic violence - violent behaviour including severe verbal / psychological aggression - child protection matters
Medical requiring hospitalisation	- burns / scalds - drug / alcohol overdose - epi-pen use - infections / pandemic disease impacting student (no broader College impact) - physical injury - mental health crisis - poisoning
Other	- natural disaster impacting student (no broader College impact) - poisoning

Appendix 2 – Flowchart

STEP 1: REPORT CRITICAL INCIDENT

Report to Response Manager by emailing criticalincident@unswcollege.edu.au
or call (02) 8936 2200

STEP 2: CONVENE RESPONSE TEAM

Response Manager to assess incident and appoint Incident Manager or convene
Critical Incident Coordination Committee (**CICC**)

STEP 3: INVESTIGATION AND RESPONSE

Incident Manager or CICC investigates incident, plans strategy and allocates roles and
responsibilities

STEP 4: INTERVENTION

Incident Manager or CICC implements response to critical incident, including
coordinating support services, consulting with College staff and UNSW stakeholders,
and communicating with impacted students and staff

STEP 5: REPORTING AND RECORD-KEEPING

Incident Manager to maintain records and ensure incident is included in reports to
College and UNSW committees

STEP 6: FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION

Response Manager to coordiante follow-up and evaluation liaising with relevant Incident
Managers and consulting with Executive Director, Students

UNSW College

Appendix 3 – Critical Incident Risk Assessment Template

1. **Key information**

Description of incident	Date of incident	Student(s) affected (name, zID)	Who reported the incident?	Incident Manager	Critical Incident Coordination Committee formed?	Other details

2. **Risk Assessment**

Risk	Current controls	Risk Rating *with controls*	Additional controls *where existing controls inadequate*	Risk Owner	Status