

# **Critical Incident Procedures Manual**

## **Introduction**

Under the provision of the Education Services for Overseas Student Act (ESOS), QUT is committed to the development and maintenance of consistent, appropriate, and culturally sensitive procedures and practices in relation to the recruitment, reception, education, and welfare of its international students. This manual aims to assist staff to respond appropriately to critical incidents that involve international students from QUT.

## **Definition**

The clinical definition of a “critical incident” is an event which causes individuals to experience a strong emotional reaction that interferes with their usual coping skills. The event has a level of trauma which is beyond the normal “living” experiences of those affected.

The resulting stress reaction may include emotional, physical, behavioural, and cognitive changes evident either at the time of the incident or later. The impact of a critical incident may affect any member of the University, not only those most directly involved.

Some examples of critical incidents that staff of ISS may respond could include:

- Death of a student (on or off campus)
- Attempted suicide
- Life threatening injury/ illness
- Sexual assault (Physical, Psychological or Emotional, Neglect and Sexual exploitation)
- Mental health crisis
- Drug/ Alcohol overdose
- Campus disturbance/ Riot
- Contacting students in case of family emergency
- Fire/ Explosion with injuries or significant damage
- Natural disasters
- Infectious disease
- Airplane crashes
- International hostage situations/ kidnappings

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this manual is to articulate the plan for delivering a timely and coordinated response to critical incidents; and to ensure that reported critical incidents are:

- Documented
- Reported to relevant officials within the University, sponsors, and government agencies
- Communicated to the family where appropriate
- Managed in a manner to ensure that negative publicity is not generated from an incident.
- Ensure maximum benefits are provided to assist the students.

## **Accountability**

All staff members within International Student Services are responsible for reporting a critical incident to the Manager of ISS. However, it is the responsibility of the Manager to determine the appropriate course of action, along with advice from other relevant members, for each type of critical incident.

## **Procedure**

### Phase 1

#### *Notification*

When a critical incident has been identified, staff members should inform the Manager of ISS immediately. The Manager will then determine the circumstances of the situation and assume the coordinating role.

The Manager may assign an International Student Counsellor / Welfare Officer to be the Liaison officer and discuss the course of action.

The following information should be obtained:

- Confirmation that the person/ people involved in the incident are QUT international students.
- Details of the incident from the person informing ISS

Manager of ISS to inform Registrar and Director, Student Support Services

## Phase 2

Once the Registrar has confirmed Manager, ISS as case manager of critical incident:

### ***Assessment***

The initial task is to:

Create a clear understanding of the incident; obtain accurate and up to date information about what happened and about the current situation.

Confirmation of the people involved; gather information from eg. police, hospital, friends of the student.

Obtain the student information in detail, which includes next of kin, nationality, religion, medical condition, and health care insurance provider etc. Sponsor will need to be notified if the student is on scholarship.

Depending on the type of incident, Manager and nominated Liaison Officer need to discuss and plan an immediate response and ongoing strategies, including allocate individual's specific role and responsibilities. Some tasks will be shared with and delegated to other staff if necessary.

## Phase 3

### ***Intervention***

Making contact with relevant people:

#### *Sponsorship body*

In cases of a serious critical incident the immediate action will be to inform the sponsoring body where the student has been sponsored for their studies on an Australian Government or overseas government/agency scholarship. There may a preferred method of handling the incident and QUT will cooperate with the Sponsors to achieve the best outcome for the student.

#### *Next of kin*

After agreement of Registrar, ensure that next of kin are informed and updated on the current situation. Let them know ISS will provide range of support to them. If necessary, interpreter services will be arranged for those families where English is a Second Language. The Liaison Officer may also need to check with an appropriate person about cultural factors before making contact with the family.

If the student is in hospital or critically ill, transportation or accommodation may need to be arranged for the family to come to Brisbane.

If the student dies or is likely to die, issues related to burial or memorial services may need to be discussed with the family.

As agreed with Registrar's office, the following parties may be contacted. The Registrar will decide on the appropriate stakeholders within QUT to be contacted and who would be responsible for this.

#### *Student's Consulate*

In the case of serious accident or death of a student, relevant the consulate needs to be informed and negotiation of respective roles and responsibilities.

#### *Accommodation Provider*

Make contact with the student's accommodation provider and house mates, ensuring that support or assistance is available from ISS.

- Emergency housing - in an emergency that the current accommodation is rendered unsafe for student, immediately move student to an appointment student accommodation provider. Assist student with the move and contact the appointment student accommodation provider for an emergency housing so to ensure a smooth transition. Off-campus management is needed and contacts of multiple key stakeholders.

#### *Other Students*

Identify those students and staff who are closely involved with the student, ensure that these people are aware of support within or outside QUT and encourage them to keep in contact with ISS for assistance.

#### *Hospital*

If necessary, the Liaison Officer will contact the hospital and the student's health fund to arrange any guarantor agreements or any relevant matters.

#### *Counselling Service*

If the incident affects domestic student and/or QUT staff, the Manager of the Counselling Service needs to be informed as they will need to provide support to domestic student and staff.

#### *Academic/Faculty Staff*

Relevant faculty staff may need to be informed to make some arrangements if the student recovers, eg. Extension for assignment or special consideration.

#### *Professional Staff*

Director SBS staff needs to be contacted as issues like stop on correspondence, fees refund, leave of absence or deferred examination need to be discussed.

#### *Department of Home Affairs*

If necessary, Department of Home Affairs will be informed and discuss any implications that need to be followed up.

## Phase 4

### ***Follow up***

Monitor the need for counselling and maintain contact with those who may need ongoing support.

Assess the need for and organise debriefing sessions for all those involved in the incident.

If the student dies:

Liaison Officer needs to discuss with the student's family whether the body will be transported home or buried in Australia.

If the family wish to transport the body home, aid with arrangements of transportation and the communication process.

If the family wish to bury the body or cremate in Australia, funeral or memorial service will be arranged. Staff will need to acknowledge the diverse cultures and religions represented in the student's background.

Arrangement may need to be made for the family to obtain a death certificate. Arrange the packing up of the student's possessions and make available to next of kin if necessary.

Ensure that condolence letters are sent to the student's family in consultation with Registrar.

## Phase 5

### ***Evaluation***

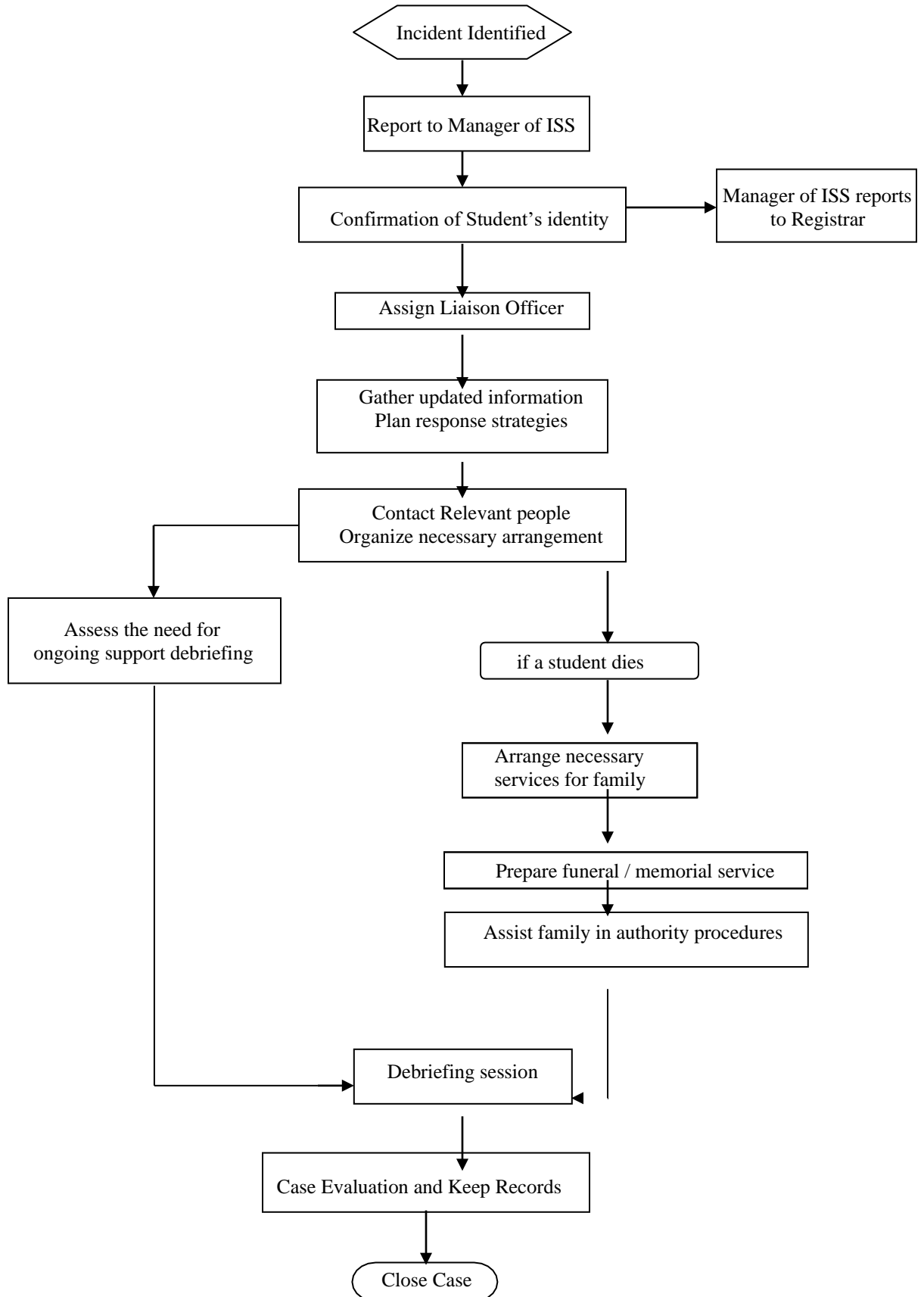
Conduct debriefing sessions for everyone directly involved in the incident. Besides a psychological debrief it will allow an opportunity to ensure that any needs are met.

Staff involved should evaluate the implementation of the critical incident procedures and responses; discuss possible changes and improvement for future critical incidents.

Liaison Officer should keep records throughout the whole response period. This will include detailed documentation about each phase taken in the response process, copies of emails and letters, records of significant interactions that occur, and contact details for significant people in the process.

"Thank you" letters are prepared and sent to all those who contributed to responding to the incident.

## Flow Chart



Critical Incident Procedure Manual  
Checklist of Tasks

<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Done</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Completed Date</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Phase 1				
Notification to Manager and relevant staff				
Confirmation of the student's identity				
Details of the incident from the person who reported				
Phase 2				
Update and gather information from hospital or police				
Review student's file for detail information				
Intervention plan for response and strategies				
Allocation of roles and responsibilities				

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<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Done</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Completed Date</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Phase 3				
Contact next of kin				
Contact consulate				
Contact accommodation provider/ housemates				
Contact other relevant students				
Contact hospital				
Contact Counselling Services				
Contact academic staff				
Contact administration staff				
Contact DIAC				
Discuss with the student's family about funeral issues				
Arrangement of transportation and accommodation				
Preparation of funeral or memorial service				
Obtaining death certificate and student's possession				
Prepare and send condolence letters				



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<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Done</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Completed Date</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Phase 4				
Access the need for ongoing counselling and support				
Access the need of a debriefing session				
Phase 5				
Conduct debriefing session				
Staff evaluation				
Keeping records				
Prepare and send thank you letters				

## Crisis Response Situation Quick Reference

<b>Type of Incident</b>	<b>Primary Contacts</b>	<b>Secondary Contacts</b>	<b>Follow up</b>
Death of a student	Registrar Police Hospital Next of Kin	Accommodation provider Consulate Relevant students Faculty staff SBS DIBP	ISS SBS OSHC Student health service Counselling Services
Missing student	Police Next of Kin	Accommodation provider Consulate Relevant students Academic staff SBS DIBP	ISS SBS
Life threatening injury or illness	Hospital Next of kin	Academic staff SBS	ISS SBS OSHC Student health service
Attempted suicide	Police Hospital Next of kin		ISS Student health service Counselling Services
Sexual Assault	Police Hospital	Support Agency	ISS Student health service Counselling Services

## EMERGENCY RESOURCES

### Campus Resources

Department	Location	Phone Number
Campus Emergency		85555 1800 065585 (External)
QUT Health Service	Garden Point Kelvin Grove Caboolture	x 82321 x 83161 x 82539
Counselling Services	Garden Point Kelvin Grove Caboolture	x 82383 x 83488 x 84539
Student Centre/ Client Service Team		x 82000
Student Business Service		x83192

### Off Campus Resource

Department	Location	Phone No.
Emergency		000
Brisbane Police Communication Centre		3364 6464
Emergency First Aid Service		0500 555 912
Ambulance Service Enquiries		3247 8200
Fire & Rescue Service Enquiries		324708100
Mater Hospitals	301 Vulture St South Brisbane	3840 8111
Prince Charles	Rode Rd Chermside 4032	3350 8111
Princess Alexandra	Ipswich Rd Woolloongabba 4102	3240 2111
RBWH	Herston Rd Herston 4006	3636 8111
QE II Hospital	Kessels Rd Coopers Plains 4108	3275 6111

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Wesley Hospital	Coronation Drv (cnr Chasely St) Auchenflower 4066	3232 7000
DIBP	Ground Floor, 299 Adelaide Street (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Wed 9am-1:30pm)	131 881 Fax: 33605819