

# Policy: Student critical incident

## Purpose

The policy describes the University's principles for decision-making for managing and reporting on student critical incidents to ensure that each case is managed effectively, consistently, compassionately, and expeditiously.

## Overview

This policy and the associated Student Critical Incident Procedure provide staff, students and visitors with guidance as to the applicable principles and appropriate action to be taken in the event of a critical incident.

This policy is compliant with the requirements under the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework and has been developed in line with the University policies and procedures.

## Scope

This policy applies in the event of a critical incident that occurs on or off campus at any time that involves enrolled students of The Australian National University.

This policy and procedure do not apply to sexual assault and sexual harassment incidents which are covered under the [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) and the associated Sexual Misconduct Response (Students) Procedure.

## Policy statement

1. The University asserts its reasonable support for students, staff, contractors and, where appropriate their families, who may be affected by a student critical incident.
2. The response to a student critical incident should be in line with the following principles:
  - Timely and appropriate management in response to the severity of the incident
  - Transparent communication both internally and externally where appropriate
  - Privacy of the affected students is maintained within the parameters of the [University Privacy Policy](#) and consent is sought from the affected students to share their details wherever possible

- Health and wellbeing of affected staff and student must be considered, with particular recognition towards mitigating psychosocial risks which may be heightened in student critical incidents
- Compliance with relevant legislation and Standards.

3. A 'student critical incident' is a traumatic event, or the imminent threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury to a student or group of students (including Higher Degree by Research and exchange students). A student critical incident requires a response and active management within 24 hours of notification and is not able to be normalised by local processes. A critical incident may include, but is not limited to:

- a. missing student
- b. death, serious injury, or any threat of these to self or others
- c. serious threats of violence to students and/or staff
- d. other traumatic events or serious threats, such as those caused by natural disasters

4. The responsibility under this policy:

- ANU UniSafe (ANU Security): First point of contact and escalation of incidents.
- Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Student and University Experience) portfolio: Manage student critical incidents through implementation of the Student Critical Incident Procedure.
- Senior Managers (e.g. College Deans, School and Division Directors): Support managers and supervisors in fulfilling their responsibilities and accountabilities.
- Workers, students, and contractors: Take reasonable care of their own safety as well as the safety of others, and notify the University through ANU UniSafe, of critical incidents.

5. Overseen by the Director, University Experience, the University's response is adapted, within the parameters of this policy and the [Privacy Policy](#), to meet the needs of each incident.

6. The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) permits the University to disclose personal information about someone to a party outside the University where, inter alia:

- a. a person consents in writing to their personal information being disclosed; or
- b. the University believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the individual concerned or of another person.

7. This policy ensures compliance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (Act) 2000 (ESOS Act) in relation to critical incidents involving international students.
8. The University will ensure written records of all incidents will be appropriately stored in accordance with the University's [Records and Archives Management policy](#).
9. The policy and procedures should be reviewed every 5 years or as required for continuous improvement.
10. In the event of a student critical incident on campus, this policy is read in conjunction with the [Emergency response procedure](#) and the [Work health and safety incident management procedure](#).

## Document information

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