

Student Mental Health Support Procedure

Purpose

(1) This Procedure will assist University of Canberra (University) community members to support students by providing a coherent, supporting, culturally safe and holistic approach when responding to students experiencing a mental health problem or mental health crisis.

Section 1 - Scope

(2) This Procedure seeks to support the implementation and effectiveness of the [Support for Students Policy](#).

(3) This Procedure offers processes to staff and students to facilitate:

- a. good mental health for the University student community
- b. appropriate responses to those individuals experiencing mental health conditions.

(4) This procedure applies to all University of Canberra Students enrolled in courses and units of study including non-award courses.

Section 2 - Procedure

Student support services

(5) Staff must familiarise themselves with the support services available at the University website and described below and refer students as required and appropriate. Staff are advised to contact the Student Wellbeing and Support team or Medical and Counselling if they require advice and/or assistance in supporting the learning of a student experiencing a mental health problem or mental health crisis.

(6) Special consideration will be applied by the Future Students team to students who declare their academic performance/eligibility has been impacted by a mental health condition or learning disorder, when applying for (re)admission to the University. For more details see [Study at UC - University of Canberra](#).

(7) University staff must complete professional development to assist in their understanding and ability to support students experiencing a mental health problem or mental health crisis. The University provides opportunities for staff to complete training eg Mental Health First Aid.

A Student can be brought to the attention of University support services in the following ways:

- a. Incident report – student residences – [Unilodge](#) staff to notify Student Wellbeing & International Support (SWIS) by email – wellbeing@canberra.edu.au.
- b. [VIVA report](#) – Director, Student Life.
- c. Internal referral – staff member notifies SWIS via email, phone, walk up or Teams message, OR Medical & Counselling via phone or walk up.

- d. External referral – family, health professional, Placement/Internship host, external support service (list not exhaustive) notifies the University (IVIVA report, faculty, careers, SWIS, and so on) via email, phone or walk up.
- e. Student initiates contact via an appointment, email or phone with Medical & Counselling or SWIS.

(8) Internal and external support services may include any of the following services:

- a. Access Mental Health
- b. Canberra Rape Crisis Centre
- c. Community Services
- d. Domestic Violence Crisis Service
- e. Emergency Services
- f. InclusionUC
- g. Onelink
- h. Medical & Counselling.

Critical incidents

(9) A critical incident is defined as a tragic or traumatic event or situation, or threat of such, which has a serious personal consequence for the student or their family that may result in emotional reactions in the University community.

(10) Whether or not a staff member believes that a critical student incident arises from a mental health issue, the incident must be managed by the University's Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) under the terms of the University's [Resilience Management Framework](#) and [Business Continuity Plan](#). The procedures to be followed in reporting a critical student incident are summarised in Appendix A.

Mental health and student conduct

(11) The [University of Canberra \(Student Conduct\) Rules 2023](#) address matters of academic, non-academic misconduct, or serious misconduct, as defined in the [Student Conduct Rules](#), by a student while they are on University grounds or taking part in any event or activity related to the student's enrolment at the University and conducted under the name of the University. This includes placements, internships, exchange programs, excursions, field trips, conferences and courses undertaken through a Third-Party Provider institution.

(12) It is recognised that certain behaviours that may be considered to be a breach of the [Student Conduct Rules](#) may be caused by, or result from, a serious mental health condition. If a person suspects on reasonable grounds that a student's conduct has occurred because that student is suffering from a serious mental health condition, the student's conduct may be referred to an Authorised Officer under the [University of Canberra \(Medical Leave\) Rules 2022](#). The [Medical Leave Rules](#) address matters of physical and mental health conditions that impinge on the individual's capacity to engage in university study and life.

(13) If the student's conduct has been referred to a Prescribed Authority under the [Student Conduct Rules](#), and the Prescribed Authority forms a reasonable belief that the student may have a serious health condition, the Prescribed Authority may transfer the matter to an Authorised Officer under the [Medical Leave Rules](#). If this occurs, the Authorised Officer can recommend to the Prescribed Authority that the student conduct matter be suspended, including that the student conduct proceedings be permanently stayed.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

WHO	RESPONSIBILITIES
Director, Student Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Leader member of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) – role activated in the event of a critical incident. May decide to activate a Critical Student Incident Response team. • Manage complex student wellbeing issues including chairing the student support, safety and early intervention process for individual students. • Coordinate, communicate and advise students and staff of the University of supports available to students.
Student Wellbeing & International Support (SWIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice and support to all students using trauma-informed practices. • Contact students impacted by an incident or on receipt of a referral from university staff, or an external source. • Interactions and attempted outreach to be logged in the respective CRM case within the student record. • Work with the student to develop and share an individual support plan, referring the student to external providers where necessary. • Offer and provide ongoing support to students. • Escalate matters to the Director, Student Life.
University Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to students with mental health difficulties in a respectful, culturally safe and positive manner. • Students should be referred and encouraged to seek advice and support from Student Wellbeing & International Support (SWIS), Medical & Counselling or InclusionUC. • If requiring advice in relation to a student with a mental health difficulty, staff should contact the SWIS, Medical & Counselling, InclusionUC, or the Director, Student Life (for critical incidents). • Be aware of their own personal and professional limitations. It is not a staff member's responsibility to provide ongoing mental health support to students. Staff identifying student behaviour they believe may arise from a mental health disturbance, should seek advice from Medical & Counselling. • Call Security staff on location and Emergency Services on 000 • If someone appears to be in immediate danger of seriously harming themselves or other people. • Not responsible for, and should not consider, accompanying a student manifesting symptoms of serious disturbance off-campus (for example, to the emergency department of a hospital). • In acute and urgent mental health issues, University support staff (SWIS, Medical & Counselling) may also contact external services for assistance and support. • Staff are reminded and urged to contact the Employee Assistance program (EAP) where appropriate after dealing with or being exposed to any traumatic or stressful event.
University Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected to take responsibility for communicating their needs and seeking support within the University. • Expected to take care of their own mental health (for example, ensuring they get adequate rest, take prescribed medications and access appropriate support). • If concerned for a fellow student's mental wellbeing, students should be aware of their personal limitations and should encourage their fellow student to seek specialist support at the earliest opportunity. • If someone appears to be in immediate danger of seriously harming themselves or other people, students should call Security staff on location and Emergency Services on 000.

Section 4 - Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Authorised Person	As defined in the University of Canberra (Student Conduct) Rules 2023 .
Critical Incident	A tragic or traumatic event or situation, or threat of such, affecting a student which has a serious personal consequence for the student and/or their family and/or the potential to result in emotional reactions in the University community.
Mental Health	A state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to the community. (page 89, Volume 2 - Inquiry report - Mental Health (pc.gov.au)).

TERM	DEFINITION
Prescribed Authority	As defined in the University of Canberra (Student Conduct) Rules 2023 .
Serious Health Condition	As defined in the University of Canberra (Medical Leave) Rules 2022 .
Support Services	As defined in the Support for Students Policy .

Section 5 - Appendices

Appendix A - Contact details

CONTACT	HOURS	DETAILS
EXTERNAL		
Emergency services	all hours	000
Lifeline	All hours	A national charity providing all who experience emotional distress with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. • Phone: 13 11 14 • Website: Lifeline.org.au
1800RESPECT	All hours	Support for people impacted by domestic, family or sexual violence. • Phone: 1800 737 732 • Website: 1800respect.org.au
Beyond Blue	9am to 5pm weekdays	One of Australia's most well-known, trusted, and visited mental health organisations. • Phone: 1300 224 636 • Website: Beyondblue.org.au
Mental Health Triage Service	All hours	CATT – the crisis assessment and treatment team healthdirect
Access Mental Health Canberra	All hours	Provides information, makes recommendations, and/or referrals for further mental health support. • Phone: 1800 629 354 • Website: https://www.canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/services-and-clinics/services/access-mental-health
Suicide Call back Service	All hours	A free nationwide service providing 24/7 phone and online counselling to people affected by suicide. • Phone: 1300 659 467 • Website: https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/
INTERNAL – Bruce Campus		
UC security	All hours	02 6201 2222
Security Chaperone Service	All hours	02 6201 2222
Medical & Counselling	9am to 5pm	02 6201 2351
Student Wellbeing & International Support	9am to 5pm	• Phone: 02 6206 8841 • Email: wellbeing@canberra.edu.au • Website: Student wellbeing - University of Canberra
UC Crisis line	After hours, weekends and public holidays	• Call: 1300 271 790 • Text: 0488 884 227

CONTACT	HOURS	DETAILS
Director of Student Life	9am to 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 02 6201 2284 • Email: Directorofstudentlife@canberra.edu.au
Student Critical Incident reporting	All hours	0414 837 291
Director of Student Connect	9am to 5pm	02 6201 5971
INTERNAL – other locations		
TAFE Queensland		Student Support Services - Current Students TAFE Queensland (tafeqld.edu.au)
Brisbane campus	9am to 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 07 3244 5095 • Email: Studentsupport.services@tafe.qld.edu.au • Website: Student Support Services
Queensland Police	All hours	131 444
Hotline for International students	After hours	1800 644 044
Sydney Hills		Student Support — Sydney - University of Canberra
Converge International		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 1300 687 327 • Website: Convergeinternational.com.au
Castle Hill Family Doctors	7 days a week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 02 8858 9800 • Email: Castlehillfamilydoctors.com.au
TAFE NSW Northern Sydney – St Leonard's		Student Support — Sydney - University of Canberra

Appendix B - Critical incidents

On-campus incidents

Staff or students who are first made aware of a critical incident should immediately contact Emergency Services and University Security (see Supporting Information – Contact details). If the incident does not warrant immediate referral to Emergency Services, University Security should be advised of the incident.

For acute and urgent mental health issues, staff members or students may also wish to contact Emergency Services or the Crisis Assessment & Treatment team for reporting and advice appropriate to the location (see 'Appendix A – Contact details' above).

Once the immediate need has been addressed, University Security must report the critical incident to the Director, Student Life via the online reporting tool.

Off-campus incidents

Off campus incidents involving students on University business (for example, during a field trip or a placement) should be dealt with as though the event had occurred on campus.

Incidents occurring off-campus involving domestic students which do not have an immediate impact on other staff or students of the University do not need to be reported to University personnel.

Staff members who become aware of an off-campus critical incident involving an international student who is not on University business should report the incident to their Executive Dean, Director or Manager, who will then contact the Director, Student Life as soon as possible.

If a staff member is unsure of whether a circumstance involving a student should be defined as a critical incident, then the matter should be referred to the Director, Student Life in the first instance. If the Director, Student Life is unavailable the matter should be referred to the Director, Student Connect (see 'Appendix A – Contact details' above).

Appendix C – Role of University of Canberra student support services

CATEGORY OF STUDENT	CATEGORY OF SUPPORT	UC SUPPORT SERVICES
All students	Institutional, structure, planning and policy	CIMT, Risk Management Register, Student Conduct Committee, Campus Safety, Policies: Disability discrimination Act; disability standards for education; ACT Discrimination Act; ACT Human Rights Act; Commonwealth Privacy Act; Health records and Privacy Act & Information Privacy Act
	Student experience on campus	Closing the gap, Residential Manager Support, Health education: Smoking; Drink in Check, ATODA representation, Wellbeing activities, Cultural awareness, WIL & Placement Support, Research and education, Safety on campus, Security & chaperone service
	Mental Health Awareness	Residential training, Orientation Programs, resources, website, online resources, staff education, Resilience lectures, Mental Health First Aid training, Bystander training, UCMCC workshops and groups, Wellbeing activities
Students who have about coping (self-identified or referred)	Community capacity to respond to early indicators	Training of security, education of academic & professional staff to recognise signs, referrals from faculties and other student services, Mental Health First Aid Training, residential Pastoral Care meetings, Legal assistance – CCJC
	Self-management and coping skills	Health coaching, WIL Support, Placement Support, ACT on Anxiety, Weekly Psych Sessions, Bystander Training, ADHD group, Emotional Skills group, Disability reports
Students with mental health concerns	Accessible mental health services	Multidisciplinary Medical & Psychology team: psychiatrist;, nurse triage; open on the day appointments; walk ins; notification systems; online bookings; Security, Wellbeing team, Hospitals, UC Crisis line, Pastoral care
	Crisis management	MHJHADS, Dr's Mobile for after hours, CALMS, NHDS, CATT, BCP, Triage Protocols, hospital admission and discharge notifications, Access Mental Health & HARTT
SUPPORTED UC STUDENT		

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st January 2025
Review Date	17th July 2029
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	17th July 2024
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Custodian	Michelle Lincoln Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Responsible Manager	Mara Eversons Director, Student Life
Author	Nick Markesinis Manager, Policy and Compliance
Enquiries Contact	Nick Markesinis Policy Manager <hr/> Policy