QI

QUANTUM INSTITUTE
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Emergency and Critical Incident Management Policy

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Purpose

Quantum Institute of Higher Education ('QIHE' or 'the Institute') is committed to managing and responding to emergencies and critical incidents in a prompt and efficient manner. The Emergency and Critical Incident Policy ('the Policy') aims to ensure the safety, health, and wellbeing of all by outlining the procedures for handling emergencies effectively including natural or man-made disasters and critical incidents that could disrupt normal operations.

Scope

This Policy applies to all students, staff, visitors and other stakeholders of the Institute.

1.   Policy Principles

QIHE is committed to the following principles:

i.   **Safeguard the Well-being of All.** Ensure prompt and effective measures to protect the lives and well-being of students, staff, and visitors in the event of a critical incident;

ii.   **Minimise Damage.** Prevent or mitigate the impact of incidents that could damage QIHE's property, assets, reputation, and finance;

iii.   **Maintain Operational Continuity.** Ensure that the Institute can continue delivering education and services, even under adverse circumstances;

iv.   **Compliance.** Adhere to all applicable laws, standards and regulations where QIHE is operating in;

v.   **Continuous Improvement.** Commits to continuously improve its emergency and critical incident management plans and procedures, ensuring enhanced effectiveness and prompt response.

2.   Incident Classifications

Incidents occurring at QIHE will be classified into three levels based on their severity:

i.   **Level 1 (Minor Incident)**

   a.   Incidents of this level have minimal risk and impact. Examples include minor injury, small electrical fire or a faulty facility with minimal impact.

   b.   Minor incidents are handled through standard protocols by internal staff, or by external services as necessary.

ii.   **Level 2 (Moderate Incident)**

a. Incidents of this level are considered medium-level risk with potential for escalation. Examples include a significant fire, building damage or a data or information breach.

b. Incidents of this level requires coordinated efforts from QIHE's staff and responders to handle the situation. QIHE may engage with external service if necessary. The Critical Incident Management Team ('CIMT') may be activated but are not required for a full activation.

iii. Level 3 (Critical Incident)

a. Incidents of this level are considered high-level risk with severe consequences. Examples include major natural disaster, attacks, major injury, active shooter situation, widespread IT systems failure due to an attack;

b. Full activation of CIMT and potential involvement of external agencies are to be engaged with for this level of critical incident.

3. Critical Incident Management Framework

The framework for managing critical incidents includes five key phases:

3.1 Preparation and Planning

i. Regular assessment of potential risks by the Risk Management Committee will be conducted to ensure that risks are being identified and managed properly, in line with the Risk Management *Framework*.

ii. QIHE develops response strategies that are tailored to different types of critical incidents. Furthermore, QIHE will implement a culture of health and safety for all to ensure that everyone holds the importance of others health and safety as indicated in the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy*.

iii. QIHE maintains up-to-date emergency management and business continuity plans to address the potential risks and threats.

iv. Staff and students will be given regular training exercises and simulations to ensure that everyone is prepared in case of an emergency or critical incident.

v. All information and instructions in case of an emergency or critical incident are to be clearly communicated in:

    a. This Policy, which can be found on the Institute's website

    b. Student Orientation

    c. Staff Induction;

    d. Student Handbook;

    e. Informative posters and information around the campus.

vi. Clear communication strategies are to be established for emergency notification and to inform staff and stakeholders during a critical incident or emergency. This includes internal communications (e.g. to management, staff and students) and external communications (e.g. to the government agencies and relevant authorities).

3.2 Detection and Mitigation

i. QIHE implements necessary security systems to ensure safety and early mitigation of potential threats when they arise.

ii. If a student becomes aware of a potential threat of critical incident, the student is required to immediately inform Institute staff.

iii. Upon detection of a potential threat of critical incident, any staff or any first responder, is required to promptly assess the situation to determine the appropriate level of response.

3.3 Incident Response

Upon detection of a critical incident occurring:

i. The first priority is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone; therefore, responders must ensure that everyone is safe;

ii. Depending on the severity, the appropriate level of emergency response will be activated and the required responders will be notified;

iii. If necessary, evacuation procedures will be initiated according to the pre-established evacuation route of the campus;

iv. The relevant authorities or emergency response services will immediately be contacted to handle the situation;

v. In case of a medical emergency, immediate first aid attention and medical assistance are to be provided;

vi. The family members of those who are affected and involved in the incident will be informed. Internal stakeholders will also be informed of the situation and any actions they need to take;

vii. The CIMT will be activated. This Team will be responsible for:

   a. overseeing the strategic response;

   b. making executive decisions;

   c. coordinating resources;

   d. working closely with external emergency services as well as any relevant government agencies.

   CIMT will be convened by the Dean who acts as the CIMT leader in the situation and consists of members from QIHE's staff.

viii. Any communications regarding critical incidents will be made with a clear appreciation of privacy and confidentiality. For media briefings and update if there is any, only the appointed member of CIMT should provide any information.

3.4 Recovery and Continuity

i. After the incident is diffused, QIHE will continue to provide support to affected individuals, including counselling and medical care where necessary.

ii. If a critical incident disrupts core operations, the business continuity plan will be activated to restore essential services and resume academic operations as quickly as possible.

iii. After the critical incident, QIHE will perform an assessment to any physical damage and coordinate repairs, or remediation as needed.

3.5 Review and Learning

i. After the incident, QIHE will conduct a thorough review of the incident, including causes, response effectiveness, and areas for improvement.

ii. The CIMT must prepare a detailed incident report of the incident. The report includes the detailed breakdown of the incident, the key takeaway from the incident and how to prevent them in the future, as well as any other additional information regarding the incident.

iii. The report will be presented by the CIMT via the Dean to the Risk Committee. The Committee will review and submit it to the Governing Council, where it will be used to evaluate and improve this Critical Incident Management Framework, this Policy as well as other procedures and training programs relating to critical incident response;

iv. The report will be noted and stored in the Critical Incidents Register and the Risk Register;

v. The Framework, Policy and other procedures relating to critical incident response will be regularly updated to ensure that they remain compliant, effective and responsive to new risk, requirements or advancements.

4. Training and Compliance

i. With QIHE's commitment to ensure all staff and students are adequately trained, QIHE will:

    a. Provide clear and detailed information regarding emergency procedures and other emergency response related information upon induction and orientation;

    b. Conduct regular training and evacuation drills at least annually as a refresher for staff and students;

    c. Require selected staff to do a certified first aid training. QIHE will ensure that the number of trained first aiders meets the regulatory requirements.

ii. The trainings are conducted in line with the applicable regulatory requirements and safety standards. These include, but are not limited to:

    a. Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW);

b. Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW);

c. NSW State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW);

d. Australian Standard AS 3745-2010;

e. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018;

f. SafeWork NSW Guidelines;

g. NSW Police Force and Emergency Service Guidelines.

iii. Records of trainings and drills will be documented. They will be reviewed alongside the regular review of the Framework and other procedures related to emergency and critical incident management.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

i. The CIMT will provide strategic oversight and decision-making during critical incidents. The Team is responsible for managing the broader implications of the incident, such as public relations, communication with authorities, and ensuring the welfare of the Institute's community.

ii. The Dean will act as the head of the Team and upon the requirement to fully activate the Team, the Dean will convene other staff or governing body members to the Team to effectively manage the critical incident.

5.2 Staff

i. All staff are responsible for their own safety and well-being, therefore must contribute to enable a safe and comfortable environment in QIHE as well as familiarising themselves with health and safety procedures.

ii. All staff have a responsibility to participate in QIHE's emergency training programs, briefings or other drills to ensure their preparedness in case of a critical incident or emergency.

iii. In case of a critical incident, staff are required to take a proactive role to be the first responder to the situation.

5.3 Governing Council

i. The Council are responsible for ensuring adequate resources are allocated to support the implementation, training and continuous improvement of the Framework, plan and this Policy.

ii. The Council provides oversight of QIHE's risk management practices. This includes QIHE's preparedness and response capabilities towards emergency and critical incidents.

iii. The Council will conduct regular reviews from reports on QIHE's emergency and critical incident matters.

5.4 Risk Committee

i. The Committee holds a key role in monitoring and managing risk and are responsible for regular assessment and evaluation of risks associated with potential emergencies and critical incidents.

ii. The Committee will review and recommend updates to this Policy and the Framework and/or plans surrounding critical incidents and emergency management to the Governing Council, in line with the changes in legislation, standards and best practices.

iii. The Committee monitors the implementation of the strategies and plan within this Policy and reports on compliance, effectiveness and any incidents to the Governing Council.

iv. In case of a critical incident, the Committee will also review the response towards the incident and ensuring the proper management of QIHE's policy and procedures.

5.5 Students

i. Students are responsible for their own health and safety and therefore they are responsible to familiarise themselves with the emergency procedures and other safety information provided by QIHE.

ii. Students must follow all instructions provided by staff or other authorised personnel during an emergency or critical incident.

iii. Students must report if they become aware of any potential hazards, safety concerns or incidents to QIHE staff member.

6. Privacy and Records Management

QIHE upholds the importance of everyone's privacy. All records and information regarding emergencies and critical incidents that involves any individual will remain confidential within QIHE's database and will only be disclosed to the relevant authorities, as required by the situation. All records will be kept in accordance with the *Records Retention Policy*.

7. Continuous Improvement and Policy Review

QIHE regularly assesses the effectiveness of its policies and internal controls relating to emergency and critical incident management. The composition of this Policy and the Framework as well as strategies set within it undergo regular reviews in accordance with the *Policy Review Schedule*. In the event of new laws and regulations relating to emergency and

critical incidents, QIHE will assess them and adjust the Policy in accordance with the applicable laws or regulations.

Appendix 1 – Emergency Contact Information for NSW

For immediate assistance in an emergency, anyone should contact the following services:

Police, Fire, and Ambulance (Triple Zero - 000)

Phone: 000 (24/7 Emergency Line)

For all emergencies requiring police, fire, or medical assistance.

NSW State Emergency Service (SES):

Phone: 132 500

For flood, storm, and tsunami emergency response.

Poisons Information Centre:

Phone: 13 11 26

For poisoning emergencies.

Healthdirect Australia:

Phone: 1800 022 222

For health advice and assistance.

National Security Hotline

Phone: 1800 123 400

For reporting suspicious activity related to terrorism.

The Dean will be responsible for the review of the contact details.

Glossary

Critical Incident refers to an event or situation that causes or has the potential to cause significant disruption to the operations of the Institute, poses a serious threat to the health or safety of individuals, or results in serious damage to property. Examples include natural disasters, fires, medical emergencies, and acts of violence.

Emergency refers to an unexpected situation or event that requires immediate action to prevent harm to people, property, or the environment. Emergencies may include fires, hazardous material spills, or severe weather conditions.

Emergency Services refers to the public organisations that respond to emergencies, including police, fire brigades, ambulance services, and the State Emergency Service (SES).

Governing Body refers to all the functional bodies QIHE.

Hazard refers to a source of potential harm or a situation that could lead to an emergency or critical incident. Hazards can be physical, chemical, biological, or environmental.

Members of the Committee refers to all members of QIHE's Governing Body, including members of the Governing Council, Academic Board, Course and Industry Advisory Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, Risk Committee. and Executive Management Team.

Post-Incident Review refers to an evaluation conducted after an emergency or critical incident to assess the effectiveness of the response and identify lessons learned for future improvements.

Version Control

Version	1.0
Last Review	6 September 2024
Policy Category	Governing Council
Related Documents	*Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure* *Equity and Diversity Policy* *Human Resources Policy and Procedure* *Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy* *Staff Code of Conduct Policy* *Student Code of Conduct*
Legislation References	TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW) Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW) NSW State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW) Australian Standard AS 3745-2010 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 SafeWork NSW Guidelines NSW Police Force and Emergency Service Guidelines
References	Macquarie University University of Sydney University of Newcastle University of Wollongong Western Sydney University