

# Critical Incident Policy

## Intent

James Cook University Brisbane Campus is a campus of James Cook University (JCU) and operates as a joint venture with Russo Higher Education Pty Ltd (RHE). The intent of this policy is to specify James Cook University Brisbane Campus's response to, and management of, a Critical Incident.

## Scope

The policy applies to all Staff, Students, visitors, tenants and contractors.

## Definitions

**Chief Coordinator** - the person responsible to manage James Cook University Brisbane Campus's response to a Critical Incident.

**Critical Incident** - any event, or threat of an event, which:

- (a) causes significant stress, injury to or death of Staff, Students, visitors, tenants or contractors where the event or threat of an event:
  - (i) occurs on a James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site;
  - (ii) wherever it occurs, involves a student in the course of the student's enrolment in or attendance at James Cook University Brisbane Campus, or the student's participation in James Cook University Brisbane Campus activities (including non-academic activities);
  - (iii) wherever it occurs, involves Staff in the course of their duties on behalf of James Cook University Brisbane Campus; or
- (b) in respect of a Student which causes significant stress, injury or death, while resident in Australia; or
- (c) causes or may cause, serious damage or harm to RHE property or to personal property located at a James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site; or
- (d) while not coming within the scope of (a) or (b) above, the Chief Coordinator has elected to deal with under this Policy.

Critical Incidents include, but are not limited to, Emergencies.

**Critical Incident Group** - the group of people convened by the Chief Coordinator to manage James Cook University Brisbane Campus's response to a Critical Incident at a James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site.

**Emergency** - a Critical Incident requiring the response of the Emergency Services.

**Emergency Services** - any or all of the Police, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance and State Emergency Services (as may be appropriate to the Critical Incident) and any organisation which could reasonably be expected to assist in the Critical Incident or to be notified of the Critical Incident.

**James Cook University Brisbane Campus Sites** - locations where James Cook University Brisbane Campus has responsibility for services delivered. These locations comprise the campus of Brisbane.

**Staff** – means staff of RHE.

**Students** – means a student of James Cook University who is attending the James Cook University Brisbane Campus including international student visa holders.

**visitors, tenants and contractors** – means visitors, tenants and contractors of RHE

# Policy and Procedures

## 1. Examples of Critical Incidents

Examples of Critical Incidents include, but are not limited to:

- serious injury to or serious illness or death of a Student, Staff , visitor or contractor, or any threat of these;
- a missing Student, where the Student is:
  - an international student (in accordance with the [National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007](#)); or
- severe distressing or disturbing behaviour;
- physical assault, threats, or attack;
- where a Student, Staff , visitor or contractor has witnessed a serious incident;
- natural disaster eg cyclone, earthquake, tsunami, or flood;
- fire, riot, bomb-threat, explosion, gas, chemical hazard, or other environmental hazard;
- major overseas events, such as earthquakes or political unrest;
- pandemics.

James Cook University and RHE will, from time to time, undertake appropriate planning and training to prepare for a range of possible Critical Incidents, and to respond efficiently and effectively to a Critical Incident should it occur. This document outlines how James Cook University Brisbane Campus will respond in the event that a Critical Incident occurs or threatens to occur.

## 2. Reporting of a Critical Incident

2.1 If a Critical Incident occurs or threatens to occur, it must be reported as outlined in [Schedule 1](#) of the Appendix (see below). Key details to report include:

- (a) the time, exact location and nature of the incident (e.g. threat, accident, death or injury), and
- (b) the names and roles of persons involved (e.g. Staff, Student).

2.2 James Cook University Brisbane Campus will contact:

- (a) the Emergency Services (if required); and
- (b) the Chief Coordinator for James Cook University Brisbane Campus as specified in clause 4.2(a)

## 3. Accountabilities and responsibilities

3.1 The Chief Coordinator is responsible for Critical Incident management at all James Cook University Brisbane Campus Sites and is responsible for:

- (a) ensuring that a comprehensive and up-to-date Emergency and Critical Incident Plan, along with a Schedule of Details is distributed to appropriate Staff, as shown in [Schedule 3](#) of the Appendix; and
- (b) ensuring that appropriate information is available through James Cook University Brisbane Campus's website regarding procedures for Staff, Students, visitors, tenants and contractors in relation to Critical Incidents; and
- (c) maintaining an up-to-date list of key Staff who may be appointed as members of the Critical Incident Group, should a Critical Incident arise, and
  - (i) formally advising those Staff that they may be called to act as part of the Critical Incident Group, and
  - (ii) ensuring that prospective members of the Critical Incident Group are familiar with, and trained in, their roles relating to Critical Incidents.

3.2 The Chief Coordinator and members of the Critical Incident Group are responsible and accountable to the CEO for the management of responses to Critical Incidents at James Cook University Brisbane Campus.

## 4. Critical Incident Management Framework

### 4.1 Avoidance and Mitigation

James Cook University and RHE will develop, share and implement strategies to avoid and mitigate the impact of Critical Incidents through Critical Incident and safety awareness, education and training.

### 4.2 The Immediate Response

- (a) The person required to act as Chief Coordinator will vary according to the availability of personnel at the time, and will be:
  - (i) Senior Manager Operations (0415 482 712) in the first instance and if unavailable then;
  - (ii) Campus Dean (0408 062 421) and if unavailable then;
  - (iii) CEO (0419 709 185)
- (b) The Chief Coordinator will assess the incident and judge whether it is appropriate to inform the CEO and any external authorities listed in [Schedule 2](#) (other than Ministers of Government)
- (c) Where appropriate, the Chief Coordinator will make a decision to activate the Critical Incident Group and notify the CEO and Campus Dean, accordingly.
- (d) The responsibilities of the Chief Coordinator are as follows:
  - (i) Notify the Emergency Services (if required).
  - (ii) Conduct a risk assessment of hazards which may require emergency response.
  - (iii) Identify the people involved and the resources needed.
  - (iv) Implement the response in terms of people and resources, including, if required, activation of the Critical Incident Group (see clause 4.2.e below).
  - (v) Liaise with, and support, the Emergency Services as required.
  - (vi) Act as or appoint a Communications Coordinator to establish a Central Information Point to provide up-to-the-minute, accurate information to Staff, Students and others at the incident (excluding the media) as required.
  - (vii) Provide advice to the CEO, Campus Dean or delegate and the Communications Coordinator on the status of the incident. Provide advice to the Chief Coordinator of James Cook University Townsville Campus via Campus Security on (07 4781 5555)
  - (viii) Appoint senior officer(s) of James Cook University Brisbane Campus, as outlined in clause 5.4, to make contact with individuals, including victims, other Students and/or Staff, family and friends.
  - (ix) Notify James Cook University Brisbane Campus's Counseling Service and, if required, outside agencies to assist those affected by the incident.
  - (x) Provide a quiet area for victims and/or their families.
  - (xi) Arrange to secure property - including buildings or infrastructure which may be unsafe, and personal property.
  - (xii) Evacuate or lock down James Cook University Brisbane Campus, or part of James Cook University Brisbane Campus if appropriate.
  - (xiii) Act in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Emergency and Critical Incident Plan.

- (e) Formation and membership of the Critical Incident Group
  - (i) If activation of the Critical Incident Group is required, then the Group will comprise sufficient people to perform the following roles as appropriate:
    - the Chief Coordinator (chair);
    - a Physical Infrastructure Coordinator;
    - an Information Technology Infrastructure Coordinator;
    - a Workplace Health and Safety Coordinator;
    - a Security Coordinator;
    - a Communications Coordinator (normally a senior officer from the Chancellery or Head of campus/centre); and
    - a Media Coordinator.
  - (ii) The Chief Coordinator is responsible for appointing appropriate people to perform the roles identified in clause 4.2(e) (i) above, as required.
  - (iii) An additional person(s) will be appointed by the Chief Coordinator to record and maintain appropriate records of the incident and of decisions made or action taken by the Critical Incident Group.
  - (iv) The Chief Coordinator may also direct any Staff or resources to assist in the management of the Critical Incident.
  - (v) The Chief Coordinator and Communications Coordinator (where appointed) are to work together to share and manage information in relation to the incident.
- (f) Authority of the Critical Incident Group
  - (i) The Chief Coordinator, assisted by the Critical Incident Group, has full authority for management of a Critical Incident until formal notification by the Emergency Services that they have assumed control under an appropriate Act - eg the Public Safety Preservation Act 1986 (Qld), the Police Powers and Responsibility Act 2000 (Qld) or the Disaster Management Act 2003 (Qld) (ii) Under the Acts named above, or other appropriate Act, the Police or other Emergency Services may assume control of the incident, and in such a case, the Critical Incident Group will act in support of the Emergency Services until formal closure of the incident.
- (g) Preservation of evidence
  - (i) Where it is suspected that a crime has taken place, care shall be taken to preserve the scene of the incident and any related evidentiary items, provided that it is feasible to do so without adversely impacting on health and safety.

### 4.3 Recovery

- (a) Assess safety of infrastructure - The Chief Coordinator, with the advice of the Physical Infrastructure Coordinator and/or the relevant Emergency Services having appropriate authority in the circumstances, will determine whether it is safe to re-enter buildings evacuated or damaged or to use equipment damaged as a result of the incident.
- (b) Communication - The Communications Coordinator will notify the Student Support Services or appropriate administrative centre, regarding Students who are likely to be affected by the traumatic situation to ensure that proper support is given and that inappropriate contacts are not made.
- (c) Media - The Public Relations Executive for RHE will coordinate with the James Cook University Media Liaison and agree upon a media protocol to apply to the critical incident.
- (d) Stress management - James Cook University Brisbane Campus's Counseling Service will monitor the ongoing need for, and provide, counseling as required and senior staff of James Cook University Brisbane Campus will conduct debriefing sessions for Staff as appropriate.
- (e) Reconstruction planning and restoration of operations - The Chief Coordinator will provide advice to the CEO on reconstruction and/or other requirements to permit resumption of James Cook University Brisbane Campus operations.

#### **4.4 Evaluation and Review of the Emergency and Critical Incident Plan**

- (a) After a Critical Incident, the Chief Coordinator will evaluate the effectiveness of the Emergency and Critical Incident Plan, the Critical Incident Policy and any associated procedures and propose changes as required.
- (b) The evaluation process will incorporate feedback gathered from those present at the incident and other stakeholders.
- (c) An evaluation report will be provided to the CEO who in turn will report to James Cook University.

#### **5. Communication**

- 5.1. Responsibility for communication during and after a Critical Incident will be as follows:
  - (a) with hospitals and the Emergency Services - Chief Coordinator, Critical Incident Group;
  - (b) to establish a Central Information Point to receive and respond to enquiries from Staff, Students and others as required (other than from the media) - the Communications Coordinator (if appointed); and
  - (c) with the media – see clause 4.3(c).
- 5.2 Where a person has been adversely affected by a Critical Incident, James Cook University Brisbane Campus will first obtain authorisation from that person, where it is feasible to do so, and prior to contacting their family, friends and next of kin.
- 5.3 Where one of the Emergency Services is in formal control of an incident, James Cook University Brisbane Campus must first obtain authorisation from the Emergency Services prior to contacting family, friends and next of kin.
- 5.4 When appropriate and/or authorised, action to contact family, friends and next of kin will be undertaken as follows:
  - (a) for affected domestic students, their family, friends and next of kin - by the Chief Coordinator or delegate;
  - (b) for affected international students, their family, friends and next of kin - by the Chief Coordinator or delegate;
  - (c) for affected Staff, their family, friends and next of kin - by the Chief Coordinator or their delegate in consultation with the Director, Human Resources; and
  - (d) for affected visitors and contractors, their family, friends and next of kin - by the Chief Coordinator or delegate.

#### **6. Support for students involved in a Critical Incident**

##### **6.1 Domestic students**

The Chief Coordinator or their delegate will coordinate support for domestic students, their family, friends and next of kin, which may include, as appropriate:

- (a) referral to James Cook University Brisbane Campus's Counseling Service;
- (b) for coursework Students, contacting the Subject Coordinator(s) and/or Faculty Registrar to request rescheduling of assignments or withdrawal without academic penalty;
- (c) for coursework Students, facilitating an application for deferred examination or special consideration in an examination;
- (d) for research Students, contacting the supervisor(s) to request rescheduling of research or a temporary leave of absence;
- (e) assistance in application for withdrawal without financial penalty;
- (f) assistance in the arrangements for family, friends and next of kin to visit James Cook University Brisbane Campus eg in relation to accommodation and crisis support,
- (g) contacting James Cook University Brisbane Campus's legal officer; and
- (h) providing a single point of contact at James Cook University Brisbane Campus for family, friends and next of kin.

## **6.2 International students**

The Chief Coordinator or their delegate will coordinate support for international students, their family, friends and next of kin which may include:

- (a) the support outlined in 6.1 above, plus,
- (b) assistance with arrangements for hospital or medical treatment;
- (c) assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues;
- (d) contacting the consulate, high commission or embassy for the Student's country;
- (e) assistance in obtaining visas for family, friends and next of kin to visit James Cook University Brisbane Campus;
- (f) hiring interpreters; and
- (g) assistance in arrangements for repatriation, funeral or memorial service, if required.

## **7. Support for Staff involved in a Critical Incident**

The Chief Coordinator or delegate, in conjunction with the Director, Human Resources, will coordinate support for members of staff, their family, friends and next of kin which may include, as appropriate:

- (a) referral to James Cook University Brisbane Campus's Counseling Service;
- (b) assistance in the arrangements for family, friends and next of kin to visit James Cook University Brisbane Campus eg in relation to accommodation and crisis support;
- (c) contacting James Cook University Brisbane Campus's insurance officer; and
- (d) providing a single point of contact at James Cook University Brisbane Campus for family, friends and next of kin.

## **8. Support for visitors, tenants and contractors involved in a Critical Incident**

The Chief Coordinator or delegate will coordinate support for visitors, tenants and contractors, their family, friends and next of kin which may include, as appropriate:

- (a) referral to counseling and other support services;
- (b) assistance in the arrangements for family, friends and next of kin to visit James Cook University Brisbane Campus eg in relation to accommodation and crisis support;
- (c) contacting James Cook University Brisbane Campus's insurance officer; and
- (d) providing a single point of contact at James Cook University Brisbane Campus for family, friends and next of kin.

## **9. Useful phone numbers within Australia**

The following phone numbers may be useful during or after a Critical Incident:

- Emergency Services (Police, Fire & Rescue, Ambulance) - 000 (external) ;
- Group Property – National Property Asset Manager 0408 011 130 or Senior Property Coordinator 0437 865 606;
- JCU Brisbane's Counseling Service – VOICE – 1300 469 675;
- Lifeline (24 hour crisis counseling line) - 13 1114;
- Migrant Resource Centre - 3871 3141 (Brisbane);
- Environmental Protection Authority, Queensland - 1300 130 372;
- Ergon Energy - phone number for life-threatening Emergencies only - 13 16 70l;
- Southern Cross protection 1300 136 102;
- Harmony Place - Multicultural Centre for Mental Health and Well-being - 46 Shottery Street Yeronga Qld 4104  
Phone: 3848 1600

## 10. Critical Incident Procedures

Critical Incident procedures will be developed, maintained and distributed as specified in [Schedule 3](#) below.

### Appendix

#### Schedule 1 - Reporting of a Critical Incident

To be done in accordance with the order listed in clause 4.2(a) until the report is made

#### Schedule 2 - External Authorities for Possible Notification

External Authority
Relevant Local Authority
Environmental Protection Agency
Ergon Energy
Minister for Education, Training and the Arts, Queensland
Minister for Emergency Services, Queensland

#### Schedule 3 - Critical Incident Procedures

No.	Procedure	Responsibility	Distribution
1.	Emergency and Critical Incident Plan	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for James Cook University Brisbane Campus and Counseling Service if required.
2.	Emergency and Critical Information website	As per policy	<a href="http://www.jcu.edu.au/emergency/">http://www.jcu.edu.au/emergency/</a>
3.	Critical Incident Stress Management Plan	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for each James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site and Director, Human Resources
4.	Critical Incident Media Plan	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for each James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site and Public Relations Executive.
5.	Critical Incident Communication Procedures	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for each James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site and Public Relations Executive.
6.	Support for domestic coursework students involved in a Critical Incident	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for each James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site and Public Relations Executive.
7.	Support for international students involved in a Critical Incident	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for each James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site and Public Relations Executive.
8.	Support for staff involved in a Critical Incident	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for each James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site and Director, Human Resources.
9.	Support for visitors, and contractors involved in a Critical Incident	As per policy	All prospective members of the Critical Incident Group for each James Cook University Brisbane Campus Site and Counseling Service.

## Related documents, legislation or James Cook University Statutes

### Emergency and Critical Incident Plan

JCU's [Emergency and Critical Incident website](#)

[National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007](#) - particularly Standard 6.4

[Public Safety Preservation Act 1986 \(Qld\)](#)

[Police Powers and Responsibility Act 2000 \(Qld\)](#)

[Disaster Management Act 2003 \(Qld\)](#)

[Environmental Protection Act 1994 \(Qld\)](#)

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