

Critical Incident Procedures/Business Continuity Planning

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Table of Contents

Section 1 – Introduction	3
<i>Why do we need Critical Incident Procedures?</i>	3
<i>What is a Critical Incident?</i>	3
<i>Other relevant documents for consultation</i>	3
<i>What are the key priorities for the College in the event of an Incident?</i>	3
<i>How do people know what to do?</i>	3
Section 2 – How Does the College Cope?	4
<i>Who is responsible for managing a response?</i>	4
<i>What happens if any of the key personnel are not contactable?</i>	5
<i>What is the role of the Chairperson and the Governing Body in the event of an incident?</i>	5
<i>What is the role of staff members of the College?</i>	5
<i>What is the role of students of the College?</i>	6
<i>If important services are unavailable, what does the College do?</i>	7
<i>Will there be somewhere for staff members and students to assemble?</i>	7
Section 3 – How Do People Know What is Happening?	7
<i>How does the College hear about Incidents?</i>	7
<i>What information does the College need?</i>	8
<i>How will the College inform all staff members and students?</i>	8
<i>What information does the College have to contact Staff members or Students?</i>	8
<i>Who will deal with family members?</i>	9
Section 4 – How will the College Help Students or Staff Members?	9
<i>Will the College close?</i>	9
<i>What is the role of the Students' Union?</i>	10
<i>What support will be put in place for staff members and students?</i>	10
<i>Will there be Counselling?</i>	10
<i>Will financial assistance be available?</i>	11
<i>How will the College notify staff member(s) or student(s) about a tragedy?</i>	11
<i>How will the College notify family member(s) about a tragedy?</i>	11
<i>What training will staff members or students be given?</i>	12
Appendices	13
<i>Appendix 1 Contact Details for Staff Members</i>	13
<i>Appendix 2 Contact Details for Students</i>	13
<i>Appendix 3 Contact Details for NCAD Management Team</i>	14
<i>Appendix 4 Contact Details for Media Enquiries</i>	14

Section 1 – Introduction

Why do we need Critical Incident Procedures?

The College (NCAD) is a large organisation and many people depend on it for a wide range of facilities, services and resources. However, issues may arise which can seriously disrupt and impact on the College's business. This could be as serious as a fire, or it could be as simple as the absence of a key staff member at a critical time for the College. In such circumstances, our staff members and our students expect their routines to proceed as normal or, at the very least, to be provided with information as to what is going to happen to rectify the situation. The following are the standard operating procedures when such resources and or people are affected.

What is a Critical Incident?

A critical incident may involve:

- Weather event as determined by Met Eireann (Status Red)
- Potential for harm to staff, students or the public on campus.
- Death/serious injury (or the threat of) to a staff member, student or visitor to the College
- Serious physical or environmental damage to the buildings of the College or their surroundings
- Significant disruption of the business of the College
- Serious threat to the College's public image
- Systems failure
- Criminal activity

Other relevant documents for consultation

- The College's Safety Statement 2016
- Student Union event planning guidelines

What are the key priorities for the College in the event of an Incident?

Whenever there is a threat to the running of the College, it will need to balance a wide range of priorities. Some of these priorities become key in the decision-making of the CMT of the College.

These are in order of priority:

- The **immediate** personal safety of all students, staff members and anyone else associated with the College including visitors to the gallery. This includes and extends to Grace Gifford House and Annex. (101 St James St). (It is noted that there is an amount of travel abroad and this plan extends to those incidents)
- Following government advice based on national threat levels which is also linked to students travelling to the college.
- The future wellbeing of students and staff members of the College
- The protection of the assets, infrastructure and fabric of the College
- Compliance with all appropriate legislation
- The ability of the College to continue to function
- The reputation of the College

How do people know what to do?

The College's staff training and development process ensures that staff members are regularly up skilled in the areas of relevance to themselves and their work area.

The College, through its Risk Register, identifies the main potential risk areas and has plans and procedures in place for their management. In addition, the College keeps up to date regarding incidents and events in other Colleges and colleges nationwide, throughout the world and in many other organisations. The College learns lessons from such incidents and from the responses made to them. Finally, the College and each area of the College plan for the types of incident that may arise in the relevant area.

The College's response to a critical incident will typically reflect the following stages:

- **Immediate Response and Intervention:** This involves an emergency response and reaction and a restoration of the functioning of the College
- **Secondary Response:** This involves any reconstruction of buildings, replacement of staff members or equipment; it may also involve investigation by external agencies
- **Post-incident Response:** This involves communication both internally and externally in relation to the event and the actions taken. It may also involve implementing support mechanisms for staff members, students and families affected by the incident
- **Review:** Every critical incident will be critically reviewed and analysed to determine whether the incident was handled appropriately and to identify any weaknesses in the College's systems and procedures to prevent any future occurrence

The occupants of the site are also to be informed, where appropriate,.

While these responses will usually happen in sequence, it is likely that there will be overlaps when two or more of these responses occur at the same time.

Section 2 – How Does the College Cope?

Who is responsible for managing a response?

The Director is responsible for the running of the College. In the event of an incident, the Director has overall responsibility.

The Director manages the College through CMT. Each member of CMT is responsible for the management of their area of responsibility and has a collective responsibility for the management of the College as a whole.

The Director leads and co-ordinates the response in the event of an incident involving the College's reputation.

The Head of Academic Affairs leads and coordinates the response in the event of an incident involving students.

The Registrar/HCS leads and coordinates the response in the event of an incident involving staff and/or facilities. In relation to incidents involving staff members, the Human Resource Manager and the relevant Line Managers will be directly involved.

In certain circumstances, the Emergency Services will assume control of the College Campus. In this instance, the appropriate member of the CMT will be the direct point of contact with the Emergency Services.

What happens if any of the key personnel are not contactable?

These procedures are designed to be used by some key staff members of the College. However, for a variety of reasons one or more of these key staff members may be unavailable or not contactable. This may be as a result of the incident itself or the relevant staff member may be off campus or on leave. It is important that the College replace these key staff members on a temporary basis to deal with the incident.

All members of the CMT are empowered to act in the absence of one or more of their members, including the absence of the Director.

All members of the College Management Team are empowered to act in the absence of more senior personnel.

As soon as possible, on assuming responsibility, the CMT /Management member should assemble as many members of the CMT and/or Management Teams as are available to implement an agreed plan of action. This assembly will return control of the College to any relevant key CMT members immediately on their return to availability.

What is the role of the Chairperson and the Governing Body in the event of an incident?

The Governing Body is responsible for the oversight of the College and its powers are set out in legislation. The Governing Body performs its functions through the Director.

In the event of a critical incident, the Director, in conjunction with the Secretary/HCS, will determine the need to inform the Chairperson and the Governing Body. The Director and/or the Chairperson, in consultation with the Secretary, will determine the need to convene a special meeting of the Governing Body.

All critical incidents will be reported to the Governing Body in the Director's Report at the next available Governing Body meeting.

What is the role of staff members of the College?

This is entirely dependent on the nature of the event. Some staff members will be actively engaged in managing the College's response to the event. These will be staff members experienced and trained for the circumstance.

All other staff members will be needed to maintain calm among the College community. This can be achieved in a number of ways. Staff members should continue with their normal routines where safe and possible to do so. This will ensure that a calm and stable environment is maintained.

Staff members should assist their colleagues who may be required to disengage from their normal routine by providing relief cover for them. This will enable those staff members to deal with the incident without the need to concern themselves with the normal running of the College. Staff members can assist in keeping unnecessary intrusion on to the scene of any accident, this will allow those directly involved in managing the incident to deal with the incident without the need to deal with interference.

Staff members are often among the first to hear about any incident, particularly an incident that occurs off campus or outside College operating times. In this case, staff members need to ensure

that the College is made formally aware of the incident. Immediate communication should be directed to any one of the following:

- Director's Office
- Head of Academic Affairs
- Secretary/HCS

It is essential for the College to deal quickly with any incident. It is better to receive the same information many times than not to receive any information. All of the above can be contacted on their College e-mails or by mobile phone. These details are listed in [Appendix 1](#), attached to these procedures.

Staff members have a crucial role to play in maintaining the good reputation of the College. In the event of an incident, key people will be identified who will liaise with the media and appropriate authorities. See [Appendix 3](#) for details.

What is the role of students of the College?

This is entirely dependent on the nature of the event and who is involved. Unfortunately, it is likely that students will be close to the incident, either by direct involvement or where they are friendly with any students that are involved.

Any students' first priority is their own personal safety and welfare. In the event of any incident, all students should ensure that they remove themselves from any danger or peril and follow the lawful instructions of emergency services personnel and/or staff members. Students should, where possible, give assistance and comfort to their fellow students.

Students are also very important insofar as they are likely to be the first to hear about any incident, particularly an incident that occurs off campus or outside College operating times.

Students need to ensure that the College is made formally aware of the incident. Immediate communication should be directed to any one of the following:

- Head of Academic Affairs
- Students' Union President
- Student Experience Manager

Students are likely to be more familiar with their lecturers. Communication with any staff member in this area should ensure that the College receives the relevant information.

The Students' Union and Student Experience Manager will liaise with the Head of Academic Affairs. It is essential for the College to deal quickly with any incident.

In any case, it is vitally important that communication be made with the College as soon as possible.

Students have a crucial role to play in maintaining the good reputation of the College. In the event of any incident, key people will be identified who will liaise with the media and appropriate authorities. See [Appendix 3](#) for details.

If important services are unavailable, what does the College do?

Every circumstance and every incident will present its own unique difficulties and problems. That is why a plan will need to be developed quickly to deal with each incident. These plans will deal with the services that are required and those that are not available in the College. The members of the CMT have contact details of a range of available services and their locations.

It should be remembered that all of NCAD's ICT Systems and records are hosted off campus and are backed up regularly. This means that regardless of what happens on campus there will always be access to our data. A separate strategy is in place to deal with any failure to the external hosting of our ICT records.

Will there be somewhere for staff members and students to assemble?

Assembly points will only be required where the evacuation of any part of the campus is needed. The primary assembly areas are at various location across the campus.

Where students and/or staff members feel that they need to congregate to offer each other assistance during or following an incident a number of locations on campus have been identified as suitable. The most suitable locations are the offices or classrooms where staff members or students normally work or congregate.

Where the entire campus is unavailable, the College will notify staff members and students of the assembly location.

Section 3 – How Do People Know What is Happening?

How does the College hear about Incidents?

It is very important that the College hear about any incident as soon as possible in order to take the appropriate action and to implement the necessary steps to protect students and staff members of the College.

If the incident occurs on campus, students should bring it to the attention of any staff member as quickly as possible. Staff members should notify the appropriate member of the CMT :

- Head of Academic Affairs, if it involves a student
- Secretary/Financial Controller, if it involved staff and/or facilities
- If there are injuries or if the emergency services need to be called, the Attendants must be notified immediately HCS. For major incidents, it is likely that the fire alarm will sound.

Staff members should contact their immediate Line Manager. Contact details for the Management Team are listed in [Appendix 3](#) of these procedures.

Where a student or staff member hears reports of an incident regarding the College, and is contacted by the media for commentary, the College needs to be informed as soon as possible. In the event of any incident, key people will be identified who will liaise with the media and appropriate authorities (see [Appendix 3](#) for details). NCAD will liaise with local media in the region where appropriate.

What information does the College need?

The College will check and verify any details given to it regarding any incident, however, it is important that as much factual detail as possible is available and given to the College as soon as it is available.

Specifically the College will need to know:

- Name of the student(s) and/or staff member(s) involved
- Programme, title and year
- Office or department with whom they are associated
- Name and telephone number of the person reporting the incident

This information will remain confidential to the College unless required by the authorities. The College needs to know who is reporting the incident in case the person reporting the incident also needs assistance.

How will the College inform all staff members and students?

The College will decide on the key people to be informed. There are a number of methods of keeping people informed about incidents.

Staff members or students who work or study in close proximity to any victims or distressed colleagues, should usually be told, in person, by their Line Manager or Programme Chair/Co-ordinator and they should usually be the first to be told. The remainder of staff members and student body will be informed by e-mail from the Director's Office. E-mails from other offices must be authorised by the appropriate member of the CMT. In certain cases, it may be necessary to communicate with students and staff members as an emergency. In these cases, the College, where relevant, will text staff members and students on their mobile phones. Where possible, the College will endeavour to have common procedures in place to contact appropriate staff members and students.

In the event of an incident, key people will be identified who will liaise with the media and appropriate authorities (see [Appendix 3](#) for details). NCAD will communicate through the use of local media, where appropriate.

What information does the College have to contact Staff members or Students?

The College maintains a number of data systems that contain the details of staff members and students. Staff members, on appointment, give the HR Office details of their address and phone numbers and details of their next of kin. Students give similar details annually on registration. This information is covered by the Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003 and is only used in accordance with the law. It is important that both staff members and students keep this information up to date,

such as any changes to an address and/or phone number. When required in the event of an incident, the appropriate personnel in the College will access the records to get the necessary detail.

Who will deal with family members?

It is essential that communication to and from family members be handled sensitively and compassionately. The HR Manager is the primary contact from the College with the families of staff members and the Head of Academic Affairs is the primary contact with the families of students. Where staff members and/or students have close personal contact with the families of their colleagues, it is entirely appropriate for them to maintain their own personal contact. However, other staff members are requested to respect the privacy of families that may be dealing with difficult circumstances.

Who will deal with media queries?

The College needs to manage media information and external communications to ensure that accurate and timely information is issued. In the event of an incident, only designated personnel may communicate on behalf of the College with the media or issue formal announcements. This will usually be the Director or Marketing Manager. No other staff member or student may communicate on behalf of the College without express authority. All staff members and students must refer all queries and requests for information to the Marketing Manager or the Director, in the first instance.

The College will take advice on the nature of any information it can release. The College will confine itself to issuing statements of fact. Where the event involves the health or wellbeing of a staff member or student the College will have regard to the wishes of the victim's family in the content of any statements made.

Are there times when the College will comment?

The College will comply with all of its legal obligations and will report to the appropriate authorities where it is required to do so by law. These would normally be:

- HSE (Health Services CMT), in the case of outbreaks of a range of illnesses
- HSA (Health and Safety Authority), in the case of work-related injuries
- FSAI (Food Safety Authority of Ireland), in the case of outbreaks relating to food safety
- EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), and/or the local authority in the event of the escape or leakage of certain toxic materials
- Gardaí, in the case of revelations of criminal activities or convictions

The College may comment in cases where there is a risk to the health or wellbeing of staff members, students or the general public. Where appropriate, it will issue formal public notification of the issue(s) involved. Such notification will be for information and advisory purposes only.

Section 4 – How will the College Help Students or Staff Members?

Will the College close?

The College will endeavour to remain open and to operate as normal in any crisis.

Clearly, where it is unsafe for staff members or students to remain on campus or in any part of the campus, then, either the entire campus, or the relevant portion of the campus, will be closed. This is

likely to mean a disruption to classes and activities. Staff members and students will be notified in this event and will be notified of any alternative arrangements.

The management of the College will determine, based on the incident, whether it would be appropriate to provide for a period of mourning. Where this is the case, staff members and students will be notified. The College will close in the event of a national day of mourning.

Attendance at funerals or memorial services is a matter of personal choice for each individual. The Manager for each area, in consultation with the relevant CMT member, will determine the necessity to close a Faculty or Office for a period to allow attendance at services. Any potential impact on classes must be agreed with the Head of Academic Affairs. Where staff members wish to take annual leave to provide for additional attendance at services or memorials, the standard practice for ensuring a continuation of service for each office and department will apply.

What is the role of the Students' Union?

The Students' Union participates in a number of key roles in the College. The Students' Union has a key representative role and the views and opinions of students' representatives are important to the College when managing difficult issues.

The Students' Union may often be the first contact point in relation to students in difficulties or members of the Students' Union may often be the first to hear of an event. The College relies on the Students' Union and its officers to ensure that the College is informed of incidents.

The Students' Union may often have more accurate and up-to-date information on student contacts and their personal circumstances and this may be key in making contact with students. The Students' Union, through its class representative system, may be in a position to make contact with students.

The Students' Union, through the Student Hardship Fund, has a system for disbursing monies to students and may be in a position to assist students in a financial crisis following any incident.

What support will be put in place for staff members and students?

The College, in dealing with any issue, will consider the impact on staff members and students. However, the level of support that needs to be provided will depend on the specific details of the incident.

Will there be Counselling?

People react in different ways to traumas. The resulting stress may include emotional, physical, behavioural and cognitive reaction. The College recognises this and has made provision for staff members and students to respond in their own way. The College provides a student counselling service on campus in the Student Experience Centre. This service may be extended for additional hours or by additional counsellors, if this is considered necessary. The College provides an Employee Assistance Programme for all staff members and members of their families. This service may also be extended, where it is considered necessary. The College may designate areas for students or staff members to use where necessary.

Will financial assistance be available?

The College is fully insured. It subscribes to a personal accident insurance policy for students. Students are entitled to claim for reimbursement of necessary medical expenses. Personal property lost or damaged during an incident and as a direct result of the incident is covered, unless the loss or damage is due to the carelessness of the owner. The Student Assistance Fund will consider any application for financial assistance where a student suffers financial hardship as a direct result of an incident.

How will the College notify staff member(s) or student(s) about a tragedy?

Staff members or students, who work or study in close proximity to any victims or distressed colleagues, should usually be told in person by their Line Manager or Programme Chair/Co-ordinator and they should usually be the first to be told. The ideal person to inform a group of students is someone who knows them well and has their trust. Where possible, the staff member making the announcement should be accompanied by another staff member. This may be the Student Counsellor or a more senior member of the College's management team. Where any staff member indicates that they would be uncomfortable undertaking this task, their view should be respected.

While each person will have their own way of relating to their group of staff or students, clear and unambiguous information, the facts as they are known, will reduce the spread of unnecessary rumour and misinformation. It is also important to recognise that not everyone needs to be given the full details of an event. Information should be provided on a need-to-know basis.

Where possible, all students and staff members should be told at the same time in class or office groups no larger than their normal size. Notice should be made of any absentees from the group in order that they can be appropriately informed. Details of a critical incident will obviously need to be communicated to any group of students or staff in a sensitive manner and those informing the group should check the list of those they are informing carefully and note if there are any individuals in the group who are likely to be more seriously affected by the information than others. Those informing students or staff of the details of the incident should spend a reasonable amount of time with the group to allow them to react to news of the incident.

Where news of the death of a student or staff member is being communicated, it should be acknowledged that some people may find it difficult to cope with the news and that support is available through the student counselling and the Employee Assistance Programme. The statement should also highlight the support that will be available to staff members and students in respect of the incident in both the immediate and longer term.

Where a clear plan of action has been agreed in respect of the incident, this plan should be conveyed. Where a plan is in the process of being prepared, staff members and students should also be advised of this and of the time/date that they may expect to be advised of the details of such a plan.

The College should not normally comment on the causes of death or injury or on the events leading to an arrest or conviction. It is important to respect the privacy and sensitivity of the victim's family and friends.

How will the College notify family member(s) about a tragedy?

Notifying family members about an incident is a very important issue and must be managed carefully and sensitively. This will be done by the Head of Academic Affairs and the relevant Head of Department for students and the Human Resources Manager and the relevant Line Manager for staff members. While it is

recognised that different situations will call for different responses, the following points should be considered:

- A clear statement should be prepared to assist those contacting the relatives of those who have been injured or affected by the incident
- It is preferable to have a group of people ie the entire family involved, so that all concerned are informed in or around the same time
- Those contacting the most affected by the incident, should check to see if the contacted persons are on their own and, therefore, in need of support
- Those contacted should be offered as much practical help as possible eg transport, phone numbers, relevant contact persons and other resources
- Ideally, the most seriously affected should be spoken to face to face rather than by phone
- The communication should contain some element which allows the person who conveys the information to check that it has been fully understood

What training will staff members or students be given?

Staff members of the College are appointed to positions based on their demonstrated competencies, experience, skills and training. These staff members are experienced and qualified to deal with many of the issues that arise in their area of competence, including crises. The College identifies skills that need to be available to a range of personnel through the College's staff training and development process and training in these areas is provided. Staff members may also request training in specific areas through the College's Training and Development process.

Individual students may have some skills and competencies based on their external experiences and activities. The College will be pleased to include these students in the development and implementation of responses to critical events. This will be done through the Students' Union. Training for students who wish to develop skills in these areas can also be delivered through the Students' Union.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Contact Details for Staff Members

Contact details for staff member(s) to inform NCAD that an incident(s) has occurred off campus or outside College operating times:

Office	Name	Email Address	Phone Number	Mobile Number
Director	Sarah Glennie	director@ncad.ie		
Head of Academic Affairs	Siun Hanrahan	hanrahans@ncad.ie		087 608 3006
Head of Corporate Affairs	Gerry McCoy	mccoyg@staff.ncad.ie		087 2712777

Appendix 2 Contact Details for Students

Contact details for student(s) to inform NCAD that an incident(s) has occurred off campus or outside College operating times:

Office		Email Address	Phone Number	Mobile Number
Head of Academic Affairs	Siun Hanrahan	hanrahans@ncad.ie		087 608 3006
Students' Union President				
Student Experience Manager				

Appendix 3 Contact Details for NCAD Management Team

Contact details for NCAD Management Team:

Office		Email Address	Phone Number	Mobile Number

Appendix 4 Contact Details for Media Enquiries

Office		Email Address	Phone Number	Mobile Number
Director	Sarah Glennie	director@ncad.ie		

Appendix IV

Event Management