

SG.43		STUDENT SUICIDE RESPONSE POLICY	
APPROVED BY	ACADEMIC BOARD	Last reviewed	2022
REVIEW STAKEHOLDERS	▪ PRINCIPAL	Minor Edit	
	▪ ACADEMIC DEAN	Published	2022
		Review period	1 Year
		Next review	2023

RATIONALE

BTI is committed to taking all reasonable steps to maintain the wellbeing of students, and ensuring, as far as possible, that students have a positive experience that supports their educational achievement. This includes the provision of student support to promote students' mental, spiritual and physical health and well-being.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy applies to BTI, including but not limited to its Board and Committee members, employees, Staff, and students, who may be required to report and respond to students at risk of suicide.

This policy applies to situations where a student has expressed a desire or intent to engage in a suicidal act or exhibited Suicidal Behaviours.

This policy is designed to set out the reporting and responding procedures in the event that:

- a) a student self-reports their own suicide behaviour and/or the desire or intent to engage in a suicidal act; or
- b) b) a Staff member or a student report that a student has expressed a desire and/or intent to act on suicidal ideation or exhibits Suicidal Behaviour.

This policy also sets out how BTI will report and respond to concerns about Students' health, safety, or wellbeing and to ensure that BTI takes all reasonable steps to connect students quickly to culturally appropriate social, medical, and mental health services.

DEFINITIONS

At-Risk Student:	Any student for which BTI has reasonable grounds to believe that there is a serious issue relating to a student's health, safety, or wellbeing.
Code:	Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.
Code Administrator:	The independent person responsible for administering the Code for tertiary students, in accordance with the definition in section 238H of the Education Act 1989. This is currently New Zealand Qualifications Authority.
Crisis Team:	The Crisis Assessment Team at the Ministry of Health, which in Bay of Plenty is reached on Tauranga 0800 800 508 and Whakatāne 0800 774 545. These are reachable 24/7.
Staff:	Any employee, or contractor of BTI, or an employee of another organisation who is contracted to perform work on BTI's premises under BTI's control or direction.
Student:	Any person enrolled in a personal course of study at BTI including a secondee.
Suicidal Behaviour:	Any behaviour by which the identified student expresses an intention to, or attempts to, act on suicidal ideation, or engages in efforts to prepare to commit a suicidal act, or expresses a preoccupation with suicide.
Third Party:	Any person or entity that is not Staff or a Student at BTI.

GENERAL

- 1 This policy will identify and assist students at risk of suicide by requiring Staff to report any Suicidal Behaviour or desire or intention to engage in a suicidal act expressed or exhibited by a student.
- 2 This policy supports staff to manage students at risk of suicide by providing them with a standardised procedure for reporting and responding to At-Risk Students.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3 This policy requires all Staff to have serious regard to any student's expression of a desire or intent to engage in a suicidal act, or to any Suicidal Behavior exhibited by a student.
- 4 All Staff are required to notify the Programme/ Professional Leader by phone or in person if they:
 - a) Become personally aware of a Student expressing a desire or intent to engage in a suicidal act or demonstrating any form of Suicidal Behaviour; or
 - b) A Third-Party report that an identified Student is expressing a desire or intent to engage in a suicidal act or demonstrating any form of Suicidal Behavior.
- 5 All staff are responsible for ensuring that students are aware that if they have concerns about other students or themselves, they can either:
 - a) Report these concerns to an appropriate staff member working with the student (for example course educator or professional mentor); or
 - b) Report these concerns directly to the Programme/Professional Leader.
- 6 All Staff are responsible under this policy for ensuring that students are aware that any disclosures they make to staff about themselves or their peers are made in confidence, subject to reporting to the Programme/Professional Leader and Head of School, to provide the appropriate support.
- 7 Once notified, the Programme/Professional Leader will take the following steps:
 - a) Provide pastoral support by, in the first instance, directing the student to the Crisis Hotline.
 - b) Establish what, if any, support persons the At-Risk Student has available to them from their personal file. This may include family, whānau, counsellor or other mental health support; and
 - c) Ensure that the At-Risk Student has access to a counsellor or other independent support person.

RECORD OF INCIDENT

- 8 An incident report will be completed by the Programme/Professional Leader and will then be shared with the Head of School. This sensitive information will only be disclosed if necessary for the protection of student safety.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS AFTER A SUICIDE

- 9 Suicides can be very distressing. They may evoke strong reactions from others and may even place others at risk of suicide. In the event that a suicide does occur with the BTI community, BTI will follow the critical incident and emergencies procedures manual.

TRAINING

- 10 BTI will provide staff education and training from independent designated professionals to ensure its staff are able to identify At-Risk Students. Signs to look out for include:
 - a) Unexpected reduction of academic performance;
 - b) Ideas and themes of depression, death and suicide (e.g., in their essays);
 - c) Observable change in mood;
 - d) Grief about a significant loss;

- e) Withdrawal from relationships, and
 - f) High-risk behaviours, e.g., use of drugs or alcohol, risky driving.
- 11 BTI will also provide staff education and training around:
- a) BTI's obligations under the Code;
 - b) Understanding the welfare issues of diverse student groups and appropriate cultural competencies, which is an awareness of cultural diversity;
 - c) Identifying and timely reporting of incidents of racism, discrimination, and bullying;
 - d) Physical and sexual violence prevention and response, including how to support a culture of disclosure and reporting;
 - e) Privacy and safe handling of personal information;
 - f) Referral pathways (including to local service providers) and escalation procedures, outlined above at paragraph (7);
 - g) Identifying and timely reporting of incidents and concerning behaviours, in accordance with paragraph (7); and
 - h) Wellbeing and safety awareness and promotion topics, including:
 - i. safe health and mental health literacy and support;
 - ii. suicide and self-harm awareness;
 - iii. promoting drug and alcohol awareness; and
 - iv. promoting healthy lifestyles for Students.

POLICY AMENDMENTS

- 12 BTI is entitled to amend and vary this policy from time to time at BTI's sole discretion.
- 13 BTI is committed to undertaking regular reviews of this policy, and make any necessary amendments, within a reasonable timeframe of that review. During the review process, BTI will proactively work with Students and stakeholders, use their input, and relevant quantitative and qualitative data, such as complaints from students, to improve the policy. BTI will report on the data and input received.

QUESTIONS

- 14 If you have any questions about our student suicide prevention and response policy, or any other related matter, please feel free to contact your Programme/Professional Leader/Head of School.