



# INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE SERVICES



**Crisis situations –  
UH action plan**

**UNICA IRO meeting, Tallinn 2019**



# UNIVERSITY POLICY

- A crisis situation is handled by the unit involved.
- The chief of the unit shall be responsible for handling the crisis.
- The communications officer of the unit shall support the chief in crisis communication.
- The communications officer of the unit may contact the communication unit of the central administration for support if necessary.
- Should the crisis involve the university the central administration shall be responsible for handling the crisis.



# DEFINITIONS OF CRISIS SITUATIONS

## **Force Majeure Situations in a Foreign Country**

Stakeholders: Chief of Safety and Security, the authorities, Department for Rescue Services of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, partner universities, FSHS, CIMO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, university chaplains. The student registry has emergency contact details for the students who cannot be reached.

## **Social and Cultural Crises of In-coming and Out-going Students**

Stakeholders: the authorities, partner universities, FSHS, counselling psychologists, student organisations.



# PRINCIPLES IN COORDINATION

## **Leadership and decision-making:**

The action plan and division of tasks is decided by the supervisor. Each unit and person shall act according to their jurisdiction and task. The authorities and the leadership at the university hold primary responsibility over the actions taken.

## **Communication:**

The authorities and the leadership at the university hold primary responsibility over communication. Crisis communication should be open, fast, truthful and accurate.



# PRINCIPLES IN CONFIDENTIALITY

## **Professional secrecy:**

All information on any crisis shall always be confidential. Permission to convey information further shall not be asked from next of kin of the potential injured / victims. Any enquiries will be directed to a supervisor or as agreed. Any information shall only be discussed within the team, and even then the privacy of the student shall be respected. If necessary, a de-briefing will be organized for staff members.



# PRINCIPLES IN EXCHANGES

## Decision on Continuing or Interrupting the Exchange Period:

Interrupting an exchange period is an understandable decision in a crisis situation. Support is necessary to ensure that a decision on whether to continue or interrupt an exchange period is not taken in a rush, panicked, or traumatised. A student should be informed that interrupting the exchange period is possible, but that the decision should be made in a few days or a week's time rather than straight away. A direct threat or an evacuation order from the authorities, e.g., are obvious exceptions to this.



# ACTION PLAN STEP 1

## Recognising and Categorising the Crisis, Assessing of the Situation, and Creating an Action Plan

1. What has happened?
2. Where, when, how, who?
3. The validity of the information shall be confirmed if necessary. More information is acquired if necessary. This may be done in cooperation by dividing the immediate tasks.
4. Who should be contacted in order to receive more information?
5. Telephone the Chief of Safety and Security à Assessing the situation and creating an action plan accordingly



# STEP 2

## Communication, Action Plan and Division of Tasks

- (Deputy) Rector, Chief of Administration, Chief of Communications,
- Next of kin / students affected in Finland or abroad (degree and exchange students)
- Heads of Academic Affairs, Heads of faculties
- Finnish Student Health Service, university chaplains
- Fellow students – support if necessary (degree and exchange student)





# STEP 3

## Acting According to the Action Plan and Following up on the Plan

- Confirm the situation of the student/(s) (degree and exchange students)
- Necessary actions: support, information, and assistance according to wishes and needs of the student in question
- Making the claim for recovery / student financial aid as reasonable as possible due to the circumstances



# EXTRA ACTIONS

- **Instructions for (in-coming) local students**

<https://guide.student.helsinki.fi/en/health-care-and-well-being>

<https://guide.student.helsinki.fi/en/article/instructions-emergency-situations>

- **Instructions for out-going students**

*Health and safety during exchange and Instructions of the Ministry for foreign affairs of Finland*

<https://guide.student.helsinki.fi/en/article/do-you-want-study-abroad>

- Guidelines, check-lists of actions, training of officers dealing with emergency situations, tools in place (Mobility online, Phone system, Email service desk, Chat)
- Cooperation with authorities



# EMAIL: OUTGOING

Headline: Information for exchange/traineeship participants in Great Britain

Dear student,

according to our data system you are on exchange or traineeship in Great Britain. Because of the attack in London, we kindly remind you that if you have any questions whatsoever or need help, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are here for you. (studentexchange@helsinki.fi; tel. +358 2941 22401)

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Finland has asked Finnish nationals in London to be in contact with their relatives and to comply with the instructions issued by local authorities and to fill in a notification of travel if they have not already done so, for more information, please see <http://matkustusilmoitus.fi/>.

We kindly ask you to please follow the information given by local authorities and either the Finnish Embassy (e.g. <http://www.finemb.org.uk>) or your own country's embassy.

On behalf of the International Exchange Services team,

kind regards, Minna Koutaniemi



# EMAIL: INCOMING

Headline: Information for exchange students from British universities at UH

Dear students,

according to our data system you are currently on exchange at UH. Because of the attack in London we are sending you this message to remind you that you can contact us, should you need any help. You can either reply directly to this message or call us +358 2941 22401. We are here for you.

General information on services available for help and support is available in the students' guide to well-being, health and safety on Flamma:

<https://flamma.helsinki.fi/en/HY329988>.

Information from the British authorities is available on the website of the British embassy in Finland <https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-embassy-helsinki>.

On behalf of the International Exchange Services team, Minna Koutaniemi

