



Emergency Plan

May 2026

History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authored by	Date
1.0		P Smith	
1.1	Update to contacts	P Smith	August 2009
1.2	Update Distribution List, Contact List, Sections 1.6, 2.1, Appendix 1	P Smith	January 2012
1.3	Update Distribution List, Contact List, minor amendments throughout	P Smith	January 2015
1.4	Update Contact List and Management Team	P Smith	November 2017
2.0	Review document	K Fitzgerald	April 2023
2.1	Distribution List updated. Copies will be in electronic format. Hard copies to be held at the reception area at each of the 4 campus sites. Edinburgh Reception deleted	K Fitzgerald	April 2023
3.2	Contact List updated. Contact numbers removed, these will now be issued and reviewed by the Executive Office as a confidential service directory. Deletion of contact numbers	K Fitzgerald	October 2024
4.0	Update following Threat Level increase to Severe – May 2026. All job titles updated. Document complete audit. All job titles updated. Contact List updated. 1.7 added – National Threat Level added and explained	K Fitzgerald	July 2026

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Distribution List

This document and all amendments are distributed, in electronic format as follows:

Borders College

Principal and Chief Executive
Vice Principal – Finance and Corporate Services
Vice Principal (Interim) – Student Experience
Assistant Principal (Interim) – Curriculum and Sustainability
Health Safety & Environmental Manager
Estate Manager
Director of IT and Digital
Director of People Services
Director of Student Support Services
Director of MIS and Quality
Principal's Office
Reception Desk (Scottish Borders Campus)
Reception Desk (Centre for Land-based Studies)
Tweedbank Engineering Centre
Helpdesk

Police Scotland – J Division

Fire and Rescue Service

NHS Borders (Chief Executive)

Scottish Ambulance Service

Scottish Borders Council – Emergency Planning Unit

Emergency Planning College – Library, Easingwold

Hard copies of the plan will be located at each Campus Reception, to include
Tweedbank, Galashiels and Newtown St Boswells

In addition, this Plan will be available on the College Staff Portal in the Document Hub.

Contact List

This contact list must only be used in the context of responding to emergency situations.

Note that, due to the personal nature of the information contained in it, all contact telephone numbers will be distributed separately via a service directory issued the Executive Office.

Name	Designation
Pete Smith	Principal and CEO
Lynn Murray	Vice Principal – Finance and Corporate Services
David Lowe	Interim Vice Principal – Student Experience
Greg Steel	Interim – Assistant Principal Curriculum and Sustainability
Mark Easson	Interim Assistant Principal Delivery & Sustainability
Debbie Kerr	Director of People Services
Conor Bradley	Director of IT and Digital
Amy Brydon	Director of Student Support Services
Joanne George	Director of MIS & Quality
College Reception areas	Galashiels, Newtown St Boswells & Tweedbank

1. Background

1.1 Introduction

When an emergency occurs, those responsible for managing the response will inevitably face a range of competing demands and pressures. These pressures will vary depending upon the nature of the incident, the speed of onset, and numerous other influencing factors. In a college environment, additional pressures may arise due to the potential vulnerability of those involved, including young people and vulnerable adults.

Information available during the initial stages of an emergency may often be incomplete, unclear, or contradictory. Perceptions of events may differ between those reporting the incident, different levels of management, and responding agencies. A number of external agencies may also become involved, each with specific responsibilities and capabilities requiring effective leadership, coordination, and communication.

This document is therefore not intended to operate as a standalone set of procedures, but as a framework to support and guide the College response in partnership with Emergency Services and other agencies who may have significant roles alongside the Borders College Incident Management Team.

1.2 Aim

This document provides a framework for the effective management and coordination of Borders College's response to a major emergency incident.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this document are as follows:

- Ensure all staff are aware of the contents of this document to enhance the effectiveness of the emergency response;
- Outline the internal and external resources that may be activated to assist in the management of an emergency;
- Allocate responsibilities to designated members of staff upon activation of these procedures;
- Provide contact details for those who may require involvement in the response; and
- Ensure that the response to any incident is proportionate to the scale, duration, and impact of the emergency.

1.4 Direction

It is essential from the outset of any emergency that the Borders College Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is clear regarding its role and responsibilities. This is achieved by agreeing a clear and singular AIM at the earliest possible stage.

This AIM must be communicated immediately to all staff and relevant external agencies involved in the response. Establishing a clear direction ensures coherent actions and consistent priorities are maintained across the College and partner organisations.

This approach will help prevent duplication of effort, conflicts of interest, and assumptions that may result in critical tasks being neglected or misdirected.

1.5 Scope

It is impossible to predict every type of emergency that may occur. Each incident will be unique and specific to the College environment. Whilst previous experience may provide guidance, every emergency must be managed according to the scale, duration, and impact of the incident.

All reasonable efforts must therefore be made to ensure staff are able to gather sufficient information to support effective assessment, decision-making, and incident management.

Examples of emergencies may include:

In College

- Acts of violence resulting in injury or death, including hostage situations or serious threats of violence;
- Fire or explosion; or
- Serious damage to college property.

Outside College

- Death of a student or member of staff;
- Transport accidents involving students or staff;
- Widespread or community-related incidents impacting the College;
- Death or injury during college journeys or excursions; or
- Civil disturbances and acts of terrorism.

This document should not be viewed as a standalone emergency plan. It forms part of the wider Borders College Emergency and Business Continuity framework, including:

- Business Continuity Plan (BCP);
- ISLT Disaster Recovery Plan;
- Property Displacement Plan;
- Staffing Plan; and
- Guidance produced by Scottish Borders Council Emergency Planning Unit, the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat, and the Emergency Services where appropriate.

1.6 College Incident Management Team

To ensure an appropriate and coordinated response to any emergency, Borders College will establish an Incident Management Team (IMT).

The IMT will normally consist of members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), together with other College staff as appropriate to the nature and scale of the incident.

1.7 National Threat Level

The College recognises the UK Government's **National Terrorism Threat Level**, which indicates the likelihood of a terrorist attack occurring in the UK. The threat level is set nationally by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) and is reviewed regularly in response to available intelligence.

The current threat level should be considered when planning and reviewing the College's security, emergency preparedness and protective security arrangements. The threat level may change at short notice, and the College will respond proportionately to any change in risk.

All staff have a responsibility to remain vigilant; report concerns promptly and follow College security and emergency procedures. The College will communicate any significant changes to the threat level or associated security arrangements where appropriate.

Threat levels: Low, Moderate, Substantial, Severe and Critical.

Current National Terrorism Threat Level

The current UK national terrorism threat level is **SEVERE**, meaning that an attack is **highly likely**. The level applies across the UK and is set and regularly reviewed by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC), based on intelligence, terrorist capability and the likelihood of an attack.

For the College, **SEVERE does not mean that an attack is expected at the College**. It means that appropriate vigilance and proportionate protective security measures should be maintained. Staff should remain alert, report suspicious behaviour or concerns promptly, follow College security and emergency procedures, and comply with any additional measures introduced by the College.

The five national threat levels are:

- **LOW** – an attack is highly unlikely
- **MODERATE** – an attack is possible, but not likely
- **SUBSTANTIAL** – an attack is likely
- **SEVERE** – an attack is highly likely
- **CRITICAL** – an attack is highly likely in the near future.

2 During an Emergency

2.1 Action Points – Immediate Response

The following actions should be considered immediately following an incident by those staff members closest to the situation. Some responsibilities may transfer to the Senior Leadership Team as the response develops. This list is not exhaustive.

- Open an incident log immediately and assess the availability of communication links. The log should record dates, times, actions taken, decisions made, and personnel involved. A sample log sheet is included at Appendix 2.
- Collect, collate, and interpret all available information, ensuring details are accurately recorded within the incident log.
- Assess the scale, duration, and impact of the incident in consultation with the Emergency Services where appropriate.
- Assess the requirement for support from the College Senior Leadership Team.
- Initiate briefings for college staff involved in the response.
- Brief the Senior Leadership Team regarding on-site support requirements.
- Brief the Regional Board where appropriate.
- Consider how the College can continue to operate, with reference to the Business Continuity Plan (BCP).
- Consider potential media involvement and identify an authorised spokesperson.
- Establish the identities of individuals directly involved in the incident.
- Ensure no information is released to the media without agreement from Police Scotland where applicable.
- Ensure parents, carers, or next of kin are informed prior to any media release.
- Consider additional support for staff managing incoming calls and enquiries.
- Recognise and manage any religious, political, or cultural sensitivities associated with the incident.

2.2 Action Points – Once the College Incident Management Team is Established

The following actions should be considered once the College IMT has been activated. This list is not exhaustive.

- Continue maintaining the incident log.
- Determine whether incident coordination should remain within college premises or relocate elsewhere in accordance with the BCP.
- Ensure on-site staff are issued with visible identification.
- Ensure unauthorised persons are removed from affected areas where necessary.
- Manage and record visitors attending the site.
- Establish facilities and support arrangements for parents, carers, and next of kin.
- Maintain effective communication with staff, students, parents, carers, the Board of Management, councillors, media representatives, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), and other relevant parties.
- Consider the need for additional administrative support.
- Assess the requirement for specialist professional services including Legal, ICT, People Services, Public Relations, insurance and financial support.
- Consider the establishment of a dedicated Help Line where appropriate.
- Assess the need for additional telephone lines and communication facilities.
- Monitor staff wellbeing and stress levels and ensure appropriate rest periods are provided.
- Deliver regular staff briefings, with a minimum recommendation of two briefings per day.
- Ensure students are appropriately informed through tutors or small group briefings where necessary.
- Remind staff and students of potential media approaches and provide clear guidance regarding authorised communications.
- Ensure Next of Kin contact details are readily available to relevant staff.

2.3 Involvement of Parents, Carers, and Next of Kin

The following actions should be considered when parents, carers, or next of kin require involvement during or following an incident.

- Ensure contact lists are accurate, up to date, and available to relevant staff.
- Provide briefings that are clear, accurate, and sensitive.
- Remember that Police Scotland is responsible for notifying next of kin in cases involving serious injury or death.
- Anticipate that parents or carers may arrive quickly seeking information and support.
- Ensure suitable accommodation and liaison staff are made available promptly.
- Where incidents occur away from college premises, establish effective communication with the incident location.
- Consider arrangements for transporting students home where appropriate.
- Maintain regular communication with parents, carers, and next of kin through agreed communication channels.

2.4 Involvement of Staff

The following actions and considerations should be remembered when supporting staff during and after an emergency incident.

- Borders College has a duty of care to both students and staff.
- Monitor staff welfare, including access to food, refreshments, and regular rest breaks.
- Maintain regular briefing arrangements and ensure staff fully understand updates and instructions.
- Provide positive leadership, reassurance, and openness to suggestions throughout the incident response.

3 Following the Initial Emergency

3.1 Actions – Aide-Memoire

The following list is intended as an aide-memoire for the Incident Management Team (IMT) following the initial incident. This list is not exhaustive.

- Continue to gather, record, and assess all available information. The logging and information management process must remain ongoing throughout the incident.
- Use established contact lists to notify and involve those individuals and agencies who may be required to support the response.
- Ensure staff are briefed clearly and concisely regarding required actions, responsibilities, and expected timescales. Staff should be empowered to determine the most appropriate method of completing their assigned tasks.
- Maintain effective information flow and communication channels at all times. This is critical to the successful management of the incident.
- Consider longer-term wellbeing and support arrangements for students and staff who may be identified as vulnerable or high risk.
- Consider the longer-term implications of the incident, including funerals, memorials, anniversaries, cultural or religious considerations, and ongoing support arrangements for students and staff.
- Recognise that those staff most affected by the incident are often the individuals upon whom the greatest operational demands are placed. Consider the requirement for replacement staff or additional support at an early stage.
- Carefully consider when it is appropriate to formally close the incident log. In some cases, incident management activity may continue for an extended period following the initial emergency.
- Consider actions required following closure of the incident, including debriefs, documentation, welfare support, memorials, and lessons learned.

4 Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery

4.1 Introduction

Following an emergency incident, normal College operations may be significantly disrupted due to the loss or reduced availability of key personnel, business systems, facilities, or accommodation.

It is essential that appropriate measures are implemented to minimise disruption and support the continuation and recovery of critical College functions as quickly and safely as possible.

Borders College maintains a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan (BCP) detailing the arrangements in place should key College services become disrupted. The following sections provide a brief overview of these arrangements.

4.2 Personnel

Emergency contact details for senior and key personnel are contained within this document.

In addition, it may be necessary to call upon wider staff resources during or following an incident. The People Services Department maintains contact details for all staff through the People Services database and will support communication and staffing arrangements where required.

4.3 Business Systems

Borders College maintains secure off-site backup data storage arrangements to ensure that critical information and systems can be restored should on-site data become unavailable, inaccessible, or compromised.

IT & Digital staff are responsible for the restoration and recovery of data and systems from backup facilities in accordance with established recovery procedures.

4.4 Facilities and Accommodation

The Facilities Team maintains links with partner organisations and external providers in order to identify and secure alternative accommodation should College premises become unavailable.

Details of alternative accommodation arrangements and previously agreed reciprocal agreements are contained within the Business Continuity Plan (BCP).

5 Stand Down

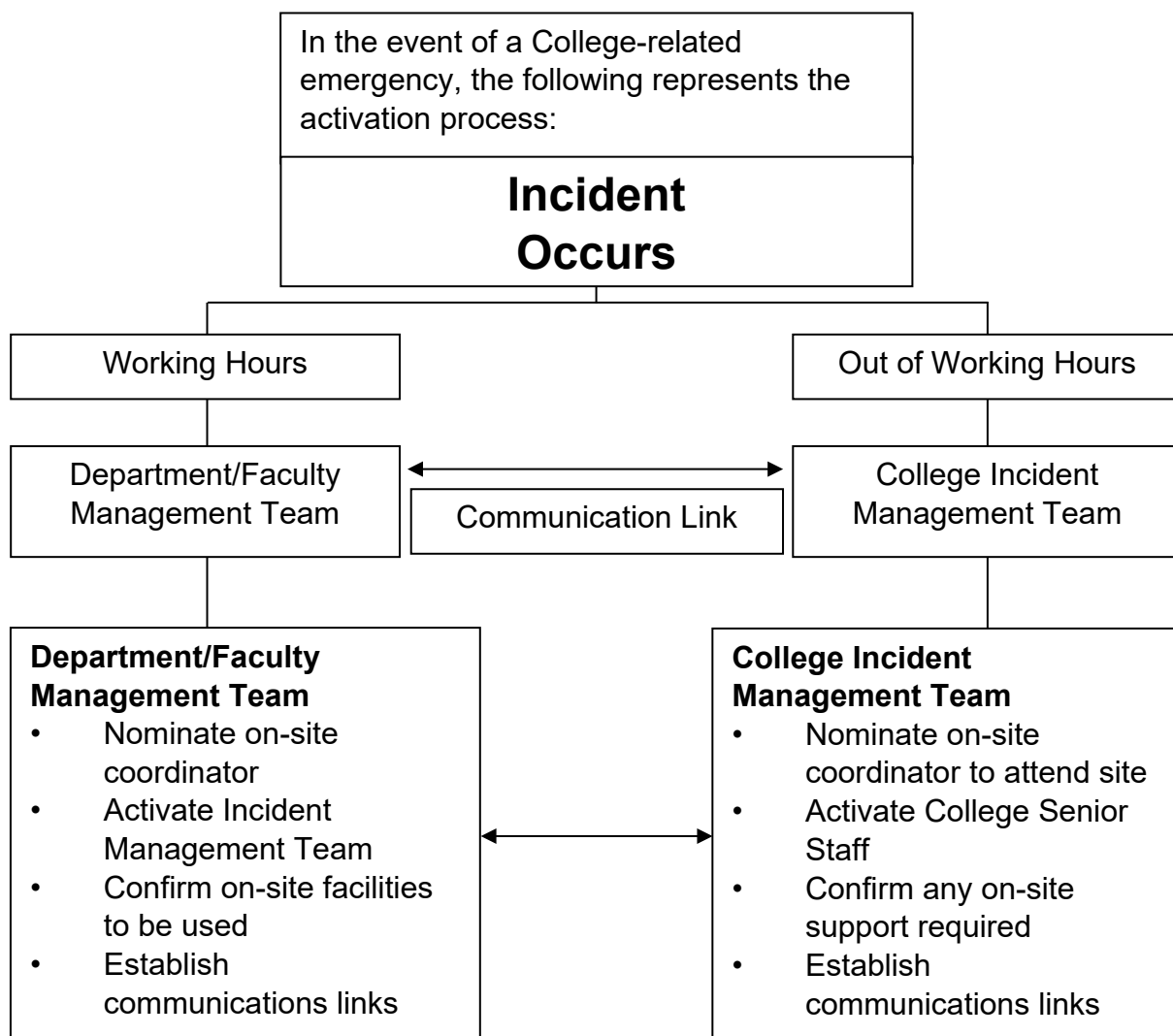
- 5.1** At the point where the Incident Management Team agrees that the incident response can formally conclude and the incident log may be closed, a formal stand down should be declared.
- 5.2** All parties and agencies still involved in the response should be informed of the stand down and change of operational status.

Consideration should also be given to communicating this information to those individuals or groups affected by the incident where appropriate.

- 5.3** Consideration should be given to formally documenting the incident, the response undertaken, and any lessons identified throughout the management process.

Post-incident reviews and debriefs can provide valuable learning opportunities for Borders College and partner organisations and contribute towards the continuous improvement of emergency preparedness and response arrangements.

Emergency Response Flowchart



Sample Log Sheet

Reference	Date	Time	Details of Incident/Actions Taken/Decisions Made	Name of person making entry

Status: Awaiting approval by HS&S
Policy Dated: May 2026
Author: Health, Safety & Environmental Manager Review
Date: May 2028
Equality Impact Assessed: Yes