Contingency and Adverse Effects Policy

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Status: Approved by AIC Senior Management Committee

Responsible for implementation: AIC Academic Team

Responsible for review: Director - Academics and Quality Assurance

Current version review date: August 2025

Version Control

History of amendments	Version/ pages/ section affected	Summary of changes
Last amended September 2022	All sections	Initial comprehensive policy
Updated August 2025	All sections	Major revision including digital learning protocols, communication frameworks, mental health provisions, and cybersecurity measures

The individuals or group responsible for this document have the authority to make changes to it whenever necessary. In the event of any amendments, all relevant personnel will be duly notified.

The document can be found on the AIC website at the following link:
https://www.aicedu.lk/academic-progression.php

Purpose

This policy has been designed to ensure a consistent, effective, and comprehensive response to major disruptions that may affect course delivery, assessment systems, and student welfare across the institution. The policy addresses both traditional physical disruptions and modern digital challenges, encompassing public health emergencies such as pandemics and disease outbreaks, natural disasters including floods, earthquakes, and severe weather events, infrastructure failures ranging from power outages to internet disruptions and building damage, cybersecurity incidents and data breaches, civil unrest or security threats, travel restrictions and transportation disruptions, and significant staffing emergencies that could impact academic operations.

The implementation of this policy will be guided by recommendations and requirements from official agencies including police, health authorities, emergency services, and relevant regulatory bodies, ensuring that all actions taken are evidence-based and appropriate to the specific circumstances being faced. All response measures prioritize student welfare and safety while simultaneously maintaining academic integrity and qualification standards, recognizing that these objectives are complementary rather than competing priorities. AIC demonstrates its commitment to maintaining high standards in preventing and resolving adverse effects through appropriate resource allocation, evidence-based contingency planning, and regular policy review and refinement. This policy undergoes mandatory comprehensive review every two years, with additional emergency reviews conducted as circumstances require to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

Aims and Principles

The fundamental principles that guide all contingency responses have been carefully prioritized to ensure appropriate decision-making during crisis situations. Student and staff safety represents the paramount concern, encompassing both physical and mental wellbeing of all community members, as no academic objective can justify compromising the safety and security of individuals within the AIC community. Academic continuity follows as the second priority, focusing on maintaining course delivery and progression pathways to minimize disruption to students' educational journeys and career aspirations. Assessment integrity constitutes the third principle, emphasizing the preservation of fair and valid assessment processes that maintain the value and recognition of AIC qualifications in the marketplace.

Communication transparency represents the fourth guiding principle, requiring the provision of timely, clear, and accessible information to all stakeholders, recognizing that uncertainty and lack of information can often cause more distress than the disruption itself. Regulatory compliance forms the fifth principle, ensuring that all responses meet legal and accreditation requirements while maintaining the institution's standing with professional bodies and regulatory authorities. Finally, equitable access serves as the sixth principle, guaranteeing that all students can continue their studies regardless of their personal circumstances, technological capabilities, or financial situations, thereby upholding AIC's commitment to inclusive education.

Contingency Response Framework

The institution operates a three-tiered response framework that provides appropriate and proportionate responses to disruptions of varying severity and duration. Level 1 responses address minor disruptions lasting between one and three days, typically triggered by brief power outages, minor weather events, or short-term staffing issues that can be resolved through immediate operational adjustments. During Level 1 responses, affected classes are rescheduled within the same week whenever possible, alternative teaching spaces or online platforms are utilized as needed, substitute instructors are deployed from the qualified staff pool, and changes are communicated rapidly via multiple channels including SMS, email, and the learning management system to ensure all affected parties receive timely notification.

Level 2 responses address moderate disruptions lasting between four and fourteen days, typically triggered by extended infrastructure failures, localized emergencies, or significant staff absences that require more substantial operational modifications. During Level 2 responses, hybrid learning protocols are activated to maintain educational continuity, alternative assessment methods are implemented to accommodate changed circumstances, student support helplines are established to provide guidance and assistance, coordination with partner institutions enables resource sharing and mutual support, and daily communication updates are provided to all stakeholders to maintain transparency and confidence.

Level 3 responses address major disruptions lasting fifteen days or longer, typically triggered by pandemics, natural disasters, complete facility closures, or cyber attacks that fundamentally disrupt normal operations. During Level 3 responses, comprehensive emergency protocols are fully activated, the Crisis Management Team assumes operational control, complete digital learning infrastructure is deployed to maintain educational delivery, alternative examination and assessment procedures are implemented to preserve academic standards, enhanced student welfare support is provided to address the additional challenges faced during extended disruptions, and coordination with regulatory bodies ensures modified requirements are implemented appropriately while maintaining qualification integrity.

Digital Learning and Technology Protocols

The institution maintains comprehensive digital learning infrastructure designed to ensure educational continuity during various types of disruptions. The primary platform consists of a fully-featured Learning Management System containing complete course content, interactive materials, and assessment tools, supported by a backup platform utilizing alternative video conferencing and content delivery systems to ensure redundancy and reliability. Technical support operates on a 24/7 basis, providing helpdesk services for both students and staff to address technical difficulties and maintain engagement with digital learning resources. Equipment loan programs provide laptops, tablets, and internet connectivity support for students who lack adequate technology access, ensuring that financial or technological barriers do not prevent continued participation in education.

Digital assessment procedures have been developed to maintain academic integrity while accommodating remote learning environments. Online examinations utilize secure browser technology combined with multiple authentication methods to prevent academic misconduct while ensuring accessibility for legitimate users. Alternative assessment approaches including portfolio-based evaluation, project-based assessment, and continuous assessment options provide flexibility while maintaining rigorous academic standards. Academic integrity measures include enhanced plagiarism detection systems and remote proctoring capabilities when appropriate and consensual, balanced with respect for student privacy and dignity. Accessibility provisions ensure that screen readers, extended time allowances, and alternative formats remain available to students with disabilities, maintaining inclusive educational practices regardless of delivery method.

Data protection and cybersecurity measures become particularly critical during disruptions when normal security protocols may be challenged. Real-time synchronization of critical academic records ensures that student progress and achievements are preserved even during infrastructure failures. Enhanced cybersecurity protocols provide additional monitoring and protection during disruptions when systems may face increased threats or unusual usage patterns. Privacy compliance with GDPR and local data protection laws remains paramount even during emergency situations, ensuring that expedient responses do not compromise legal obligations or student rights. Incident response procedures enable rapid containment and recovery from security breaches, minimizing potential damage to systems and data while maintaining operational capability.

Communication and Information Management

Effective communication during disruptions requires sophisticated coordination across multiple channels and stakeholder groups. Internal communications begin with an immediate notification system for senior management and the Crisis Management Team, ensuring rapid decision-making and resource deployment. Daily briefings via secure channels keep all staff informed of developments and their roles in the response, while secure backup and access procedures maintain the integrity and availability of academic records throughout the disruption period.

External communications employ a multi-channel approach recognizing that different stakeholders have varying communication preferences and technological capabilities. Student notifications utilize email, SMS, app notifications, and website updates to ensure comprehensive reach and redundancy in case individual channels fail. Regular progress and safety communications are provided to parents and guardians, recognizing their concern for student welfare and their role in supporting student success. Timely reporting to regulatory bodies ensures compliance with accreditation standards and maintains institutional standing, while designated spokesperson protocols and approved messaging strategies manage media relations to protect institutional reputation and provide accurate information to the broader community.

Communication accessibility represents a fundamental commitment to inclusive practice during crisis situations. Language support provides translations in Sinhala, Tamil, and English to ensure that linguistic diversity does not create barriers to critical information access. Disability accommodations include screen reader compatible formats, large print options, and alternative communication methods to ensure that students with disabilities receive equal access to information and support. Multiple communication channels accommodate varying technology capabilities, recognizing that not all community members have access to the same technological resources or digital literacy levels.

Student Welfare and Support Services

Academic support services are enhanced during disruptions to address the additional challenges students face when normal learning environments are altered. Learning support programs provide additional tutoring and remedial assistance to help students maintain academic progress despite changed circumstances. Assignment extension policies offer flexible deadlines with appropriate documentation requirements, balancing academic standards with recognition of genuine difficulties. Progression guidance provides modified academic pathways when necessary, ensuring that students can continue toward their educational goals even when standard progression routes are unavailable. Career services maintain internship and employment support, recognizing that career preparation remains crucial even during institutional disruptions.

Mental health and wellbeing support becomes particularly important during disruptions when students may face additional stressors and isolation. Counseling services provide both remote and in-person psychological support, adapting delivery methods to maintain accessibility while ensuring

professional standards. Peer support programs including student buddy systems and support groups help maintain social connections and mutual assistance when normal campus community interactions are disrupted. Financial assistance programs provide emergency funding for students facing hardship, recognizing that disruptions often create or exacerbate financial difficulties. Health services coordinate with medical professionals and health authorities to ensure that student health needs continue to be met even when normal healthcare delivery is modified.

Special circumstances provisions recognize that certain student populations may face particular challenges during disruptions. International students receive immigration support and accommodation assistance to address visa, housing, and travel complications that may arise during extended disruptions. Students with disabilities receive enhanced accessibility measures and personalized support to ensure that their educational experience remains equitable despite changed delivery methods. Financial hardship provisions include flexible payment plans and emergency funding to prevent economic difficulties from ending educational journeys. Family emergency accommodations provide compassionate leave and alternative arrangements for students facing personal crises during institutional disruptions.

Assessment and Examination Contingencies

Modified assessment methods ensure that learning outcomes can be demonstrated and evaluated even when traditional examination formats are unavailable. Continuous assessment approaches increase the weighting of coursework and projects, providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills while reducing dependence on single high-stakes examinations. Open book examination formats employ modified question designs that ensure learning outcome achievement while acknowledging that information access may differ from traditional closed-book environments. Oral examinations conducted via video conference provide viva voce assessment opportunities that maintain personal interaction between examiners and students while accommodating distance requirements. Portfolio submissions enable comprehensive evidence collection of learning and competency development over time, providing rich assessment data that may be more meaningful than traditional time-limited examinations.

Quality assurance measures maintain academic standards throughout the assessment modification process. External examination procedures accommodate remote external examiner participation through digital platforms while preserving the independence and expertise that external examiners provide. Moderation processes adapt to digital submission and review procedures, ensuring that assessment quality and consistency are maintained across different delivery methods. Appeals procedures preserve student rights to challenge assessment decisions through maintained appeals processes with remote hearing capabilities when necessary. Certification timelines are protected to ensure that graduation and certification schedules proceed as planned, preventing disruptions from affecting student career and progression opportunities.

Special consideration policies expand to address the unique circumstances created by institutional disruptions. Extenuating circumstances criteria are broadened to reflect the various impacts that

disruptions may have on student performance and wellbeing. Evidence requirements become more flexible to accommodate documentation challenges that may arise during unusual circumstances. Appeals processes are expedited to provide rapid resolution when students face time-sensitive progression or completion requirements. Reasonable adjustments are enhanced to provide additional accommodations for students whose specific circumstances create particular challenges during the disruption period.

Financial and Resource Management

Financial contingency planning ensures institutional stability and student protection during disruption periods. Emergency funding reserves are specifically allocated for crisis response, enabling rapid deployment of resources without compromising ongoing operations or long-term institutional sustainability. Fee adjustment policies provide partial refunds or credits when services are significantly modified, maintaining fairness while recognizing institutional costs that continue during disruptions. Payment flexibility programs offer extended payment plans and hardship provisions to accommodate students whose financial circumstances are affected by the disruption. Comprehensive insurance coverage addresses various disruption scenarios, providing financial protection and enabling rapid recovery from material losses.

Resource allocation strategies ensure that critical functions continue while adapting to changed circumstances. Technology resource management includes emergency procurement procedures for digital infrastructure, enabling rapid scaling of online learning capabilities when needed. Alternative venue agreements with partner institutions and external facilities provide backup options when primary facilities are unavailable. Staff deployment policies enable flexible working arrangements and role assignments to maintain essential services while accommodating staff circumstances and safety requirements. Supply chain diversification maintains relationships with multiple suppliers for critical materials and services, reducing dependence on single sources that may be affected by disruptions.

Qualification Withdrawal and Programme Discontinuation

Advance planning measures protect student interests when qualifications or programmes must be withdrawn. Early warning systems provide a minimum of twelve months' notice for planned withdrawals, enabling students to make informed decisions about their educational pathways. Student protection measures ensure completion opportunities for all enrolled students, preventing situations where students are left without viable options for achieving their intended qualifications. Alternative pathway identification includes credit transfer arrangements and progression route mapping to help students transition to suitable replacement programmes. Partner coordination establishes clear agreements with external validation bodies regarding responsibilities and procedures during withdrawal situations.

Teach-out provisions provide comprehensive protection for students affected by programme discontinuation. Sufficient duration policies ensure that all enrolled students have adequate time to

complete their studies without rushed timelines that could compromise educational quality. Cost protection maintains the original fee structure during the teach-out period, preventing students from facing unexpected financial burdens due to circumstances beyond their control. Quality standards remain fully maintained throughout the teach-out process, ensuring that students receive the same high-quality education they expected when they enrolled. Resource commitment guarantees adequate staffing and facilities until all affected students complete their programmes, maintaining institutional obligations even during financially challenging periods.

Partnership termination procedures provide additional protection when agreements with partner entities must be ended. Student completion provisions ensure full teach-out arrangements for all registered students at the original cost structure, preventing students from bearing financial consequences of institutional decisions. Enrollment freeze policies implement immediate cessation of new student registrations upon termination notice, preventing the creation of additional obligations that could compromise existing student protection. Exclusive arrangement requirements prevent collaboration with other partners during the teach-out period, ensuring that institutional attention and resources remain focused on completing obligations to existing students. Intellectual property provisions require immediate cessation of trademark and brand usage upon termination, while transition support assists with credit transfer to alternative institutions where appropriate and desired by students.

Recovery and Business Continuity

Short-term recovery processes spanning the initial thirty days after a disruption focus on immediate stabilization and essential service restoration. Essential services restoration prioritizes critical academic functions including student safety, communication systems, and basic educational delivery capabilities. Comprehensive damage assessment evaluates both physical and operational impacts to inform recovery planning and resource allocation decisions. Temporary solutions implement emergency measures to maintain basic operations while permanent repairs and improvements are planned and executed. Stakeholder communication provides regular updates on recovery progress, maintaining confidence and managing expectations during the restoration period.

Medium-term recovery spanning one to six months addresses systematic restoration and normalization of operations. Infrastructure rebuilding follows systematic restoration procedures for facilities and technological systems, incorporating improvements and lessons learned from the disruption experience. Service normalization implements gradual return to standard operating procedures while maintaining flexibility to accommodate ongoing challenges or changed circumstances. Comprehensive lessons learned reviews examine all aspects of the disruption response to identify successes, failures, and improvement opportunities. Stakeholder relationship repair focuses on rebuilding confidence and trust among students, staff, partners, and regulatory bodies through transparent communication and demonstrated competence.

Long-term recovery extending beyond six months integrates experience and learning into institutional development and strategic planning. Strategic planning incorporates lessons learned

into institutional planning processes, ensuring that knowledge gained from disruption experience informs future decision-making and risk management. Policy updates revise institutional policies based on practical experience and identified improvement opportunities, creating more robust and effective frameworks for future challenges. Investment planning directs infrastructure improvements and capability development to prevent or minimize future disruptions, building institutional resilience and preparedness. Community engagement strengthens relationships with local and academic communities, building networks of mutual support and cooperation that enhance collective resilience.

Training and Preparedness

Staff training programs ensure institutional readiness through comprehensive preparation and regular practice. Annual emergency drills provide regular practice of emergency procedures, building familiarity and confidence among staff members who may need to implement contingency measures. Technology competency training ensures that all staff have necessary digital literacy and platform usage skills to maintain educational delivery during disruptions. Crisis communication and student support training develops skills in managing difficult conversations, providing emotional support, and maintaining professional effectiveness under pressure. Mental health awareness training enables recognition of and appropriate response to student distress, ensuring that welfare concerns are identified and addressed promptly.

Student preparedness programs build awareness and capability among the student body. Orientation programs include emergency procedure awareness to ensure that students understand their roles and resources during disruptions. Technology training provides instruction in digital platform usage and basic troubleshooting to maximize student ability to engage with alternative delivery methods. Academic skills development focuses on self-directed learning and time management capabilities that become particularly important when normal support structures are modified. Support service awareness ensures that students know what resources are available and how to access them, reducing barriers to help-seeking during difficult periods.

Monitoring and Review

Regular review processes ensure continuous improvement and adaptation of contingency capabilities. Annual assessments conduct comprehensive policy effectiveness reviews, examining all aspects of contingency preparedness and response capability. Incident analysis provides post-disruption evaluation and improvement identification, capturing lessons learned while experience remains fresh and actionable. Stakeholder feedback collection gathers input from students, staff, and partners on policy effectiveness and suggested improvements, ensuring that diverse perspectives inform policy development. External benchmarking compares institutional practices with sector best practices, identifying innovation opportunities and ensuring continued alignment with professional standards.

Performance measurement systems track institutional effectiveness in maintaining educational quality and community welfare during disruptions. Academic continuity metrics measure the percentage of planned learning outcomes achieved during disruption periods, providing objective assessment of educational effectiveness. Student satisfaction surveys and feedback sessions provide subjective assessment of student experience and support quality. Staff preparedness indicators track training completion rates and competency assessments to ensure workforce readiness. Recovery time measurement evaluates the speed of return to normal operations, informing efficiency improvements and resource allocation decisions.

Continuous improvement processes ensure that contingency capabilities evolve with changing circumstances and emerging challenges. Policy updates implement regular refinement based on emerging threats, technological developments, and lessons learned from experience. Technology advancement integration incorporates new technologies and platforms that enhance institutional resilience and capability. Partnership development strengthens relationships with support organizations, building networks that enhance collective response capability. Resource enhancement involves ongoing investment in resilience capabilities, ensuring that institutional preparedness remains current and effective.