



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

RULE FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Type of document:	Rule ¹
Date of Approval:	8 June 2021
Reg. no.:	FS 1.1-576-21
Approved by:	Vice-Chancellor
Validity:	1 July 2021 until further notice
Field:	Buildings, IT, environment and safety
Office in charge:	Building Office
Replaces document:	Rule for crisis management approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 11 September 2018 (FS 1.1-1630-18)

¹ This document has been translated from Swedish into English. If the English version differs from the original, the Swedish version takes precedence.



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1. Description

This policy document defines Umeå University's organisation and division of responsibility for crisis preparedness and crisis management based on the requirements of Ordinance (2015:1052) on Emergency Preparedness and the Measures to be taken by Designated Authorities in the Event of Heightened Alert.

2. Background

When a crisis occurs, good preparedness and organisation are required for quick and informed decisions and to manage the situation. *Ordinance (2015:1052)* requires government agencies to reduce vulnerability in society through their activities and develop adequate capacity to carry out their assignments during peacetime crisis situations and to initiate a higher level of preparedness. The ordinance also states that each government agency has a responsibility to provide employees with the training and exercises necessary to perform their assignments in the context of crisis situations and to implement a planned training and exercises programme to achieve this objective.

The international, collaboration, accessibility and student perspectives have been integrated into this rule. Due to the content and nature of the document, the sustainability perspective has not been integrated. The policy document is not regarded as having any consequences for gender equality at Umeå University.

3. Definitions

A *crisis* can arise suddenly through an accident or threat, for example, often unexpectedly and without warning. A crisis can be sudden, but it can also change over time and last a long period. When a crisis occurs, past experience is often insufficient to understanding the new situation.

Ordinance (2015:1052) defines *crisis preparedness* as the ability to prevent, withstand and manage crisis situations through training, exercises and other measures, and through the organisation and structures created before, during and after a crisis.

The University Security Team consists of the head of security and security officer in the University Administration. They are responsible for coordinating, supporting and developing university-wide security and safety initiatives to ensure physical safety, personal security, and disaster and emergency preparedness.

4. Organisation

4.1. General information

The University's crisis management programme is carried out in accordance with the University's line organisation, which is specified in the Rules of procedure for Umeå University and the Vice-Chancellor's decision-making and delegation procedure. The Vice-Chancellor is ultimately responsible for crisis management. Deans, the University Director, the Library Director, Heads of Department and other managers each are responsible for functions within their faculty, department, office or equivalent.

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A crisis situation is primarily dealt with by the affected faculty, department or office. Depending on the nature and scope of the event, the University Director can activate the university-wide Crisis Management Team. In the event of an extraordinary crisis, the Crisis Management Council (see Section 4.3.2) may also be activated.

The university-wide Crisis Management Team can be reached around the clock through the University emergency number: +46 90-786 97 00.

4.2. Responsibilities and roles

Crisis management at Umeå University is conducted at two levels: university-wide level and faculty, department or office level. Operative teams, administrative offices and external actors may be co-opted to the university-wide Crisis Management Team or serve as support in case of a crisis.

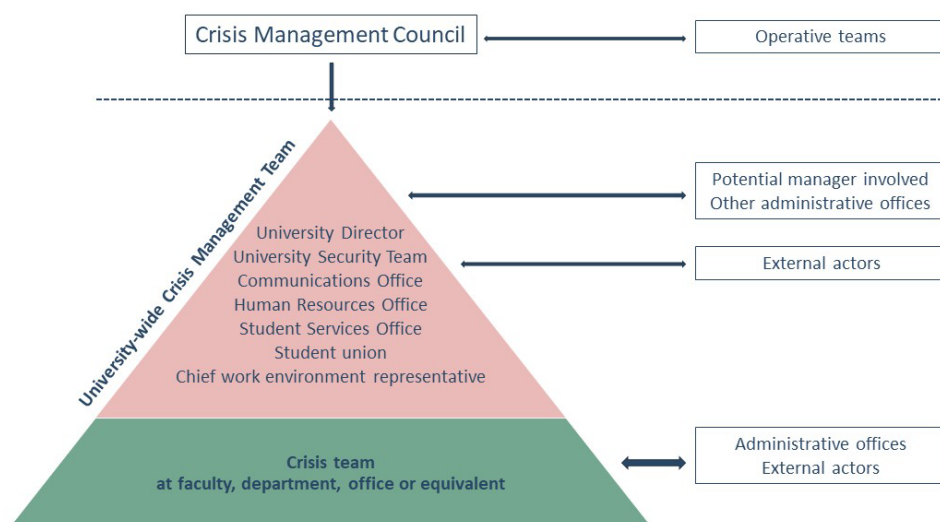


Figure 1: The crisis preparedness organisation at Umeå University. Operative teams, administrative offices and external actors may be co-opted or serve as support in case of a crisis.

4.3. University-wide level

The Crisis Management Team, Crisis Management Council and crisis support functions are advisory and preparatory bodies that support the Vice-Chancellor and the University Management in case of a crisis.

4.3.1 Crisis Management Team

The university-wide Crisis Management Team consists of:

- University Director, or an individual appointed by the University Director (chair)
- University Security Team (1)
- Student (1), jointly appointed by the student unions
- Communications Office (1)
- Human Resources Office (1)
- Student Services Office (1)
- Chief work environment representative (HAMO) (1).



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Depending on the crisis, functions from other administrative offices and any faculties, departments or equivalent may be co-opted to the Crisis Management Team. A substitute is appointed for each permanent member.

The Crisis Management Team is charged with leading and coordinating crisis management in case of serious accidents, fire, threats or other major disruptions to activities and operations. The Crisis Management Team is also charged with leading and coordinating crisis management when an affected faculty, department, office or equivalent is unable to deal with the crisis alone. Members of the Crisis Management Team have different responsibilities and roles to ensure that crisis response before, during and after a crisis is managed and communicated effectively and professionally. The Chair of the Crisis Management Team establishes the responsibilities and roles of the Crisis Management Team through a separate decision.

The Crisis Management Team schedules meetings at least four times a year to discuss potential risks or crises. The University Director convenes the meetings. The meetings of the Crisis Management Team are documented in the form of minutes that are available to members of the team on a joint file sharing platform.

4.3.2 Crisis Management Council

The Crisis Management Council may be convened in cases of crisis of extraordinary scope and duration. The Vice-Chancellor decides in consultation with the University Director when this occurs. The Crisis Management Team acts and reports to the Crisis Management Council if it is activated.

The Crisis Management Council is charged with leading and coordinating crisis management in cases of extraordinary crisis.

The Crisis Management Council consists of:

- Vice-Chancellor (chair)
- University Management Council in accordance with the composition specified in the Rules of procedure for Umeå University
- University Security Team (1)
- Communications Office (1)
- Human Resources Office (1).

4.3.3 Supporting functions in case of a crisis

In case of crises of extraordinary scope and duration, one or more operative teams may be established, with representatives from the administrative offices or other units. Such an operative team works on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor or University Director to support the Crisis Management Council or Crisis Management Team. Depending on the nature of the crisis, other teams may be linked to the crisis management organisation, including various operative teams, collaborative teams with union representatives, head health and safety representatives, etc. The University Director, after consultation with relevant heads of office, appoints members to one or more operative teams. The Vice-Chancellor or University Director may also give assignments to other parts of the organisation.

The University can also receive support from external actors in case of a crisis.



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4.4. Faculty, department or office level

Each faculty, department, office or equivalent has a designated crisis team. The head of department, office or equivalent manager leads the team, which is composed of individuals at the department, office or equivalent who are knowledgeable about students, human resources and communications. The team has basic and up-to-date knowledge of crisis management. It is vital that everyone at the department, office or equivalent is informed about who the members of the crisis team are, how communication takes place within the team and how staff can reach the crisis team, even outside of office hours. Guides and manuals produced by the University Security Team, including those available on the University website, support this work.

5. Crisis communication

Planned and structured communication is a prerequisite for effective crisis management. Crisis communication involves being prepared for potential crises and communicating professionally during an emergency crisis. Lack of communication when a crisis occurs can lead to misunderstandings, the spread of rumours and damage to the University's reputation.

All crises are different, and the specific event dictates crisis communication. Serious crises and disasters require interventions that go beyond regular communication activities. Methods for dealing with crisis communication in different types of situations are spelled out in guides and manuals that are regularly added to and updated.

The head of the Communications Office is responsible for crisis communication in the event of a crisis that affects the entire University. The Communications Office also coordinates media contacts. The dean, head of department, head of office or equivalent manager is responsible for crisis communication in the event of a crisis affecting a particular department, office or equivalent. If necessary, the Communications Office also supports the heads of department or office in their crisis communications. Regardless of where a crisis starts, the University Security Team and the Communications Office must always be informed.

Communication in a crisis situation must be:

- Planned and structured – Efforts to deal with an acute crisis are facilitated by careful monitoring of events, risk analysis of potential crises, written response policies and establishment of a plan for crisis communication.
- Fast and transparent – The sequence of events in a crisis often requires rapid and open communication to avoid spreading of rumours and speculation.
- Correct and relevant – We only provide information that we know is correct.
- Continuous – We keep providing information even if there is a lack of new information. It is better to say, “We do not know more at the moment, but will let you know as soon as we have more information” than to say nothing at all.
- Coordinated – To avoid uncertainty and unnecessary concern, it is important to provide a uniform and cohesive picture of the course of events.
- Accessible – Straight, simple and clear communication reduces the likelihood of speculation and misunderstandings.
- Adapted for privacy and security – Communication must consider personal privacy and organisational assets worth protecting.
- Translated – The information is available in English and the languages relevant to the situation.



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6. Training and exercises

6.1. Training

6.1.1 Crisis Management Team

The University Security Team is responsible for ensuring that members of the Crisis Management Team are trained in crisis preparedness and crisis response and are familiar with the University's crisis management. The University Director decides on major targeted training initiatives for the university-wide Crisis Management Team.

6.1.2 Crisis Management Council

The University Security Team is responsible for ensuring that members of the Crisis Management Council are trained in crisis preparedness and crisis response and are familiar with the University's crisis management. The Vice-Chancellor, in consultation with the University Director, makes decisions on major targeted training initiatives for the Crisis Management Council.

6.1.3 Faculty, department, unit

The dean, head of department or equivalent manager is responsible for ensuring that members of the crisis team are trained in crisis response and are familiar with the University's crisis management. The University Security Team has produced guides and manuals to support these efforts. The dean, head of department or equivalent manager is responsible for training initiatives within the faculty, department, office or equivalent.

6.2. Exercises

6.2.1 Crisis Management Team

Exercises with the university-wide Crisis Management Team are conducted at regular intervals. The University Security Team is responsible for implementing these as ordered by the University Director.

6.2.2 Crisis Management Council

Exercises with the Crisis Management Council are conducted, with the University Security Team having responsibility for implementing these as ordered by the Vice-Chancellor.

6.2.3 Faculty, department, office or equivalent

The Crisis Management Team at the faculty, department, office or equivalent level conducts exercises at regular intervals. The faculty, department, office or equivalent determines the scope and scenario as well as the timing. The University Security Team can assist with the exercises.

7. Follow-up

The University's crisis management is regularly followed up at meetings of the university-wide Crisis Management Team at least four (4) times a year and through risk analyses, as specified in the ordinances (2007:603) on internal governance and control; (2015:1052) on crisis preparedness and more, and (1995:1300) about risk management of government agencies. Some follow-up also takes place through the ordinance (2017:170) on payments and administration of funds by public authorities, and the provisions (MSBFS 2016:1) on information security of government agencies.