

 <p>CEU <i>Universidad Cardenal Herrera</i></p>	<p>ACTION PROTOCOLS OF THE UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE SERVICE (SOU)</p>	<p>SUICIDAL IDEATION AND BEHAVIOUR</p>
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ACTION PROTOCOL:

SUICIDAL IDEATION AND BEHAVIOUR: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

- 1. Definition and scope**
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1. DEFINITION AND SCOPE

The protocol establishes the procedure to follow if the University becomes aware that a student is experiencing suicidal thoughts.

This protocol is applicable to any student enrolled at CEU UCH.

1.1 SUICIDAL THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIOUR

Suicide is widely recognized as a major public health issue and the main source of preventable deaths across the world.

According to the WHO, 800,000 people take their own lives every year and many more attempt to do so. Suicide can occur at any age and in 2016 it was the second most common cause of death in the world for those between 15 and 29 years of age. Suicide does not only occur in affluent countries, but is rather a global phenomenon affecting all regions of the world (WHO, 2019).

De la Torre (2013) defined suicidal ideation as “the appearance of thoughts concerning taking one’s own life.”¹

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2009), suicidal thoughts and tendencies can be seen as the prior stages to suicide.

Rojas, E (1984) defined suicide as “the behaviour or set of behaviours undertaken by the subject which lead to his or her death (suicide *per se*) or a situation of mortal danger (attempted suicide), either actively or passively.”²

¹ De la Torre, M. (2013). *Protocolo para la detección y manejo inicial de la ideación suicida*. Guide produced by the Centro de Psicología Aplicada (CPA), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM).

Accessed on 16th December 2019: https://www.uam.es/centros/psicologia/paginas/cpa/paginas/doc/documentacion/rincon/protocolo_ideacion_suicida.pdf

² *INTERVENCIÓN EN INTENTOS DE SUICIDIO. Una guía para profesionales de la emergencia*. Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos del Principado de Asturias. Rojas, E (1978). Estudios sobre el suicidio. Salvat editores S.A. Barcelona.

Accessed on 16th December 2019:

<https://psicologosemergenciasbalears.wordpress.com/2018/11/24/intervencion-en-intentos-de-suicidio-una-guia-para-profesionales-de-la-emergencia/>

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2. PREVENTION: IDENTIFICATION OF RISK FACTORS AND PRE-EMPTIVE ACTION

The first aim of the protocol is one of prevention, placing special emphasis on the identification of possible risk factors and on the pre-emptive action the University can take to prevent suicidal ideation and suicide itself.

2.1 IDENTIFICATION OF RISK FACTORS

This section details some of the risk factors associated with behaviour of this type. The presence of one or more of these risk factors does not necessarily entail that this type of behaviour will be present. The intention here is informative only and an assessment by specialized professionals will always be necessary.

Risk factors:³

Personal risk factors:

- Previous suicide attempts by the person in question
- Thoughts concerning suicide as the only release from suffering
- Communication problems or inadequate social skills
- Presence of mental illness, such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or borderline personality disorder
- Recent discharge from a psychiatric hospital
- Abuse of psychoactive substances (alcohol and other drugs)
- Self-harm, such as cuts, burns, scratches, etc.
- Introverted personality, low tolerance for uncertainty
- High self-imposed standards, perfectionism
- Feelings of personal failure, low self-esteem and/or feeling of inferiority
- Perceiving oneself to be a burden
- Feelings of helplessness and despair about life and the future
- Highly impulsive, easily frustrated
- Sexual orientation and gender identity problems
- Victim of sexual, physical or psychological abuse, either recently or in childhood

³ Adapted from: *Guía para la prevención de la conducta suicida dirigida a docentes. Enseñales a vivir*. Consejería de Sanidad, Comunidad de Madrid. Online publication: Madrid, 2016
Accessed on 16th December: <http://www.madrid.org/bvirtual/BVCM017853.pdf>

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Family-related risk factors:

- Family history of suicide
- Family history of alcohol or drug abuse
- Family history of mental illness
- Frequent fights or violence in the family environment
- Lack of communication between family members and inflexible attitudes, with high expectation levels and perfectionism with regard to academic achievement and behaviour in general
- Underestimation of the person's emotional health

Social risk factors:

- Absence or loss of social support network
- Social isolation
- Ostracism or marginalization by peers
- Occurrence of negative life events: death or loss of a loved one, break-up of a relationship or conflict with family members, peers or partner

Risk factors specific to the educational environment:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying⁴
- Feeling ostracized due to being different (physically, due to sexual identity, race, etc.)
- Demanding academic requirements
- Stigmatization of the student after a suicide attempt, due to uncertainty of how to behave towards them
- Ostracism, due to the discomfort and anguish that suicidal behaviours can cause
- Silence and consequent increase in tension, due to unfounded fears of students and lecturers of causing further suicidal behaviour

⁴ CEU UCH Bullying Prevention and Intervention Protocol. Accessed on 16th December 2019
<https://www.uchceu.com/docs/en/regulations/bullying-prevention-protocol.pdf>

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2.2 PRE-EMPTIVE ACTION TO ACTIVATE PROTECTIVE FACTORS

The pre-emptive action that the University can take includes:

- The design of this protocol for the prevention of suicidal ideation and behaviour and intervention in those cases that occur
- Information campaigns aimed at students to encourage a zero-tolerance culture, in order to minimize the impact of possible risk factors associated with the educational environment
- The promotion of supportive behaviour amongst students and communication of information regarding how to ask for help and who to speak to, if necessary
- The intervention by staff from the University Guidance Service
- If a death by suicide occurs at the University, the provision of support to students and the allowing of spontaneous or planned manifestations of mourning to take place.

3. IDENTIFICATION

A case of a person with suicidal ideation may be identified and reported by the student in question, a fellow student, a member of the University staff (personal tutor, coordinator, vice-dean, lecturer, administration and service staff member, etc.), a family member, or other external party.

Whoever the informant may be, the University Guidance Service will be notified and will then assess the case.

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4. ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTION AND MONITORING

4.1 ASSESSMENT

Once a case has been identified, an initial assessment will be made regarding the gravity of the situation and then the appropriate action to take will then be considered by the relevant University bodies. Possible action includes:

- Extraordinary academic measures (temporary withdrawals, reduction of courses enrolled on, etc.).
- Parents or legal guardians being made aware of the situation.
- Establishment of a support/guidance plan, if appropriate.
- If the student is absent from the University for a prolonged period as a result of the behaviours described in this protocol and this has educational consequences, the case will be referred to the Disability Advice and Support Unit (UAPD).

4.2 INTERVENTION

Intervention by CEU UCH staff will take place in the context of the identification of risk factors and the activation of protective factors.


The pre-emptive action the University is taking to activate protective factors includes: the creation of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Protocol and the corresponding awareness campaigns⁵ to achieve a Bullying-Free Campus and the launch of a special buddying programme for first-year students, called the Student Mentoring Programme (SMP).⁶ Our lecturers are also active in this respect, both specifically as personal tutors and, more broadly, as figures of trust for all our students.

In addition to these resources, CEU UCH students also have available to them the support of the University Guidance Service (SOU),⁷ whose possible intervention will take the form of providing guidance and support, referring the student for specialized treatment outside of the University, if this is deemed necessary.

⁵ Actualidad CEU <https://medios.uchceu.es/actualidad-ceu/bienvenida-a-estudiantes-de-todo-el-mundo/>

⁶ Universidad CEU Cardenal Herrera <https://www.uchceu.com/en/campus-life/mentoring-programme>

⁷ Universidad CEU Cardenal Herrera <https://www.uchceu.com/en/services/university-guidance-service>

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4.2.1 INTERVENTION BY THE UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE SERVICE (SOU).

Direct intervention with students will include the following non-exhaustive list of actions. These actions will be taken at the discretion of guidance counsellor concerned and, in any case, any such intervention will always be voluntary in nature for the student.

- Provision of guidance to enhance those factors which protect against the risk of suicide.
- Encouraging the establishment of a supportive social network
- Acting as a person the student can turn to for advice and support
- Monitoring the student's well-being and state of mind
- Getting the student to commit to not harming him or herself
- Helping to create a safety plan
- Provision of information regarding community resources and local sources of support for those with suicidal behaviours

4.3 MONITORING BY SOU

The case will be **monitored** in the following manner:

- Regular contact will be maintained, in a manner agreed with the student
- Regular contact with external figures (parents, specialists, etc.), if appropriate.
- Issue of a monitoring report by SOU to the Dean, Vice-Dean or Vice-Rector, if required.

4. RETENTION OF THE INFORMATION COLLATED

Type of data	Person responsible
Monitoring register	Guidance counsellor
Monitoring reports of a social, medical nature, etc.	Guidance counsellor

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5. ACTION TO TAKE IN AN EMERGENCY

- Notify the University's medical service if the student is on campus
- Call 112
- Accompany the student to the health centre
- Accompany the student to emergency department of the local hospital
- In the case of international students, contact their health insurer

6. USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

TELÉFONO DE LA ESPERANZA:

Suicide crisis line: +34 717 003 717

VALENCIA:

Tel: 963916006 Email: valencia@telefonodelaesperanza.org

Website: <http://telefonodelaesperanza.org/valencia>

Address: C/ Espinosa, nº 9 - 1º - 1ª; 46008, Valencia

ALICANTE:

Tel: 965131122 Email: alicante@telefonodelaesperanza.org

Website: <http://telefonodelaesperanza.org/alicante>

Address 1: C/ Benito Pérez Galdós, 41 - Entr. C; 03005, Alicante

Address 2: C/ Bernabé del Campo Latorre, 26, 03002, Elche

CASTELLÓN:

Tel: 964227093 Email: castellon@telefonodelaesperanza.org

Website: <http://telefonodelaesperanza.org/castellon>

Address: C/ Segorbe, nº 8 - Entlo. - 12004 Castellón

TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:

List of international resources:

<https://fr-ca.facebook.com/help/103883219702654>

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7. OTHER RESOURCES

Spanish resources:

- **GENERALITAT VALENCIANA (Valencian regional government)**
 - Suicide Prevention Plan
Website: www.prevenciodelsuicidi.san.gva.es
- **Regional Mental Health Office**
 - Website: www.san.gva.es/web/dgas/salud-mental1
- **Self-help guide. Suicide prevention. What can I do?**
 - <http://www.madrid.org/bvirtual/BVCM017534.pdf>
- **Guide to help identify those at risk and prevent suicide**
 - https://www.coppa.es/gestor/uploads/noticias/documentos/Guia_digital.pdf

English resources:

- **The Jed Foundation:**
 - <http://jedfoundation.org>
- **American foundation for suicide prevention.**
 - <https://afsp.org/>
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.**
 - <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
- **Suicide Prevention Resource Center.**
 - <http://www.sprc.org/>
- **Uline.**
 - <http://www.ulifeline.org/topics/130-suicidal-behavior>
 - <https://counseling.ufl.edu/resources/suicide/>

French resources:

- **Ministère des solidarités et de la santé.**
 - <https://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/prevention-en-sante/sante-mentale-et-psychiatrie/article/que-faire-et-a-qui-s-adresser-face-a-une-crise-suicidaire>

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- **Unión Nationale Prévention suicide.**
 - <https://www.unps.fr/index.html>