

TAI

Suicidal behaviour prevention and intervention

PROTOCOL



ESCUELA UNIVERSITARIA
DE ARTES @ *taiarts.com*
RECOLETOS-22 MADRID

Document versions/modifications

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	<i>Responsible Authority</i>
<i>Authorship</i>	Student Support and Welfare Unit
<i>Review</i>	Department of Quality and Development
<i>Approval</i>	Office of Academic Affairs
<i>Scope (Applies to)</i>	Faculties, Registrar's Office



1. Introduction

The purpose of this protocol is to establish what actions must be taken in the event that one becomes aware of a student that presents suicidal behaviours. The action plan will be activated when any member of the TAI Community detects any sign of suicidal behaviour.

Suicide is the leading cause of non-natural death in Spain (Spanish National Institute of Statistics, 2020). For this reason, TAI School of the Arts is eager to prevent risk situations through awareness and intervention, in its efforts to safeguard the wellbeing of its students, teachers and administrative and services personnel.

2. Risk factors and protective measures

The aim of this protocol is primarily prevention, through the identification of possible risk factors and protective measures that help prevent suicidal ideation and behaviours.

2.1 Risk factors

Suicide risk factors are understood as behaviours, situations and lifestyles that put persons at a greater risk of engaging in suicidal behaviours. It is important to underline, however, that the signs of one of these risk factors in a person does not necessarily indicate the existence of suicidal ideation or behaviours. Furthermore, the risk factors outlined in this protocol are for information purposes only, and must be assessed by professionals. Possible risk factors include:

Personal, family and social risk factors:

- Personal or family antecedents of attempted suicide.
- Recurring suicidal thoughts.
- Presence of a psychopathology.
- Social isolation.
- Self-harm.
- Difficulties to communicate.
- Drug or substance misuse.
- Elevated levels of impulsivity and low tolerance for frustration.
- Adverse life events: death of a loved one, break-up of a relationship, family problems.

Risk factors specific to the education environment:

- Being subjected to bullying.
- Elevated levels of academic pressure or self-demanding.
- Feelings of peer group rejection.



2.2 *Protective measures*

TAI School of the Arts is taking the following actions, or protective measures; in essence situations, circumstances and characteristics that reduce the probability of engagement in the self-injurious behaviour.

- Creation of a prevention and intervention protocol to address cases of suicidal ideation.
- Informational and awareness-raising campaigns oriented to the TAI Community, to promote a Safe Space and reduce possible risk factors in the education environment.
- Fostering Communities where students can engage with their peer group and share interests.
- Establishing good communication with the Heads of the Faculty Areas of each Faculty and with the teaching staff.
- Review of security measures in all school infrastructures.

3. *Identifying suicidal ideation*

Identifying suicidal ideation can be quite complex. There are, however, four identification scenarios to be aware of: when the student expresses that he/she needs help or does so through a fellow student, through a member of the Faculty or through a relative.

Whatever the scenario, it must always be brought to the attention of the Student Support and Welfare Unit, which will evaluate the case and the situation.

4. *Assessment*

Once a situation of suicide ideation has been identified, the Student Care and Advocacy Department will conduct an initial assessment to look at the magnitude of the situation and determine what steps should be taken. Foremost among these are:

- Calling emergency services.
- Notifying a parent or legal guardian.
- Establishing a support plan to be carried out by the Student Care and Advocacy Department.
- Communicating with external therapists.
- Considering exceptional measures at the academic level.

5. *Intervention*

Intervention falls within the identification and reduction of risk factors and the encouragement of protective measures.

TAI School of the Arts has established protocols and runs awareness-raising talks on student harassment/bullying, in addition to creating a Safe Space, the equality platform VERSE, Communities, a Mentoring Programme and an expansion of the Student Care and Advocacy Department, among other measures.



Furthermore, the Student Care and Advocacy Department is in charge of any intervention at the academic level, and any direct intervention by this Department must be done with the consent of the student and would include the following actions:

- Reinforcing protective measures.
- Encouraging and fostering relations with the student's peer group as a means to establish a support network.
- Being their person of reference within the School.
- Following up on the student and the evolution of the situation.
- Following up with a parent or legal guardian, and with external professional medical teams.
- Creating a no-self-harm pact.
- Informing the student of community resources and specific care facilities, and helping the student reach out to those resources.

In addition, TAI teachers and/or members of the administrative and services personnel must above all endeavour to create a safe environment where the person can feel comfortable talking about what is happening to them. To that end, the following recommendations should be followed:

- **Immediately** get in touch with the Student Support and Welfare Unit.
- Talk to the student, bearing in mind that they are members of a university; so, not talking to them as if they were small children. A delicate situation should not be magnified into something far more serious and should instead be addressed by **remaining calm and talking about the matter with normality**.
- Be an active listener. It is important for the person to feel heard, and to make an effort to **interrupt them as little as possible**. It is important to show them that we are present and that they **are not alone**.
- **Don't be judgmental**. You probably don't know the person's circumstances or context, and should never diminish the importance of what they are relaying to you. Avoid phrases such as "*don't talk nonsense*", "*there are people with more serious problems*" etc.; and replace them with phrases such as "*I understand you*", "*this must be very frustrating for you*", etc.
- **Don't give advice**. TAI teachers and staff must act as a liaison between the students and a help resource, but never give advice **or "therapy"**.

6. Follow-up

The Student Care and Advocacy Department will monitor the situation as follows, once it has been duly authorised to do so by the student.

- Frequent contact with the student.
- Regular contact with family members, and with medical professionals.
- Upon request by the student, this Department will inform members of the teaching staff via email.



7. In case of emergency

As specified in the Protocol, in cases of emergency TAI School of the Arts will:

- Call 112. In cases where there is a risk of suicide, SAMUR (the municipal medical emergency service) and the National Police will come on-site.
- Immediately notify the Student Support and Welfare Unit.
- Refer the student forward to the appropriate health/emergency centre, and for non-EU citizens, contact their medical assurance company.
- It is the responsibility of the Student Support and Welfare Unit to speak with the family and the student body.

IMPORTANT. Prior to contacting a parent or legal guardian, and provided it is not an emergency situation, it is essential to verify on Classlife that the student has signed the disclosure form granting the School permission to communicate with the parent or legal guardian.

8. Important contact information

Hospitals and Health Centres

DESIGNATED HOSPITAL AND PRIMARY CARE (for both EU and non-EU citizens) Hospital Universitario Fundación Jiménez Díaz	Avda. de los Reyes Católicos, 2 28040 Madrid. 915 504 800
Ruber Juan Bravo Hospital	C/ Juan Bravo, 39 y 49, 28006 Madrid 910687999
Clínica Santa Elena	C/ La Granja 8, 28003 Madrid 914539400
Hospital La Luz	C/ del Maestro Ángel Llorca, 8, 28003 Madrid 914530200

Telephone numbers

Suicide hotline	024 (24 hours)
“Esperanza” helpline	91 459 00 50 (24 hours)
Emergency hotline	112 or 061 (24 hours)