

MODULE 7 · LEARNER GUIDE

# WHEN IT ALL GOES WRONG

Modules 1–6 were about *preventing* things going wrong. This module is the last question of the critical-thinking chain — *if it still goes wrong, what will I do?* — and the discipline that turns chaos into coordination.

## 1 THE FIFTH QUESTION

You met the **5-question critical-thinking chain** in Module 1: Purpose → Hazards → Causes → Prevention → *Response*. Modules 1–6 worked Q1–Q4 — planning, assessing, structuring, dynamically reassessing. **This module is Q5.**

### Q5 · Response

**If it still goes wrong, what will I do?**

Despite every plan, every control, and every dynamic reassessment, things sometimes still go wrong. Emergency response is what you do *when*, not *if*.

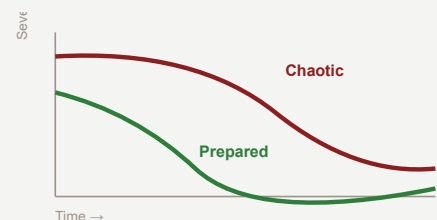
## 2 REDUCE THE HEADLESS-CHOOK RESPONSE

Without preparation, emergencies trigger predictable failure modes: people **freeze, deny** what's happening, or act in **frantic, uncoordinated** ways. Decisions take longer; outcomes are often worse.

With pre-trained, practiced responses, the same situation is managed more successfully — faster, with better outcomes for the patient and the group.

**Preparation turns chaos into coordination.**

TIME TO RESOLVE · SEVERITY OF OUTCOME



## 3 THE FOUR-STEP RESPONSE ORDER

Effective emergency response follows a clear order. The order matters — doing them out of sequence is one of the most common failures.

### STEP 01 STABILISE

Secure the site. Remove the rest of the group from further risk. Make the situation safe before doing anything else.

### STEP 02 PATIENT

Assess the injury or illness. Administer first aid. Call 111 if appropriate. Provide ICE info to emergency services.

### STEP 03 GROUP

Count students. Keep the group together. Reassure them. Adjust supervision. Manage student phones — no use until all-clear.

### STEP 04 COMMUNICATE

Escalate to the right authorities. Principal / DP. Only the Principal speaks to media. Follow the comms hierarchy.

## MODULE 7 · LEARNER GUIDE (CONT.)

# PREPARATION, LEADERSHIP, AND AFTER THE INCIDENT

What you do *before* an emergency — the planning, the kit, the practice — is what makes the four-step order possible. Plus the leadership shift the moment things go wrong, and what happens after.

## 4 PREPARATION REDUCES PANIC

The first response to an emergency is usually *cognitive*, not physical — your brain has to recognise what's happening, decide what to do, and start doing it. Anything you can pre-load reduces the thinking time when stress is high.

- **Know your exits and retreat options.** For every event site, identify where you'd evacuate to, by what route, with what transport. Don't work this out on the day.
- **Practice emergency scenarios as a team.** Tabletop exercises take 20 minutes and surface the gaps no checklist will. Do them with the staff team that will run the real event.
- **Maintain a clear call hierarchy.** Who calls whom, in what order — documented in your SOP and rehearsed. See Reference Card C.
- **Refresh first-aid certifications.** Lapsed first aid is a planning failure, not an HR oversight.
- **Carry the tools.** Trauma plan card (Ref Card B), emergency response guide, incident report form — in every first-aid kit, ready to grab.

## 5 LEADERSHIP STYLE SHIFTS IN AN EMERGENCY

Everything else in this course has trained you toward **consultative, team-based decision-making**. Dynamic risk management works because everyone is feeding the leader information; SOPs work because the team has agreed how things run. *In an emergency, that changes.*

### NORMAL OPERATIONS

#### Consultative

The leader holds the call but builds it from team input. Time exists to discuss. Group buy-in matters because the plan needs to outlive the briefing.

### EMERGENCY

#### Directive · autocratic

The leader gives clear, specific instructions. Roles are allocated, not volunteered. Discussion is suspended until the situation is stabilised. People wait better than they decide under stress.

*This isn't a personality change — it's a context shift. The same leader who runs a consultative pre-departure briefing becomes directive the moment a student goes down. Naming the shift explicitly in your team brief means no-one is surprised by it.*

## 6 AFTER THE INCIDENT — DEBRIEF AND REVIEW

Emergency response doesn't end when the situation is resolved. What happens next is what determines whether your school's response gets better or repeats the same failure.

- **Debrief the staff team.** Soon, while detail is fresh. What went well, what didn't, what we'd change.
- **Support those involved.** Students, staff, and yourself. Trauma doesn't respect rank. Make support available; don't assume people will ask.
- **Record what happened.** Use the incident report form. Capture facts, times, decisions, names — before memories drift.
- **Review the event.** Update the RAS. Update the SOP. Update the trauma plan if it didn't hold up. Close the loop back to planning.

- **Near misses count.** A near miss is a free lesson — the same warning, without the cost. Treat them as incidents. Debrief them. Record them. Act on them.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

Emergencies are rare — but they do happen. A **calm, structured response** saves time, reduces harm, and supports everyone involved. Preparation is what makes that response possible. The reference cards in this module give you the field artefacts; the activity sheet helps you walk a scenario before you're standing in one for real.