

Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

1.0 Policy

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to recognise the duty of care owed by the Institute to all persons associated with the school and to document the process for managing critical incidents if and when they occur.

Responsibility

The Operations Manager is responsible for the implementation of the procedure and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implement its requirements.

Requirements

1.1 This policy and procedures covers the:

- a. actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident
- b. required follow-up to the incident
- c. records to be kept of the incident and action taken.

1.2 Critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- missing students
- severe verbal or psychological aggression or abuse
- death, serious injury or any threat of these
- natural disaster
- domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.

1.3 For international students, the *Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) requires the Institute to notify the RTO registering authority and the government agency issuing the student's visa as soon as practical after an incident occurs to an international student. In the case of a student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance, the incident will need to be reported via the PRISMS.

1.4 For international students, when a student dies or sustains serious injury, the Institute may be required to assist the student's family. This may include:

- hiring interpreters
- making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
- obtaining a death certificate
- assisting with personal items and affairs, including insurance issues
- assisting with visa issues (in the case of international students).

1.5 Response to the critical incident needs to be analysed to contribute to the continuous improvement of the Institute's policy and procedures.

Procedure

1.6 Any Institute staff member receiving news or information regarding a critical incident must contact the Operations Manager, or the nominee, as soon as practicable. If this is not possible, then the most senior person available must be contacted and informed.

1.7 On receipt of news or information regarding a critical incident, the Operations Manager, nominee, or most senior person must:

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- create for themselves a clear understanding of the known facts
- contact the relevant emergency services by phoning 000 if an emergency exists
- contact the Translating and Interpreting Service by phoning 131 450, if translators are required
- contact Life Line on 131 114, if counselling services are required
- plan an immediate response
- plan ongoing strategies
- allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing incident management.

1.8 Based on an evaluation of the critical incident, the Operations Manager, nominee or most senior person must, where appropriate, implement the following:

- contact with next of kin/significant others, if applicable
- identify students and staff members most closely involved with the incident and ensure they are offered support and counselling if necessary
- arrange a time and place for an initial group/individual debriefing session with counsellor/s or other relevant personnel
- inform Institute staff and students where appropriate
- prepare a guideline for staff about what information to give to students
- prepare a written bulletin for staff and students, if the matter is complex
- brief staff and delegate a staff member to deal with telephone/counter inquiries
- manage media/publicity
- arrange access to emergency funds if necessary.

1.9 Record the incident and include the following key details in a report:

- the time of the incident
- the location and nature of the incident
- the names and roles of persons directly involved in the critical incident
- the action taken by the Institute, including any opportunities for improvement as per the continuous improvement policy and procedure
- the organisations and people contacted by the Institute.

2.0 Confer a meeting with relevant parties to:

- review the Institute's handling of the critical incident
- implement improvements to the policy and procedures to ensure the institute is well prepared should an incident occur again.

Revision history

Revision	Date	Description of modifications
1	June 2008	Original
2	July 2009	No changes made
3	January 2010	Minor formatting
4	December 2011	Annual Review
4.1	May 2012	Domain change
5	December 2012	Overall editing and update
5.1	July 2013	Minor editing and updates
5.2	October 2013	Section names changes
5.3	June 2016	Minor editing
6.0	March 2018	Update with new header and footer