

P06- Critical Incidents

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to recognise the duty of care owed by the Institute to its overseas and domestic students and to document the process for managing critical incidents if and when they occur.

2.0 Responsibility

- 2.1 The Director of Studies is responsible for the implementation of this procedure and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implement its requirements.

3.0 Requirements

- 3.1 Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:
- missing students (absent for 28 days consecutively);
 - severe verbal or psychological aggression;
 - death, serious injury or any threat of these;
 - natural disaster; and
 - issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.
- 3.2 The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires the Institute to notify Department of Home Affairs as soon as practical after the incident and 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 Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).
- 3.3 When an international 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
- 3.4 Following a critical incident analyse the Institute's response and processes and implement improvements where indicated

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 A critical incident is 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'

5.0 Method

- 5.1 Where danger to life or safety occurs all members of staff are authorised to take the most appropriate action and as soon as practicable contact a senior member of staff and brief them of the incident and status.
- 5.2 Any college staff member receiving news or information regarding a critical incident (and after any immediate action that must be taken – e.g. contact emergency services) must contact the CEO or other senior management member in his absence as soon as practicable. If this is not possible then the most senior person available must be contacted and informed.
- 5.3 On receipt of news or information regarding a critical incident the DoS or senior person must:
- Create for themselves a clear understanding of the known facts

- If an emergency exists (and not already done so) contact the relevant emergency services by phoning 000
 - If translators are required contact Translating and Interpreting Service by phoning 131 450
 - If counselling services are required contact Life Line on 131 114
 - If the critical incident is at an offshore location contact the department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for advice on the best way to assist the student
 - Plan an immediate response.
 - Plan ongoing strategies.
 - Allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks.
- 5.4 Based on an evaluation of the critical incident the DoS or most senior person must, where appropriate, implement the following:
- Contact with next of kin/significant others
 - Informing Institute staff and students.
 - Prepare a guideline to staff about what information to give students.
 - Prepare a written bulletin to staff and students if the matter is complex.
 - Briefing staff and delegating a staff member to deal with telephone/counter inquiries.
 - Managing media/publicity
 - Identify students and staff members most closely involved with the incident and ensure they are offered support and counselling
 - Arrange a time and place for an initial group/individual debriefing session with Counsellor/s
 - Arrange access to emergency funds if necessary.
- 5.5 Record the incident and the following key details to report including:
- 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
 - The organisations and people contacted by the Institute
- 5.6 Following the incident, a review should be undertaken and recommendations placed in the continuous improvement register if appropriate for action to avoid a repeat of the incident.

End