

# CG7-I: Critical Incident Policy & Procedures

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## Purpose

The policy ensures that critical incidents or potential critical incidents that could affect an international student's ability to undertake or complete the course in which they are enrolled.

This complies with Standard 6 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

## Definitions

**Critical incident** means a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm could include, but are not limited to, events such as:

- Missing students
- 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.

**Critical Incident Team** means a group of persons specified by Australian Institute of Tertiary Education (AITE) to plan an immediate response, allocate responsibilities and determine ongoing strategies. This role has been allocated to:

- CEO
- Training Manager
- Student Support Officer
- Health and Safety Representative

**Designated person** means any AITE staff member who either witnesses or is informed about an actual or potential incident. The designated person should immediately inform the most senior member of staff available of the incident. In the meantime, however, the designated person may need to assume temporary control of a critical incident site.

**DET** means Department of Education and Training

**Emergency Services** include:

- Emergency Services - Police, Fire and Ambulance Phone: 000
- Police Headquarters (24 hr) Phone 131 444
- Lifeline (24 hour crisis counselling line) 131 114
- Poisons Information Centre 131 126
- State Emergency Service 132 500
- Victorian Health Department 1300 650 172

**PRISMS** means Provider Registration and International Students Management System

## Policy

1. AITE is committed to protecting staff and students in the event of a critical incident and will take appropriate actions to maximise the safety of all staff and students and any other persons involved in the critical incident.
2. AITE ensures that as far as possible risk reduction measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a critical incident. This is specified in AITE Health and Safety Policy and Procedure.
3. A designated officer and/or critical incident team will manage critical incidents.
4. All staff will receive induction into their role which will include information about health and safety, as well as critical incidents. Training and updates to information will be provided to staff on a regular basis.
5. Students will receive information about health and safety, including critical incidents, in the Student Handbook, as well during their orientation. This will include information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia and how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their well-being, including critical incidents. Updates to information will be provided to students as required.
6. AITE will ensure that appropriate post-incident support is provided as required.
7. AITE response to critical incidents will always be evaluated and improvements identified and implemented as required.

# Procedures

## 1. Respond to incident

Procedure	Responsibility
<p><b>A. Immediate response (within 24 hours)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess situation and consider any risks to own safety before taking any action.</li> <li>Alert the most senior staff member available where a critical incident is occurring or is likely to occur.</li> <li>Take over temporary control of incident (where there is no threat to that person's safety).</li> <li>Contact emergency services ensuring that all details known about the incident are provided.</li> <li>Action evacuation procedures if required and provide first aid or medical assistance as needed.</li> <li>Develop and implement a <i>Critical Incident Action Plan</i> for responding appropriately in a timely manner.</li> <li>Liaise with any other parties involved as required (e.g. police, doctors, hospital staff, embassies or consulates and other relevant professionals).</li> <li>Contact and inform parents and family members of those involved in incident.</li> <li>Provide an officially agreed response to the media and ensure other staff involved are aware of the appropriate response to the media.</li> <li>Keep appropriate and adequate records.</li> </ul>	Student Support Coordinator
<p><b>B. Secondary response (48 – 72 hours)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate support, including counselling for those directly or indirectly involved</li> <li>Review legal issues, including advising family of process/access to assistance as required</li> <li>Provide staff and students with factual information about the critical incident including organising a debriefing for all students and staff closely involved with the incident.</li> <li>Restore AITE to regular routine, program delivery, and community life as soon as possible.</li> </ul>	Student Welfare Counsellor
<p><b>C. Ongoing follow up response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify any other persons who have been affected by the critical incident and provide access to support services as required.</li> <li>Debrief staff and students on an ongoing basis as required.</li> <li>Where the incident results in a student's suspension or cancellation of studies, notify DET via PRISMS.</li> <li>Provide appropriate support in the event of a serious injury or death such as hiring interpreters, making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial</li> </ul>	Student Welfare Counsellor

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>service/repatriation, obtaining a death certificate, assisting with issues such as insurance and visa issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the progress of all those affected by the critical incident especially staff and students for signs of delayed stress and the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder.</li> <li>• Manage long term consequences such as insurance, inquests and legal proceedings.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>D. Complete critical incident report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On finalisation of the critical incident, prepare a <i>Critical Incident Report</i></li> <li>• Provide a copy of the critical incident report to the CEO</li> <li>• File copy of <i>Critical Incident Report</i></li> </ul>	Student Support Coordinator

## 2. Evaluate critical incident response

Procedure	Responsibility
<p><b>A. Evaluation of response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As soon as possible after the critical incident meet to review the implementation of procedures and the effectiveness of the response.</li> <li>• Document any changes required to procedures based on the review.</li> <li>• Implement changes identified.</li> <li>• File copy of the review findings.</li> </ul>	CEO

### Compliance Information

Standards (National Code): Standard 6