

Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

Policy Requirement

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 6 requires the registered provider to have an implemented and documented policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm. The registered provider must maintain a written record of any critical incident for at least 2 years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

VSA must:

- Take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus and advise overseas students and staff on actions they can take to enhance their personal security and safety
- Provide information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including critical incidents and
- Provide overseas students with or refer them to general information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia.

Purpose

VSA will manage critical incidents with the intention to minimise trauma and distress to students and staff and damage to property and to ensure that where possible, training is maintained or resumed. VSA will ensure the interest of students and their families are managed appropriately.

This policy is supported by the critical incident procedure to ensure VSA is prepared for such incidents and have a clear protocol to follow in what can be distressing and upsetting circumstances.

Effective critical incident management involves:

- Reduce the likelihood of emergency and critical incidents;
- Minimise the impact on students, staff and site activities; and
- Facilitate the return of the site to normal operations as soon as possible

Management of emergencies and critical incidents will involve consideration of:

- Prevention and mitigation of;
- Preparedness for;
- Response to;

- Recovery from; and
- Review of emergencies and critical incidents.

Critical incident definition

A critical incident is a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. This does not include serious academic misconduct. Examples of critical incidents are (not limited) to include:

- Missing students
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Death/suicide, serious injury, violence or any threat of these
- Widespread infection / contamination or threat of these
- Natural disaster
- Civil unrest
- Substantial damage to premises
- Deprivation of liberty or civil unrest
- Criminal offence perpetrated against a student
- Events that cause high risk to personal safety
- Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse
- Publicity that may significantly damage/disrupt the reputation of VSA.

Delegation and Responsibilities

- The Managing Director ensures all staff are aware of their responsibility in managing critical incidents.
- All staff have a responsibility that if they witness an actual or perceived critical incident to report directly to the most senior staff member available (The Managing Director or Student Support Officer).
- The Managing Director leads any critical incidents and is the key contact for emergency services and relevant regulatory authorities such as police, work health safety state regulator, Department of Home Affairs.
- The Managing Director leads responsibility for implementing critical incident procedures, including identification of potential situations, developing, documenting and communicating response plans. In absence of the Managing Director, Student Support Officer will report on actual situations to the Managing Director and reviewing policy and procedures following a critical incident.
- Student Support Officer is the key contact for communicating with students and family members.
- The Managing Director is the only person with the delegation of authority to communicate with the media.

Procedure

This procedure is used to manage critical incidents. In managing critical incidents, it is important to understand that the impact of a critical incident may be quite different for each student and the impact may not be immediate. It may result in:

Acute Stress Disorder

The essential feature of Acute Stress Disorder is the development of characteristic anxiety, dissociative, and other symptoms that occur within 1 month after exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor, such as related to a critical incident. The symptoms must cause significant distress, significantly interfere with normal functioning, or impair the individual's ability to pursue necessary task.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

The essential feature of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is the development of characteristic systems, lasting more than 1 month, following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor, involving either:

- Direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one's physical integrity.
- Witnessing an event that involves death, injury or a threat to the physical integrity of another person.
- Learning about unexpected or violent death, serious hardship, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate.
- The onset of systems may be delayed more than 6 months.

Preparation for possible critical incidents

- All staff are informed of the critical incident training as part of their induction procedure.
- Students are informed at their induction and through the International Student Handbook of the appropriate staff member to contact in case of an emergency.

Responding to Critical Incident:

1. The Staff member on the scene of the incident, or the first on there, is to assess the situation whilst being mindful of their own safety.
2. The staff member of the scene will:
 - a. Contact emergency services (e.g. police, fire, ambulance) by dialling 000 where appropriate.
 - b. Seek the assistance of the First Aid Officer if required and crowd control where appropriate.
 - c. Alert the most senior member within their location as soon as possible (e.g. the Managing Director and Student Support Officer).

- d. Where there is not threat to personal safety in doing so, the staff member on scene will take steps to minimise further damage or injury. This may involve organising willing bystanders to provide support.
 - e. Upon arrival of a more senior member (the Managing Director, Student Support Officer) they will assume authority for control of the critical incident situation.
 - f. If injury has occurred, complete an Accident Report form.
 - g. Handover to the Managing Director, Student Support Officer and emergency services who will have authority of control of the situation.
3. The Managing Director (or Student Support Officer) will:
- a. Assess the level of risk and type of Critical Incident
 - b. Identify the required resource implications.
 - c. Apply the appropriate intervention measures to the level of risk and type of critical incident.
 - d. Report critical incident, intervention measures, any relevant resource implications directly to the Managing Director.

Interventions Measures

In identifying a Critical Incident, the Managing Director (or Student Support Officer) shall determine the level of risk or type of Critical Incident and apply one or more of the following intervention measures.

Prevention Measure

Where a potential Critical Incident can be avoided through risk identification, the Managing Director (or Student Support Officer) shall:

- Identify the risk potential, including the verification of any potential source of danger or threat to student welfare.
- Establish the WHS, legal parameters and duty of care implications carried by VSA.
- Identify students who may be at risk.
- Report any potential avoidance actions that may be implemented by VSA Management.

Critical Incident Response Measure

Where an actual Critical Incident is about to occur or has occurred the Managing Director is responsible for managing the incident. This may be done in conjunction with the Student Support Officer or staff as requested by the Managing Director. Actions may include:

- Take avoidance action to ensure the safety and welfare of students when enrolled students may be at risk of physical harm. This may include requesting the attendance of security staff or a building evacuation.
- Determine if any emergency service is required and where necessary take immediate action to request the attendance of such a service (police or ambulance services).

- Where a student has experienced a physical injury VSA staff shall:
 - assess the level of injury
 - remove the student from immediate danger
 - evacuate other students from the accident site
 - in the case of low level injury request the assistance of Admin Officer
 - in the case of high level injury take immediate action to gain the attendance of an ambulance service and request the attendance of Admin Officer.
- Make direct contact with the Managing Director (or in their absence the Student Support Officer) and advise the type of critical incident and actions taken so far in the critical incident event.
- The Managing Director will liaise with the Trainers and Admin Officer to ensure the appropriate handling of student data.
- The Managing Director or Student Support Officer will:
 - Communicate with the students / college community
 - Prepare letter of condolence to family/next of kin (contact details are provided on the student electronic record and enrolment form)
 - Organise assistance for family of victim if in Australia
 - Organise immediate care and support in the case of any distressing or traumatic experience.
 - Make arrangements for visits to / from family / next of kin including arrangements for meeting at the airport and hotel reservations;
 - Hire appropriate certified interpreters/translators, if applicable
 - Liaise with Doctors and hospital staff / coroner / funeral director, if applicable.
 - Organise refund of student fees, if applicable.
 - Where possible and appropriate take immediate action to gain the presence of qualified counsellors who may assist in the support of distressed or traumatised students.
 - Counselling and emergency support services contact details are provided in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Post Incident measures

Where a Critical Incident has occurred the Managing Director shall within 5 days, ensure that the following steps are taken in completing a Critical Incident Summary form:

- Request a written report from staff who were directly involved in the incident or present when it occurred.
- Identify and interview students whom may have been involved or present during the Critical incident.
- Identify any emergency service contacts utilised during the critical incident.
- List pastoral or external support personal that were involved during the critical incident.
- The ISSO will prepare a detailed summary of the Critical Incident to the Managing

Director.

Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act

VSA may possess or control records that contain personal information that shall not disclose the information to a person, body or agency (other than the individual concerned) unless in an emergency situation:

- the individual concerned is reasonably likely to have been aware, or made aware that information of that kind is usually passed to that person, body or agency;
- the individual concerned has consented to the disclosure;
- the record keeper believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the individual concerned or of another person;
- the disclosure is required or authorised by or under law; or
- the disclosure is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue.

Where personal information is disclosed for the purposes of enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the purpose of the protection of the public revenue, the record keeper shall include in the record containing that information a note of the disclosure.

A person, body or agency to whom personal information is disclosed shall not use or disclose the information for a purpose other than the purpose for which the information was given to the person, body or agency.

Reporting to the media

The Managing Director is the only person who can report to the media.

Management Review

Following the receipt of a Critical Incident report the Managing Director and VSA's Management staff shall ensure that the report is reviewed at the next management meeting and improvement items documented and if necessary, continuous improvement action may be triggered.

Records

Records of the critical incident will be kept in the work health safety folder (both physical and electronic). The Managing Director is responsible for keeping and filing all records associated with a critical incident. VSA must maintain a written record of any critical incident

and remedial action taken for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student under the ESOS Act.

Appendix 1 – Emergency Contacts

Department of Home Affairs

70 Franklin Street
ADELAIDE. SA. 5000
Telephone: 131 881

Emergencies

In an emergency, telephone **000** for:

- Police;
- Ambulance; and/or
- Fire Brigade.

Emergencies and safety

Crisis helplines

Alcohol and drugs

[Alcoholics Anonymous Helpline](#) - phone 1300 222 222

[Alcohol and Drug Information Service](#) - phone 1300 131 340

[Family Drug Support Australia](#) - phone 1300 368 186

[Mobile Assistance Patrol \(MAP\)](#) – phone 0411 474 368

MAP transports people under the influence of alcohol or other drugs to places of safety and support. Service available seven days a week.

Crisis counselling

[Lifeline Australia](#) - phone 13 11 14

Domestic violence

[Domestic Violence Crisis Line](#) - phone 1800 800 098

[1800 RESPECT](#) - phone 1800 737 732

Gambling

[Gambling help online](#) - phone 1800 060 757

[Problem gambling](#) - phone 1800 858 858

Health

[Health Direct](#) - phone 1800 022 222

About [food poisoning, food complaints and recalls](#)

Information on when to call the [Poisons Information Line](#) on 13 11 26

Quit smoking - phone the [Quitline](#) on 13 78 48

Homelessness

[Homelessness Gateway](#) - phone 1800 003 308
Crisis advice and accommodation.

[Domestic Violence Crisis Line](#) - phone 1800 800 098
Crisis counselling support and referral for women and children to safe accommodation.

Men

[Mensline Australia](#) - phone 1300 789 978

[1800 RESPECT](#) - phone 1800 737 732

Poisons

[Poisons Information Line](#) - phone 13 11 26

Sexual assault

[Yarrow Place](#) - phone 8226 8777 or toll free 1800 817 421, after hours 8226 8787 for services for rape and sexual assault victims.

[1800 RESPECT](#) - phone 1800 737 732
National sexual assault, domestic family violence counselling service.

Suicide prevention

[Beyond Blue](#) - phone 130 0224 636

[Lifeline Australia](#) - phone 13 11 14

[Suicide call back service](#) - phone 1300 659 467

Victim support

1800 VICTIM - phone 1800 842 846

Women

Domestic Violence Crisis Line - phone 1800 800 098 (after hours diverts to Homelessness Gateway Service) for crisis counselling, support and referral to safe accommodation.

1800 RESPECT - phone 1800 737 732
National sexual assault, domestic family violence counselling service.

Women's Information Service of South Australia - phone 8303 0590 or 1800 188 158

Women's Safety Services SA - phone 1800 800 098

Appendix 2 – Emergency Contacts in Student Handbook

Telephone Crisis Counselling

There are various telephone counselling services including **Lifeline** which offer free crisis counselling 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Child Protection.....	13 14 78
Drug and Alcohol	1300 13 1340
Gambler’s Help.....	1800 060 757
Kids Help Line (5yrs to 18yrs).....	1800 551 800
Lifeline	13 11 14
Men’s Referral Service.....	1300 766 491
Mental Health Assessment & Crisis Intervention Service	13 14 65
Parent Helpline.....	1300 364 100
Poisons Information Centre	13 11 26
Pregnancy Advisory Centre	8347 4955
Quitline	13 78 48
Rape and Sexual Assault Service	1800 817 421
Samaritans Crisis Line	13 52 47
Victim Support Service.....	1800 842 846
Women’s and Children’s Health Network	8303 1500
Women’s Domestic Violence Helpline	1800 737 732

Emergency Medical and Hospital Services

Modbury Hospital

Smart Road, Modbury
Phone: 8161 2000

Noarlunga Hospital

86 Alexander Kelly Dr, Noarlunga Centre
Phone: 8384 9222

Flinders Medical Centre

Flinders Drive, Bedford Park
Phone: 8204 5511

North Eastern Community Hospital

580 Lower North East Road,
Campbelltown
Phone: 8366 8111

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital

28 Woodville Road, Woodville South
Phone: 8222 6000

Lyell McEwin Hospital

Haydown Road, Elizabeth Vale
Phone: 8182 9000

Royal Adelaide Hospital

Port Road, Adelaide
Phone: 7074 0000

Women's and Children's Hospital

72 King William Road, Adelaide
Phone: 8161 7000

Medical Centres

International students are able to access free medical services with participating general practitioners in the CBD. You will need to present your OSHC Card at the time of your appointment which enables medical practices to bulk bill Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) patients by claiming electronically their consultation fee directly with the OSCH provider.

Adelaide City General Practice

29 King William Street, Adelaide
Phone: 8410 1322

Globe Medical Adelaide

1/21 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide
Phone: 8232 7372

Marden Medical Clinic

12 Lower Portrush Road, Marden
Phone: 8362 7032

Prospect Medical Centre

188 Main North Road, Prospect
Phone: 8269 2888

Adelaide Health Care

43 Carrington Street, Adelaide
Phone: 8410 0774

Harbour Medical Services

19 Robe Street, Port Adelaide
Phone: 8447 4422

Oakden Medical Centre

132-134 Fosters Road, Hillcrest
Phone: 8266 7788

Trinity Medical Centre

28 College Street, Port Adelaide
Phone: 8249 2000