Critical Incident Policy: Overseas Students

1 PURPOSE

This procedure ensures that any critical incident that occurs is documented, reported and action taken by FIT Education where required.

This policy is designed to ensure that FIT Education:

a. Meets its Duty of Care as an ESOS based Education Provider
b. Is able to respond to a Critical Incident effectively and promptly
c. Provides appropriate support services to those affected
d. Provides timely and appropriate information to staff and students

This policy has been developed to satisfy the requirements of The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, known as 'the National Code 2018' Standard 6.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and staff in compliance with the ESOS Framework. The critical incidents covered in this procedure include, but are not limited to, those incidents which occur at FIT Education's premises and/or training and assessing locations either during or after hours.

A Critical Incident is any traumatic event, or threat of such (within or outside Australia) which has the potential to harm life or well-being, and causes extreme stress, fear or injury to the person experiencing or witnessing the event.

Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:

- Serious injury, illness, or death of a student or staff
- A missing student
- Serious illness, such as any illness which causes the deterioration of the student /staff member's health over time
- Serious Injury which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to complete the course
- Physical or Sexual assault
- Occupation Health & Safety Risk
- Student or Staff witnessing a serious accident or violent act
- Natural disaster
- Fire, bomb-threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
- Drug or Alcohol abuse
- Damaging Media attention
- Traumatic events that affect students; such as
    - Sexual Assault
    - Mental Health Crisis
    - Drug / Alcohol Overdose

3 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is separate to with the standard incident reporting policy and procedures that pertain to staff and students of FIT Education or whilst on Work Based Placement.

Should an incident be deemed to meet the above criteria, that incident report can be upgraded to a Critical Incident and be subject to the following information within this policy.

The FIT Education Critical Incident Response Procedures will address the management of a Critical Incident and include the following items:

- The time of the incident
- The type of incident
- Immediately after the incident
- Following the incident
- Post the incident
- Review the Critical Incident management

This policy will be disseminated to all Staff and Students to ensure that they are aware of these requirements in the event of a Critical Incident and shall form part of the orientation process.

Overseas students will be provided with information about assistance available, how to seek assistance and the procedure to report incidents

3.1 CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE

3.1.1 When a member of FIT Education's staff believes that a critical incident has occurred, that staff member is required to contact emergency services (if required) and contact the CEO immediately

3.1.2 If the critical incident presents a danger to staff and students health or well being, all personnel are to be immediately evacuated from the vicinity

3.1.3 In the instance of injury or onset of illness on premises, the designated First Aid Officer should be notified whenever a student or staff member requires assistance

3.1.4 Contact should be made with the family of any student involved in a situation requiring emergency services

3.1.5 A Critical Incident Report Form is to be completed by the appropriate staff member involved in the incident

3.1.6 The Critical Incident Report Form is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident

3.2 DESIGNATED OFFICER

A Staff Member who is either a direct witness or the first to be informed of the incident can assume the position of the Designated Officer and

- Is to assume temporary control over the Critical Incident and to assign duties and responsibilities to staff and students as required
- Is to alert the CEO or most Senior Staff Member at the first available opportunity,
- Is to provide a brief to and form part of the Critical Incident Response Team,
- Is to complete the Critical Incident Report Form.

3.3 Critical Incident Response Team

When an incident occurs, the CEO or most Senior Staff Member will form a Critical Incident Response Team – CIRT.

- The CEO or most Senior Staff Member shall be the designated Critical Incident Team leader
- The CIRT is to take over control of the Critical Incident from the Designated Officer, after a handover brief, and
- The Designated Officer will form part of the CIRT

The CIRT is responsible for:

- Implementation of this procedure,
- Identifying the cause to the Critical Incident circumstance, assessing and controlling any further risk
- Implementing, monitoring and maintaining risk control measures,
- Regularly monitoring the effectiveness of the Critical Incident risk control measures and rectify any deficiencies in the procedures,
- Consulting with staff and students on Critical Incident practices,
- Liaison with Emergency Response Authorities,
- Liaison with Department of Education and the Department of Employment, Australian Department of Home Affairs and other relevant agencies,
- Ensuring the well-being of staff and students following the Critical Incident,
- Arranging Counselling or Trauma Services following the Critical Incident should the student request it. Counselling can be arranged should the Critical Incident Team leader deem it relevant.
- Regularly monitoring the effectiveness of the Critical Incident response and updating any response measures to ensure ongoing support of the student.

3.4 Critical Incident Response Timeline

When an incident occurs, the CEO or most Senior Staff Member will form a Critical Incident Response Team – CIRT

- The CEO or the most Senior Staff Member shall be the designated Critical Incident Team leader
- The CIRT is to take over control of the Critical Incident from the Designated Officer, after a handover brief, and
    - The Designated Officer will form part of the CIRT

3.4.1 At the time of incident and within 24 hours

a) Identify the cause of the Critical Incident
b) If practical, remove or minimise the cause for a potential further Critical Incident
c) Ensure the Safety and Well-being of Staff and Students
d) Ensure injured and/or traumatised Staff and Students are provided with appropriate Emergency Care
e) Arrange Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services
f) Ensure support for Staff and Students in the event an incident is still continuing
g) Keep Staff, Students, Agents and where necessary the Department of Education and Australian Department of Home Affairs informed
h) Manage Media Reports
i) Designated Officer is to Complete the Critical Incident Report Form
j) Commence an investigation to record real-time or factual data on the Critical Incident

3.4.2 Immediately After Incident

a) Arrange Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services
b) Allow Staff and Students to contact relatives and friends

c) Ensure Staff and Students who have been exposed to the Critical Incident with Support and Practical assistance
d) Debrief all relevant personnel involved in the Critical Incident
e) Where applicable, ensure the site of the incident is not disturbed in relation to a Police matter or when an investigation is required by the state or territory safety authority
f) Keep Staff, Students, Agents and where necessary the Department of Education and Australian Department of Home Affairs informed
g) Restore Normal daily operations, where practical and as soon as possible
h) Manage Media Reports

3.4.3 Following Incident

a) Ensure Staff and Students are provided ongoing access to Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services
b) Monitor Staff and Students attitudes and behaviour for any signs of PTSD
c) Monitor Health and Well-being of any Staff and Students hospitalised
d) Keep Staff, Students, Agents and where necessary the Department of Education and Australian Department of Home Affairs informed
e) Assist in the arrange of memorial proceedings if appropriate
f) Conduct a CIRT debrief and provide the report to Staff and Students where necessary
g) Manage Media Reports

3.4.4 Post Incident

a) Ensure Staff and Students are provided ongoing access to Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services
b) Analyse the findings of the CIRT Incident debrief and where necessary implement Risk Control Measures to minimise the likelihood of reoccurrence

3.5 Reporting Of The Critical Incident

In accordance with the ESOS Act, FIT Education is required to notify the Department of Education and Australian Department of Home Affairs as soon as practical after the incident and in the event of a student's death or other circumstance affecting the student's attendance. In this instance notification will be made initially by Phone followed by reporting via PRISMS.

3.6 Review the Critical Incident management

The CIRT shall monitor and review the critical incident responses, strategies and the support offered to the student during, immediately after and post incident reporting

4 Responsibilities

CEO of FIT Education has responsibility for development, review, monitoring, evaluation, implementation and approval of all FIT Education Policies.

5 Designated Officer

The Designated Officer:

- If not a witness to the incident, shall be the first person to be informed of the incident or potential incident,
- Is responsible for taking temporary control over the Critical Incident and to assign duties and responsibilities to staff and students as required,

- Is to alert the CEO or most Senior Staff Member at the first available opportunity,
- Is responsible for the delivery of a brief to the Critical Incident Response Team,
- Is Required to form part of the Critical Incident Response Team,
- Holds the responsibility for completing the Critical Incident Report Form.

6 Related Legislation And Regulations

- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, known as 'the National Code 2018' Standards 6
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000

7 Related Policies And Procedures

- Student Support Services Policy – Overseas Students
- Engagement Prior to Enrolment Policy – Overseas Students, and related Procedure
- Formalisation of Enrolment and Written Agreement Policy – Overseas Students, and related Procedure

Critical Incident Procedure: Overseas Students

STEP 1 – Critical Incident Lodgement		
No.	**Who**	**Actions**
1.1	**All Staff**	a) Once a critical Incident has been identified the incident must be referred to CEO or most senior staff member b) CEO gathers relevant data as practical c) CEO or most senior staff member is to ensure the safety of the affected students and is to inform all relevant staff by email as soon as all information has been assessed
	CEO	a) The CEO is responsible for ensuring all regulatory authorities are notified b) The CEO in consultation with the student/s will contact the appropriate emergency services c) The CEO will contact the student/s next of kin and their consulate or embassy if there is a death of the student/s d) The CEO or most senior staff member completes section 1 & 2 of the Critical Incident Report Form (CIRF)
STEP 2 – immediate actions The CEO is Deemed the Designated Officer		
No.	**Who**	**Actions**
2.1	**CEO**	a) The CEO is to form a Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) and inform the team members listing these on the CIRF b) The CEO may delegate the Designated Officer duties to another staff member where appropriate c) The CEO is to complete the Immediate Action Section of the CIF and allocate duties and actions to CIRT members d) The CEO is to compile a list of all stakeholders and complete the communication log section of the CIRF e) The CEO is to complete section 5, 6 & 7 of the CIRF
STEP 3 – Student Support During and After Critical Incident has		
No.	**Who**	**Actions**
3.1	**Student Support**	a) If the Critical Incident has resulted in student/s being absent from FIT Education (including returning to their home country), Student Support is to contact the student/s by email on a fortnightly basis for the entire period that the student/s are affected by the Critical Incident. If contact is made by by phone, a summary of the phone call is to be logged in the student file or SMS. b) After the CI has been closed Student Support is to contact the student/s at the 3 month point and then again at 6 month point. c) Student Support is to compile a report for the CEO on the post CI reviews d) Student Support is to complete section 8 of the CIRF
STEP 4 – End of Critical Incidence		
No.	**Who**	**Actions**
4.1	**CEO** **Administration Co-ordinator**	a) The CEO is to complete section 9 of the CIRF b) The CEO is to review all processes contained within the CIRF and ensure that student/s are connected back to their study program and have no disadvantages due to the CI c) The Administration Co-ordinator is to ensure that SMS is updated d) The Administration Co-ordinator is to ensure all eCoE are accurate and current e) The CEO is to formally close CI advising all stakeholders that the CI is considered resolved. f) The CEO advises the student to contact DIBP for CI that extend beyond six months from initial date lodged. This timeline does not include section 8 requirements of the CIRF