

Critical Incident Policy & Procedure



CRICOS CODE:03887J RTO CODE:45652
Career Solutions Group Pty Ltd The Trustee for Career Solutions Trust

Note: This policy and procedure are based on a template developed by the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) and the International Education Association (ISANA).

Table of Contents

Purpose of the policy:	1
1.0 Policy	2
2.0 Definitions	2
Reporting:	3
3.0 Procedure.....	5
Reporting procedure.....	7
Stress Management	9
Appendices to the Critical Incident Policy and Procedures	10
Appendix 1: Managing the Media.....	11
Appendix 2: Specialised Skills and Knowledge Needed Within the Critical Incident Team.....	14
Appendix 3: A Critical Incident in a Cross-cultural setting: Preparing yourself and others.....	15
Appendix 4: Police Involvement	16
Appendix 5: Funeral Information.....	18
Appendix 6: The Grieving Process.....	20
Appendix 7: Things to Remember.....	22
Appendix 8: Emergency Numbers for Critical Incident Policy and Procedures	23
Appendix 9: Critical Incident Report.....	25
Appendix 10: CRITICAL INCIDENT NOTIFICATION LETTER	27



Purpose of the policy:

This policy and related procedures have been developed to assist Registered Training Organisation (RTO) staff and students in responding appropriately to incidents that may cause trauma to an individual and/or affect the campus as a whole. It establishes basic procedures and reporting systems to cover prevention, immediate responses and follow-up actions to deal with the immediate consequences and the longer-term implications of a critical incident. In accordance with the requirements of the National Code the policy includes specific processes for dealing with critical incidents affecting international students. When an international student is involved the RTO management will necessarily take on tasks that would normally be handled by the family. It is important to have efficient, sensitive and supportive strategies for dealing with such an occurrence that minimise confusion, conflicts and breaches of confidentiality. A further useful resource is 'Pandemic Planning in the Workplace', published by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2009), available at:

www.dpmpc.gov.au/publications/pandemic/docs/Pandemic_Planning_in_the_Workplace.pdf

1.0 Policy

This policy/procedure supports RTO 2015 standards and standard 6 of the 'National Code of Practice for Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2018'.

This policy & procedure ensures that any critical incident that occurs is documented, reported and action taken by RTO where required.

This document outlines the RTO policy, support mechanisms and procedures for managing a critical incident. The policy ensures the RTO has:

- An effective approach in responding to critical incidents as they occur
- Appropriate support and counselling services available to those affected
- Appropriate training and information resources provided to staff.

2.0 Definitions

A Critical incident is defined as *'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia which causes extreme stress, fear or injury.'* (Definition from National Code 2018).

A Critical Incident is a traumatic or tragic event or situation, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) affecting an RTO student or staff member that causes extreme stress, fear or injury and emotional distress within the Academy community. Critical incidents are not limited to but could include:

- Death (including the death of a dependant residing in Australia for an international student)
- serious illness causing declining health of a student or staff member over time
- serious injury preventing or severely affecting a student's ability to continue with a course
- severe verbal or psychological aggression
- natural disaster
- domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.
- Non-life-threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents.
- Missing students



Reporting:

Police must be notified in any case of sudden unexpected death.

Police actions include:

- Reporting such death to the Coroner
- Notifying next of kin
- Obtaining official identification of the deceased (this must be done by someone who has known the deceased for some time)
- Conducting investigations on behalf of the Coroner, e.g. interviewing witnesses and others who may have been involved, collecting clothing and other items for use in evidence, delivering specimens for analysis. The Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 requires the college to notify the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs as soon as practical after a critical incident involving an international student 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).

On-campus Incidents

If the incident is on campus, the first action will be to contact the emergency services - fire, ambulance or police (Calling "000") – as would be the case with other WH&S matters. The **Admin Manager** must also be contacted immediately when the incident involves death, serious injury or a threat to life or property.

Off-campus Incidents

If the critical incident involves a student or staff member and is off-campus, the person receiving the information must immediately contact the **CEO** who will communicate other staff as appropriate. Emergency 24 hr. contact number for RTO is 0406 097 111 (Mr Bhallinder Singh)

Key Details to be Reported 411 356 306(CEO)

Key details to report include the time, location and nature of the incident (e.g. threat, accident, death or injury), names and roles of persons involved (e.g. staff, international or domestic student).

Non-life threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents although serious illness or injury would probably not be considered a critical incident in the broader campus community.

3.0 Procedure

Procedure Immediate Response (within 24 hours) When a critical incident has been identified, whether occurring on or off campus:

The staff member witnessing the incident or receiving the news immediately contact **Admin Manager** (or if he is unavailable, the CEO of RTO, Mr Bhallinder Singh on 411 356 306).

Key details to be reported include:

- Time, location and nature of the incident, e.g. threat, accident, death or injury
- Names and positions of person/s involved, e.g. staff, international or domestic student
- Current location of the student/staff member
- Whether emergency services have been called

Critical Incident Policy & Procedure

- Whether an interpreter is required.



CRICOS CODE:03887J RTO CODE:45652
Career Solutions Group Pty Ltd The Trustee for Career Solutions Trust

1. The above details should be documented for further reference. The management will seek additional information about the incident and will request that details are not immediately made public, if appropriate. The management will communicate with other staff as appropriate, including the **Student Support Officers** and the **CEO**.
2. The management or nominee calls an immediate meeting with the following staff to make decisions as to how to proceed:
 - **Training manager**
 - **Admin Manager**
 - **Student support officers**
 - **Trainers**

This group becomes the Critical Incident Team. One member of the team should scribe for all meetings to keep a record of all content and decisions made.

3. At the initial meeting of the Critical Incident Team the tasks are to:
 - Create a clear understanding of the known facts
 - Plan an immediate response
 - Plan ongoing strategies
 - Allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks.
4. Issues to be considered include:
 - Notifying next of kin/significant others.
 - Arrangements for informing staff and students
 - Guidelines to staff about what information to give students
 - Issuing a written bulletin to staff if the matter is complex
 - Briefing the **student support officer** and other staff; delegating a staff member to deal with inquiries
 - Liaising with necessary emergency services/hospital/medical
 - Managing media/publicity
 - Identifying those students and staff most closely involved and therefore most at risk.

These people are likely to be:

- Those directly involved
- Personal friends/family of those involved
- Others who have experienced a similar past trauma
- Other students and staff.



- Arrange a time and place for an initial group/individual debriefing session with counsellor/s. This session provides an opportunity to share the impact of the event, discuss various interpretations of the event in cultural/ethnic terms, the sense of vulnerability, the experience of painful emotions and the normalisation of reactions.
- Organise tasks, timelines and individual responsibilities for the next hours/days, etc. See the list below in Additional Action (48 – 72 hours)
- Plan ongoing feedback and regular meetings so the Critical Incident Team is in constant touch and working together
- If the case of a student's death, notify the **Admin Manager** and relevant teaching staff so records are stopped
- Confirm access to Academy emergency funds if necessary
- If the incident involves death or serious injury to an international student, assist the student's family as needed.

This assistance may include:

- o Liaising with consular staff
- o Hiring interpreters
- o Making arrangements for visits from family and friends, e.g. accommodation, travel, crisis support and referral to appropriate services
- o Making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation – obtaining a death certificate
- o Assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues – assisting with visa issues
- o Notifying the student's Homestay or accommodation provider.
- Complete a Critical Incident Report (see Appendix 9 for template).

Additional Action (48 – 72 hours)

Issues to be discussed at subsequent meetings of the Critical Incident Team may include:

- Who is the decision maker?
- Who will follow up?
- Availability of mobile phones
- Notification of and liaison with sponsor/agent if applicable
- Liaison with police, doctors, hospital etc.
- Hiring independent interpreters
- Death notices
- Funeral/memorial service requirements
- Refunds of tuition fees to pay repatriation or associated expenses

Critical Incident Policy & Procedure

- Copy of death certificate



CRICOS CODE:03887J RTO CODE:45652
Career Solutions Group Pty Ltd The Trustee for Career Solutions Trust

- Consideration of personal items and affairs (including household and academic)
 - Insurance matters (including OHSC cover, ambulance cover)
 - Formal stress management interventions required for students and/or staff (release from classes, leave, rescheduled assessments or exams)
 - Liaison with academic staff or supervisors
 - Arrangements for further support/counselling sessions for groups/individuals as necessary
 - Liaison with Department of Home Affairs re visa issues if studies will be interrupted
 - Fee issues if applicable
 - Legal issues if applicable, e.g. access to legal services, right to sue
-
- Condolence letters to family
 - Financial assistance for victim's family if residing in Australia
 - Roster of staff/students for hospital visits
 - Restore normal functioning of Academy Follow-up – Monitoring, Support, Evaluation
 - Assess need for ongoing support for affected students/staff
-
- Maintain contact with any injured/affected individuals
 - Critical Incident Team to evaluate effectiveness of critical incident management plan, with feedback from staff/students and relevant community personnel.
 - Be aware of any possible longer term issues, e.g. inquests, legal proceedings Policy

Reporting procedure

The critical incident policy works together with other policies and procedures serving the students by taking necessary actions during any incidents and record keeping of the incidents and action/s. The RTO management will identify and report all critical incidents which includes the incidents occurred outside of Australia that can affect a learner e.g. a natural disaster in the region or village where the learner comes from that has affected their family, and the learner returns to their home country immediately.

The management notifies the Department of Home Affairs of a change of the student's visa status in accordance with the ESOS Act within 14 days after the event specified below occurs:

- any termination of an accepted student's studies (whether as a result of action by the student or the provider or otherwise) before the student's course is completed;

Where a Critical Incident is identified the following procedures must occur. As part of the reporting process the **Admin Manager** shall confirm that the incident falls under the definition provided above of a 'Critical Incident.'



When a staff member feels, a critical incident has occurred, they are required to contact emergency services where required and contact the **Admin Manager /Student Support officer** immediately.

- A 'Critical Incident Report' (Appendix 9) is to be completed by the appropriate staff member involved in the incident or notification of the incident. Where appropriate the report will be completed/verified by the **Admin Manager** and given to the **CEO**.
- The 'Critical Incident Report' is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.
- The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires RTO to notify the appropriate government agency(s) 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).

Consultation of Action Plan

- The **Admin Manager /CEO** will assess the Critical Incident and implement a plan of action to follow up the Critical Incident.
- Where required, a meeting with appropriate staff/students will be organised to follow up the incident. This meeting will determine issues and responsibilities relating to:
 - o Assessing risks and response actions
 - o Liaison with emergency and other services
 - o Contact with students' relatives and other appropriate contacts
 - o Liaison with other external bodies, such as home stays, carers or foreign embassies, and
 - o Counselling and managing students and staff not directly involved in the incident.
 - o Media Management (Where required)
 - Where appropriate, RTO may be required to provide support to the family in the form of:
 - o Hiring interpreters
 - o Making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
 - o Obtaining a death certificate
 - o Assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues
 - o Assisting with Visa issues

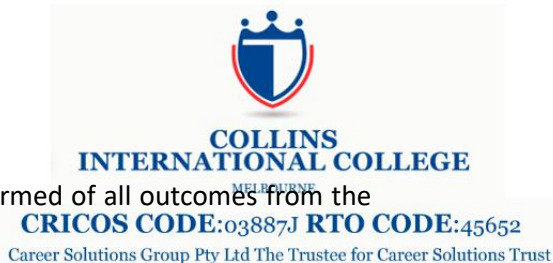
Follow up & Review of Critical Incident

Where a critical incident has occurred and all immediate action and reporting requirements have been fulfilled, RTO will conduct a follow up and review of the specific critical incident. This follow up and review will involve those staff members initially involved in the incident and action plan meeting and will ensure:

- Any required follow up such as de-briefing, counselling and prevention strategies have been completed.

Critical Incident Policy & Procedure

- All staff and students involved in the incident have been informed of all outcomes from the incident



- A recommendation as to the response to the critical incident is documented and included in the continuous improvement submissions
- Any further follow up required is documented and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff.

Record keeping requirements of a Critical Incident

All records of a critical incident are to be maintained by RTO and it is the responsibility of the **Admin Manager** to ensure that all paperwork, immediate action, and follow up action is completed.

Stress Management

The student counsellor is responsible for implementing and delivering stress management strategies, including the following stages:

1. Debriefing as soon as possible after the event on an individual or group basis
2. Further debriefing one or more days after the incident
3. Follow up 2 to 3 weeks later, individual or group basis.
4. Ongoing counselling as required.
5. Recovery time for staff involved and the Critical Incident Team members