

## PP08 CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to staff and students enabling them to quickly and decisively respond to an actual or potential emergency or critical incident which could threaten the safety of persons or property or significantly disrupt campus operations.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all the stakeholders of the Southern Cross Education Institute that consists of but not limited to all staff, students, and any other individual or group of people who may be affected by a critical incident and/or emergency.

### DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident	A traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• missing students;</li> <li>• severe verbal or psychological aggression;</li> <li>• death, serious injury or any threat of these;</li> <li>• natural disaster; and</li> <li>• issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.</li> </ul>
Emergency	An emergency is defined by the Emergency Management Act 2013 as: <i>'emergency means an emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria or endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing—</i> <i>(a) an earthquake, flood, wind-storm or other natural event; and</i> <i>(b) a fire; and</i> <i>(c) an explosion; and</i> <i>(d) a road accident or any other accident; and</i> <i>(e) a plague or an epidemic or contamination; and</i> <i>(f) a warlike act or act of terrorism, whether directed at Victoria or a part of Victoria or at any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth; and</i> <i>(g) a hi-jack, siege or riot; and</i> <i>(h) a disruption to an essential service'</i>
First Aid	Emergency treatment administered to an injured or sick person before professional medical care is available
National Code	The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
SCEI	Southern Cross Education Institute

### POLICY

1. Southern Cross Education Institute is committed to ensuring that:
  - 1.1. risk reduction measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a critical incident
  - 1.2. appropriate training and information resources are provided to staff and students

- 1.3. appropriate actions are taken in the event of a critical incident or potential critical incident and that these actions maximize the safety of staff and students
  - 1.4. an emergency response team manages critical incidents
  - 1.5. appropriate post incident procedures are followed such as support and counselling services
  - 1.6. an evaluation of the response to the critical incident is undertaken and that procedures are updated where improvements are identified. Staff and students will be encouraged to provide suggestions to assist this process.
2. Southern Cross Education Institute will ensure that critical incidents are minimised through:
- 2.1. Dissemination of this policy and emergency response procedures manual to all staff and students
  - 2.2. Providing information to staff and students to ensure they are aware of safety, prevention of risk and able to respond promptly to any perceived threats to health and/or safety
  - 2.3. Encouraging staff to raise safety issues with the CEO and/or Campus Manager by emailing the details of the issue.
  - 2.4. Encouraging students to raise concerns about health and safety to a staff member
  - 2.5. Regular emergency management training and information including emergency responses
  - 2.6. Ensuring that at least four (4) staff members have current training in First Aid management
  - 2.7. Staff who are undertaking travel for business related purposes should they experience a critical incident whilst interstate or overseas should contact the CEO and/or Campus Manager
3. In the event of an emergency, procedures outlined in the Emergency Response Procedures Manual are to be followed.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Critical Incident

- 1.1. Where a critical incident is identified by the CEO and/or Campus Manager, SCEI will activate its critical incident policy and procedure.
- 1.2. The National Code requires Southern Cross Education Institute to notify the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) as soon as practical after the incident and in the case of a student's death or other incident affecting the student's attendance, the incident will need to be reported via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).
- 1.3. All emergencies must be reported to the relevant emergency service:

Emergencies Ambulance / Fire Brigade / Police	000
State Emergency Service for storm, rain damage	13 25 00
Vic Roads for traffic Hazards and information in Victoria	13 11 70
Workplace incidents	1800 136 089 (Victoria) 1300 365 255 (South Australia)

### 2. Action in the event of a Critical Incident

- 2.1. At first signs of a staff member becoming aware of a critical incident, it must be reported to the CEO and Campus Manager as soon as practicable. If this is not possible then the Training Manager must be contacted and informed immediately.
- 2.2. On receipt of notification or information regarding a critical incident the CEO, Campus Manager or Training Manager must:
  - 2.2.1. Gain a clear understanding of the known facts
  - 2.2.2. If an emergency exists, contact the relevant emergency services by phoning 000 and follow the emergency response procedures manual
  - 2.2.3. If translators are required contact Translating and Interpreting Service by phoning 131 450
  - 2.2.4. If counselling services are required contact Life Line on 131 114

- 2.2.5. If the critical incident is at an offshore location, contact the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for advice on the best way to assist the student
- 2.2.6. If the critical incident involves international students, contact the student's next of kin or significant others and DHA, as soon as practicable
- 2.2.7. Relocate students and staff to a 'safe area', if necessary
- 2.2.8. Plan an immediate response using APLAN01 Critical Incident Action Plan
- 2.2.9. Allocate individual roles and responsibilities for managing the response
- 2.2.10. Briefing staff and delegating a staff member to deal with telephone and reception enquiries
- 2.2.11. Managing any media or publicity interest
- 2.3. When an international student dies or sustains serious injury, SCEI may be required to assist the student's family. This may include:
  - 2.3.1. hiring interpreters
  - 2.3.2. making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
  - 2.3.3. obtaining a death certificate
  - 2.3.4. assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues
  - 2.3.5. assisting with visa issues

### **3. Reporting a Critical Incident**

- 3.1. A RPRT02 Critical Incident Report is to be completed by the staff member involved in the incident or who received notification of the incident. The report is to be completed at the earliest opportunity and forwarded to the Campus Manager who will take any necessary action before forwarding to the CEO of the Southern Cross Education Institute. The report is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.
- 3.2. The following key details are to be included in the report:
  - 3.2.1. The time of the incident
  - 3.2.2. The location and nature of the incident
  - 3.2.3. The names and roles of persons directly involved in the critical incident
  - 3.2.4. The action taken by SCEI including any opportunities for improvement
  - 3.2.5. The organisations and people contacted

### **4. Following the Critical Incident**

- 4.1. A range of strategies will be in place to ensure that the appropriate support and monitoring is provided following a critical incident. These strategies include:
  - 4.1.1. Identify students and staff members most closely involved with the incident and ensure they are offered support and counselling
  - 4.1.2. Debriefing of staff and students including provision of accurate information
  - 4.1.3. Identifying any other persons who may be affected by the critical incident and providing access to support services as required
  - 4.1.4. Arranging a memorial service as appropriate
  - 4.1.5. Monitoring the progress of all those affected by the critical incident especially staff and students for signs of delayed stress
  - 4.1.6. Liaison with emergency services and other services involved
  - 4.1.7. Liaison with external bodies, such as home stays, carers, or foreign embassies
  - 4.1.8. Liaison and management of media agencies
  - 4.1.9. A recommendation as to the response to the critical incident is documented and included in the continuous improvement plan

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

PP98 First Aid Policy and Procedure  
MISC56 Emergency Response Procedures Manual  
RPT02 Critical Incident Report Form

### LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- Australian Standard 3745-2010: Planning for emergencies in facilities
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, standard 6, Element 6.9 and 6.9.2
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Victoria)
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015; Standard 8.5
- Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011 (South Australia)

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring compliance with this policy and procedure

Staff and Students are responsible for:

- adhering to this policy and procedure

<b>Author</b>	Compliance Manager
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