

1. Policy

- 1.1 Capital College ('the College') recognises the importance of an effective Critical Incident Policy and Procedure as it ensures that students and staff are provided appropriate support and information during the management of critical incidents
- 1.2 The following procedure identifies the action the College implements when responding to and managing critical incidents.
- 1.3 The College implements critical incident plans and reviews its management of each critical incident on completion of the process. Improvement actions are implemented where appropriate.
- 1.4 All appropriate stakeholders are notified in an appropriate and timely manner.
- 1.5 Support is offered to students' families where appropriate.
- 1.6 The College staff act in an appropriate professional and sensitive manner when responding to critical incidents.
- 1.7 The CEO is responsible for implementing this policy and reviewing its effectiveness in compliance with regulatory guidelines.
- 1.8 This policy is implemented in compliance with the requirements of the National Code of Practice 2018, part B Standard 6.

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.

Examples of critical incidents are:

- death, serious injury or any threat of these;
- natural disaster;
- on campus issues such as violence, sexual assault, serious issues resulting from drugs or alcohol abuse.

2. Procedure

- 2.1 This policy and procedure is provided to staff and discussed during staff induction.
Depending which Campus has the incident the contact will be the CEO if it occurs in Canberra and Campus Manager if it occurs in Southport. Note if in Southport the Campus Manager must still contact the CEO immediately.
- 2.2 Staff members and / or students are to contact the CEO/Campus Manager immediately if they believe an incident to be deemed a 'critical incident'.
- 2.3 If the CEO/Campus Manager is unavailable contact the Administration Manager. At the same time, if it is appropriate it is important to implement the plan in appendix 1 i.e. contact emergency services (if a person is injured or the situation requires immediate police intervention, or a fire exists or other) immediately call 000 and then inform CEO.
- 2.4 The CEO/Campus Manager will form a Critical Incident Team consisting the CEO/Campus Manager and appropriate College staff to manage the aftermath of the incident. The CEO will contact the Directors of the College to inform them of the incident.

The Critical Incident Team are responsible for:

- Gathering all the facts – times, people involved, places, circumstances, outcomes
- Contact College insurer and or legal assistance asap
- Accessing the students College file for information
- Formulating a plan for managing the situation
- Contacting students affected directly and indirectly
- Contacting and liaising with emergency services
- Contacting and liaising with the student's Education Agent
- Liaising with and offering support to student's family if the incident is a death
- If the critical incident results in the death or serious injury of an student, the team will contact the healthcare provider
- Contacting and liaising with embassies, DHA, Dept of Education and other external parties
- Liaising with staff
- Preparing formal communications
- Responding to enquiries
- Offering counselling to staff and students involved
- Access external professional services where appropriate
- Ensuring the management of the incident is in accordance with College Privacy Policy

When an student dies or sustains serious injury, the College provides assistance to the student's family. This may include:

- Making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
- Obtaining a death certificate
- Assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues
- Hiring interpreters
- Offering access to counselling services

2.5 In formulating the critical incident plan the team must:

- Ensure all the facts are collected and considered
- Discuss and consider possible management strategies
- Agree on strategies and timelines for managing the incident
- Allocate / assume tasks in managing the incident
- Agree reporting channels
- Disseminate information in a timely manner
- Agree methods for disseminating information
- Agree how to respond to enquiries from government, media, employers, friends, family, students, staff and other contacts
- Include a review process

2.6 Each team member records all action taken along with timelines. But no staff member is to talk to the media except the CEO under any circumstances

2.7 DHA and Department of Education are informed if the incident involves the death of an international student or the incident affects their attendance / course progress. PRISMS is employed for this purpose.

2.8 All documentation relating to each critical incident is stored in the critical incident file.

2.9 All staff and students involved in the incident are offered counselling.

2.10 The management of the Critical incident is reviewed on completion of the process and improvement action implemented where appropriate. The review includes:

- The effectiveness of strategies formulated and implemented

- Response times
- Levels of support provided to all parties
- Formal communications disseminated
- Handling of enquiries
- Liaising with external agencies
- Performance of Critical incident Team members in completing tasks
- Performance of external organisations accessed
- College documentation
- Appropriateness of policies and procedures

Staff training is initiated as a result of improvement actions. All improvement action is recorded in accordance with the College continuous improvement policy and procedure.

Documents to be employed when implementing this policy and procedure:

- Student files
- Privacy Policy
- Critical Incident Recording Form
- Student Welfare Handbook

Revision history

Revision Date		Revised by
25 May 19	Policy and procedure created	CEO
25 May 2020	Policy reviewed	CEO

Appendix 1**Critical Incident Plan****Immediate Action (within 24 hours)**

The steps include:

- a) Identify the nature of the critical incident
- b) The person, who is initially notified of the incident, be that the receptionist or homestay coordinator or student services officer should get as much information as possible regarding the nature of the critical incident.

Document:

- i. Where did the injury occur?
- ii. How severe is the nature of the injury?
- iii. Where is the student now?
- iv. Is the student in hospital?
- v. Has an ambulance been called?

c) Assignment of duties to college staff:

i) If the student is on campus:

- Ensure appropriate intervention to minimise additional injury;
- Provide first aid where necessary;
- Ascertain seriousness of injury;
- Call ambulance if required;
- If ambulance is required, accompany student to hospital;

Completion of a critical incident report [see appendix b]

- a) Media response if required.
- b) Inform critical incident team leader of any relevant factual information to be conveyed to the media liaison.
- c) Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved.
- d) If the student is seriously injured or requires hospitalisation, we should enlist aid of overseas consular staff to assist the family if they are travelling to Australia, with interpreting services to aid in communication with the relevant medical services and with counselling services if required.
- e) We should assess whether other staff and students have been affected by the incident and provide support and counselling as required.
- f) We should also contact DIBP and inform them of the incident.

Additional Action (48 – 72 hours)

- a) Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved (ongoing).
- b) Provide staff and students with factual information as appropriate.
- i) Depending on the nature of the incident, it may be appropriate for the principal to address and inform them of the facts of the incident and the condition of the student concerned.
- c) Restore normal functioning and college school delivery.

i) Where the incident occurred on college/school premises, there will be other procedures to follow in relation to any possible safety issues and our legal obligations. The critical incident committee should identify the appropriate staff member to follow up these issues.

Follow-up – monitoring, support, evaluation

a) Identification of any other people who may be affected by critical incident and access of support services for affected community members.

i) The effects of traumatic incidents can be delayed in some people. Our need to be aware of any emerging need for support and/or counselling.

b) Maintain contact with any injured/affected parties.

c) If the student is in hospital for some time, we need to maintain contact with the student and their family:

i) Support and assistance for the student and family

ii) Depending on the condition of the student, we could provide college work for the student to enable them to remain in touch with college activities

iii) Discuss with the family any required changes to the enrolment of the student e.g. suspension or cancellation of enrolment and make any changes required on PRISMS

d) Provision of accurate information to staff and students where appropriate.

i) Depending on the nature of the incident, it may be appropriate for the Principal to address and inform them of the facts of the incident and the condition of the student concerned.

Evaluation of critical incident management

e) The critical incident committee should be held to evaluate the critical incident report and the effectiveness of the management plan and to make modifications if required.

f) Be aware of any possible longer term effects on staff and student well-being e.g. inquests, legal proceedings.

Resources

The nature of critical incidents is such that resources cannot always be provided in anticipation of events. The critical incident committee uses its discretion to provide adequate resources – both physical and personnel – to meet the needs of specific situations. Staff will be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses.

Managing the Media

a) A Director should normally handle all initial media calls and manage access of the media to the scene, and to staff, students and relatives,

b) Determine what the official college response will be.

c) All facts should be checked before speaking to the media.

d) If accurate information is unavailable or the issue is of a sensitive nature, explain that questions cannot be answered at this time.

e) Avoid implying blame or fault for any part of the incident as this can have significant legal implications.

f) The Principal may delegate media liaison to another member of staff.

Evaluation and review of management plan

a) After every critical incident, a meeting of the critical incident committee will be held to evaluate the critical incident report and the effectiveness of the management plan and to make modifications if required. If appropriate this process will incorporate feedback from all staff, students and local community representatives.

