

Critical Incident Policy

Purpose

KCA Education (KCA) recognises the duty of care owed to its students and that planning for the successful management of a critical incident is essential to its operations.

Scope

This policy applies to KCA team members and students whilst on any registered campus or location.

Responsibility

Responsibility (R)	Accountability (A)	Consult (C)	Inform (I)
Operations Manager	Administration Manager	Chief Executive Officer	Quality Assurance

Applicable Legislation/Contracts

- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- ESOS Act
- VET Quality Framework – National Standards for RTO and AQF

Related Policies/Procedures

- QMSP009: Student Support Services Policy
- QMSWP:007: Critical Incident Workflow

Reference

National Code: Standard 6- Overseas student support services: Clause 6.8, 6.9.

KCA has implemented a 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 and remedial action taken by the registered provider for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

Policy

In the event of a critical incident, KCA recognises that appropriate infrastructure must be in place to ensure the provision of all necessary support services.

This document outlines KCA’s policy, support mechanisms and procedures for managing a critical incident. This policy will ensure that KCA 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.

Under Standard 6 of the National Code 2018, Overseas Student Support Services, KCA will support students to adjust to study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory academic progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course.

The intention of Standard 6 is to ensure that appropriate support services are available to international students to ease the transition into life and study in Australia and allow access to appropriate assistance for the student as needed.

Under Standard 6.8 the registered provider must have a documented critical incident policy together with procedures that covers the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident, required follow-up to the incident, and records of the incident and action taken.

Definitions

KCA understands that as defined by the National Code a critical incident is 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:

- missing students;
- severe verbal or psychological aggression;
- death, serious injury or any threat of these;
- natural disaster; and
- issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.

Non-life threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents.

Procedures

1. Critical Incident Team / Coordinating Group

When a critical incident occurs, the CEO, or their delegate will call a meeting with the appropriate staff to form a Critical Incident Team.

The Critical Incident Team is responsible for:

- assessing risks and response actions
- liaison with emergency and other services
- contact with students' relatives and other appropriate contacts
- liaison with other external bodies, such as home stays, carers or foreign embassies, and
- counselling and managing students and staff not directly involved in the incident.

2. Action Plan

The Critical Incident Team will set in motion a critical incident action plan to manage various aspects arising from the incident, including communication strategies.

This will include:

- creating and disseminating a plan and its procedures
- a review of the plan, and
- staff development and training.

3. Media Management

A media management process will be included in the management plan to ensure the most positive and supportive response from the media.

- Reporting and recording of incident and action taken

The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires the RTO to notify DET and DoHA as 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). All aspects of the incident and its management will be recorded on the student files.

- Follow-up and evaluation

KCA staff will be made aware of the critical incident policy and procedures and be given appropriate training to ensure the duty of care for international students is uppermost in their minds. A review and evaluation of the response to the critical incident will be conducted and the procedures reviewed by the Critical Incident Team and/or other stakeholders.

4. Resources

Changes to the policy and procedures, including updating resources, will be made as soon as practicable following the review and evaluation.

Critical Incident Procedures

KCA's Critical Incident procedures detailed below include:

- Reporting and recording
- Flow chart and detailed action plan sample
- Evaluation and review checklist
- Staff training
- Resources and local links

Any action taken in regard to a critical incident will be recorded to include outcomes or evidence if the incident is referred to another person or agency.

If an international student dies or other critical events involving students occur, KCA of necessity, will take on many of the tasks which would normally be dealt with by the family of the victim were the incident to have occurred in the student's home country.

KCA has in place efficient, sensitive and supportive strategies for dealing with a critical incident and provides support to members of staff, students and others in the community who are involved.

Reporting and Recording

The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires the RTO to notify DET and DoHA as 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).

When an international student dies or sustains serious injury, KCA may be required to assist the student's family.

This may include:

- hiring interpreters
- making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
- obtaining a death certificate
- assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues
- assisting with visa issues

In addition, the following need to be notified:

- Home stay or accommodation provider

- Library
- IT Services
- Utilities

On-campus Incidents

If the incident is on campus, the first action will be to contact the emergency services - fire, ambulance or police – as would be the case with other WH&S matters. The PEO or their delegate 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 PEO, or their delegate who will communicate other staff as appropriate.

Key Details to be reported

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).

The staff member receiving the news contacts the PEO, or their delegate / Head of the Critical Incident Team. The PEO or their delegate urgently deals with an emergency situation then calls a meeting with the staff involved to make decisions as to how to proceed.

The staff most likely to be present will be:

- Each PEO, or their delegate
- PEO
- Administrator
- Trainer

The Critical Incident Team

At the initial meeting, the task of the group is to:

- create for themselves a clear understanding of the known facts.
- plan an immediate response.
- plan ongoing strategies.
- allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks.

Immediate Response

Issues to be considered:

1. Contact with next of kin/significant others - what is the most appropriate manner of contact?
2. Arrangements for informing staff and students.
3. Guidelines to staff about what information to give students.
4. A written bulletin to staff if the matter is complex.
5. Briefing staff and delegating a staff member to deal with telephone/counter inquiries.
6. Managing media/publicity
7. Identification of those students and staff members most closely involved and therefore most at risk.

- Those directly involved
 - Personal friends/family of those involved
 - Others who have experienced a similar past trauma
 - Other students, staff, supervisors etc
8. Arrange a time and place for an initial group/individual debriefing session with Counsellor/s. In this session, an opportunity is given to share the impact of the event, discuss various interpretations of the event in cultural/ethnic terms, the resulting sense of vulnerability, the experience of painful emotions and the normalisation of reactions.
 9. Organise a tasks timetable for the next hour/s, day/s etc.
 10. Plan ongoing feedback and regular meetings so that the coordinating team is continually in touch and working together.
 11. Confirm access to emergency funds if necessary.

NB: One member of the team should record for all meetings to keep records of content and decisions.

Critical Incident Flowchart

Staff member(s) (witness to incident or first contacted) - gather factual information and Contact Emergency Services - Dial 000





<p>Staff member(s) (witness to incident or first contacted) ...</p> <p>Ensure safety & welfare of staff and students</p> <p>Contact first aid officer</p> <p>Administer first-aid until ambulance arrives</p>
<p>Note: Assess situation: focus on immediate safety of other students and staff</p>



NB: Once police or fire brigade arrive at the College they will determine if other resources such as State Emergency Services (SES) are required to assist. Critical Incident Team member to liaise with emergency services

<p>Staff: Contact Critical Incident Coordinator</p> <p>Staff: Give facts of the situation</p> <p>Staff: Receive advice from Critical Incident Coordinator on debriefing & counselling</p> <p>Director International incoming enquiries (and outgoing information via web, phone...)</p>	<p>Contact team leader within the hour</p> <p>Debrief and counselling info as soon as practicable</p>
<p>Critical Incident Coordinator - Manage the media</p> <p>Prepare a written statement</p>	<p>Within 24 hours</p>



Campus Support officer : Inform colleagues	Within 24 hours Receive briefing from critical incident team
	
PEO, or their delegate contact parents or families / friends of affected persons	Within 24 hours
	
PEO complete "Incident Report" form	Within 5 days

Additional Action (where appropriate)

PEO, or their delegate: Convene brief meeting of the Critical Incident Team to:	
discuss intervention plan	obtain executive support



Contact Local Support Personnel – counsellors, hospital, medical etc.



PEO, or their delegate - Convene full staff meeting of teaching and administrative staff to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss action plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> allow staff response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> decide on how students will be informed or given additional information



PEO: Set up a recovery room in the college:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide fluids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comfortable chairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support personnel



PEO, or their delegate: Inform students of:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facts of the incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> school actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> counselling services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> allow student discussion or response



Director International convenes with first aid officers...

Identify "at risk" students and staff

Be aware of others who have experienced trauma

List of students involved



PEO, or their delegate contact parents or families of "at risk" students and staff



Director International - Arrange debriefing for "at risk" students and staff
Organise for referrals to professional counsellors if required



Marketing - Inform all parents via the College's website	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facts of the critical incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the college's response plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> possible reaction of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sources of help for families
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourage two-way communication between parents and the college 	



Critical Incident Coordinating Group: Restore the school to regular routine as soon as practicable



Critical Incident Coordinating Group: Obtain updated factual information – continue to inform staff, students, families



Critical Incident Coordinating Group: Continue to monitor well-being of students and staff
All staff to report new information to Critical Incident Coordinating Group
Staff may use rapport with students to counsel or refer on to professional body...
Critical Incident Coordinating Group to be informed of all referrals

Recovery time for staff involved

Checklist for Staff Managing Critical Incidents

The PEO or their delegate will seek information about the incident and will request that the information is not immediately made public.

The PEO, or their delegate or nominee will urgently deal with an emergency matter then call a meeting with the following staff or their nominees as a Critical Incident Team – PEO and the Senior Management Team.

Response Checklist

As soon as possible, the PEO, or their delegate will liaise with relevant staff to prepare a communication plan and nominate a spokesperson.

Communication

- response and ongoing strategies including individual roles and responsibilities
- liaison with police, doctors, hospital staff and other relevant professionals
- legal assistance if required

- follow-up letters to family
- document and record incident report
- Support for family, friends and staff
- next of kin (parents/guardian) to be contacted and support provided to family and friends
- arrangements made for visits from family and friends, e.g. accommodation, travel, crisis support and referral to appropriate services

Checklist for Follow up, Review and Evaluation

How well were the following actions undertaken by the Critical Incident Coordinating Group? Please add comments below if you wish to clarify your choice.

1 = poorly; 5 = very well, most appropriately Question	1	2	3	4	5
Decision maker clear					
Follow up clear					
Availability of mobile phones					
Notification of and liaison with Agent if applicable					
Arrangements for visits to/from Family					
Liaison with Police, Doctors, Hospital Staff					
Hiring Independent Interpreters					
Death Notices					
Funeral/Memorial Service Arrangements					
Refund of student's fees to pay repatriation or associated expenses					
Copy of Death Certificate					
Consideration of personal items and affairs (household and academic)					
Insurance Matters, OHSC Coverage, Ambulance Cover					
Formal Stress Management interventions required for students and/or staff (release from classes, leave, rescheduled assessment or exams)					
Liaison with Academic Staff					
Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required					
Liaison with Department of Immigration and Citizenship if studies will be interrupted					
Fees issue to be resolved for student unable to continue with their studies					
Legal Issues: helping students get access to legal assistance if required.					
Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required					
Follow up condolence or other letters to Family					
Financial Assistance for families of affected person(s) if residing in Australia					
Organising students/staff for hospital visits					

Critical Incident Recovery Timeline

In order to successfully manage a critical incident, KCA will always take appropriate action and provide support during and after a critical incident. The recovery timeline following a critical incident will vary depending on the circumstances.

Immediately (and within 24 hours)

- Gather the facts;
- Ensure safety and welfare of staff and students and arrange for first-aid if necessary;
- Where possible notify the time and place of the debriefing to all relevant persons;
- Manage the media;
- Set up a recovery room;
- Keep staff, students and parents informed.
- Keep parents informed.

Within 48-72 hours

- Arrange counselling as needed;
- Provide opportunities for staff and students to talk about the incident;
- Provide support to staff and helpers;
- Debrief all relevant persons;
- Restore normal functioning as soon as possible;

Within the First Month

- Arrange a memorial service, if appropriate;
- Encourage parents to participate in meeting to discuss students' welfare;
- Identify behavioural changes and the possibility of post-traumatic stress disorder and refer to Health Contacts for Mental Health Services;
- Monitor progress of hospitalised staff or students;
- Monitor mental and physical health of all helpers.

In the Longer Term

- Monitor staff and students for signs of delayed stress and the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder - refer for specialised treatment;
- Provide support if needed;

In the Long Term

- Plan for and be sensitive to anniversaries, inquests and legal proceedings
- Access specialist support if needed