

Critical Incidents

POLICY

Technical Institute of Victoria (TIV) understands the importance of meeting the obligations of its duty of care in providing the highest possible standard of health and safety for staff, students and visitors and other persons working at the Institute.

We want to ensure that we are able to respond swiftly and effectively in the event of a critical incident and to ensure this is achieved. All staff will receive training on the actions that need to be undertaken following a critical incident involving the Institute. These actions include the initial response to the incident, follow-up, records of the incident and actions taken, and improvements to procedures as a consequence.

Technical Institute of Victoria (TIV) aims to be compliant with relevant legislation and standards so that exposure of persons to health and safety risks arising from critical incidents is avoided or minimized and physical and psychological trauma are reduced.

Critical Incidents

0. DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident: is any traumatic (event) or threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents are:

- missing students;
- severe verbal or psychological aggression;
- death/ suicide, serious injury, violence or any threat of these;
- widespread infection/ contamination or the threat of these;
- natural disaster;
- substantial damage to facilities;
- deprivation of liberty and/ or civil unrest;
- matters of high risk to personal safety;
- issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse; and
- publicity with the potential to significantly damage/disrupt the reputation or operations of Technical Institute of Victoria.

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

Critical Incident Team (CIT) means the team that will be formed in the event of a critical incident to coordinate the management of the incident.

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to detail the system in place for dealing should a critical incident occur in association with a student's training and/ or assessment through the Institute.

1.2 Our critical incident procedure:

- (a) Outlines the responsibilities of those involved in with a critical incident;
- (b) Outlines the steps involved in responding to a critical incident; and
- (c) Provides a checklist of tasks to be performed as a result of a critical incident.

1.3 It caters for critical incidents both on and off the campus both within Australia and overseas.

1.4 Critical Incidents involving International Students are subject to the requirements of National Standard 6 (Appendix I)

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2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Critical Incident Team (CIT) will consist of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), RTO Manager, Administration Manager, Domestic/VTG Manager, Course Coordinators and other delegate as required.

2.2 The CEO acts as the Head of the CIT. He may delegate the responsibility to the RTO Manager for liaising with emergency services, relevant regulatory authorities, Department of Education (DE), Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), Skills Victoria, media and for compiling a written report of the incident.

2.3 The Course Coordinators will liaise with the trainers/ assessors to ensure the appropriate handling of student data.

2.4 The RTO Manager and/or Course Coordinators will:

- (a) Communicate with students, Institute, relevant regulatory bodies and the Community;
- (b) Prepare letter of condolence to family/next of kin;
- (c) Organise pastoral assistance for family of victim if in Australia;
- (d) Organise formal counseling;
- (e) Make arrangements for visits to/from family/next of kin including arrangements for meeting at the airport and hotel reservations;
- (f) Hire appropriate certified interpreters/translators (not students);
- (g) Liaise with Doctors and Hospital Staff/Coroner/Funeral Director;
- (h) Obtain authorisation from next of kin for disposal of personal effects and affairs (household and academic).

2.5 The RTO Manager/CEO is responsible for:

- (a) Organising insurance matters and OSHC/ambulance cover,
- (b) In the event of a student death, refund student fees as appropriate;
- (c) Organise formal counselling and stress management interventions required staff ;
- (d) Review legal issues including advising family of process/access to assistance if needed.

3 PREPARATION FOR POSSIBLE CRITICAL INCIDENTS

3.1 All staff will receive critical incident training as part of their induction procedure.

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- 3.2 All students will be informed at their induction of the appropriate staff member to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- 3.3 At least a member of the CIT team will undergo first aid training with an appropriate registered provider.

4 PROCEDURE TO COPE WITH AN INCIDENT

- 4.1 The following steps are to be followed in the event of critical incident occurring in the TIV building.
- 4.2 The staff member who witnesses, or is the first to be informed about an actual or potential critical incident is to assume responsibility for alerting the most senior Critical Incident Team member available as soon as possible. Use Critical Incident Form to complete the report (Form 028).
- 4.3 The staff member on the scene of the incident, or the first one there, is to assess the situation whilst being mindful of their own safety.
- 4.4 The staff member on the scene will contact emergency services by dialing 000 where appropriate. In addition they are responsible for alerting the most senior member of staff available and assisting with first aid and crowd control where appropriate.
- 4.5 Where there is no threat to personal safety in doing so, the staff member on scene will take steps to minimise further damage or injury. This may involve organising willing bystanders to provide support.
- 4.6 Upon arrival of a more senior member of staff or a member of the Critical Incident Team, they will assume authority for control of the critical incident situation. A member of the Critical Incident Team will assume ultimate authority until the arrival of emergency services.
- 4.7 Upon arrival of emergency services, they will assume authority for control of the critical incident situation.
- 4.8 As soon as possible, the first staff member on scene will prepare an initial incident report, using the Injury Report Form (Form 029).
- 4.9 The Critical Incident Team will meet to review the situation and allocate tasks and responsibilities involved in responding to the incident.
- 4.10 In line with our Continuous Improvement procedure, the Critical Incident Team will organise de-briefing to evaluate response procedures and make recommendations for handling future critical incidents.

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4.11 The CEO or Authorised Delegate provides a written report of the incident.

5 FOLLOW UP

5.1 After the critical incident has occurred, then the CEO and/or RTO Manager shall bring together all relevant staff members.

5.2 These members shall be required to prepare a report of their impressions and the outcomes of the critical incident drill.

5.3 Any corrective action shall be conducted using the continuous improvement process but the person identifying the problems shall not be penalised for bringing them to the attention of management.

5.4 All discussions and reports shall be integrated into an Event Report and submitted to the relevant combat agency

6 RECORDS

6.1 Records of the critical incident advice, resolution procedure and debrief shall be retained for 10 years after the event.

Appendix I: Critical Incidents (National Standard 6)

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This procedure is to recognise the duty of care owed by the Institute to its students and the process for managing critical incidents if and when they occur.

2.0 Responsibility

2.1 The CEO is responsible for the implementation of this procedure and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implement its requirements.

3.0 Requirements

3.1 As a CRICOS registered Institute we have a documented critical incident policy together with procedures that cover 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires the Institute to notify DE and DIBP as soon as practical after the incident and in the case of a student's death or other absence affecting the student's participation, the incident will need to be reported via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

3.4 When an international student dies or sustains serious injury, the Institute 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

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3.5 Following a critical incident analyse the Institute response and processes and implement improvements where indicated.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 A critical incident is 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'.

5.0 Method

5.1 Any Institute staff member receiving news or information regarding a critical incident must contact the CEO and/or RTO Manager as soon as practicable. If this is not possible then the most senior person available will be contacted and informed.

5.2 On receipt of news or information regarding a critical incident the CEO and/or RTO Manager or senior person will:

- Create for themselves a clear understanding of the known facts
- If an emergency exists contact the relevant emergency services by phoning 000
- If translators are required contact Translating and Interpreting Service by phoning 131 450
- If counselling services are required contact Life Line on 131 114
- If the critical incident is at an offshore location contact the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for advice on the best way to assist the student
- Plan an immediate response.
- Plan ongoing strategies.
- Allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks.

5.3 Based on an evaluation of the critical incident the CEO and/or RTO Manager or most senior person will, where appropriate, make implement the following:

- Contact with next of kin/significant others
- Informing Institute staff and students.
- Prepare a guideline to staff about what information to give students.
- Prepare a written bulletin to staff and students if the matter is complex.
- Briefing staff and delegating a staff member to deal with telephone/counter inquiries.
- Managing media/publicity
- Identify students and staff members most closely involved with the incident and ensure they are offered support and counselling.
- Arrange a time and place for an initial group/individual debriefing session with Counsellor/s
- Arrange access to emergency funds if necessary.

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5.4 Record the incident and the following key details to report include

- The time of the incident
- The location and nature of the incident
- The names and roles of persons directly involved in the critical incident
- The action taken by the Institute including any opportunities for improvement
- The organisations and people contacted by the Institute.