



CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

This policy and procedure is designed to ensure ACE complies with the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018; and the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 which states:

- “The RTO determines the support needs of individual learners and provides access to the educational and support services necessary for the individual learner to meet the requirements of the training product as specified in training packages or VET accredited courses” Standard 1.7 - Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- “The registered provider must 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.” Standard 6 - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (**International students only**)

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Student Engagement prior to Enrolment Policy and Procedure
- Formalisation of Enrolment Policy and Procedure
- Student Support Policy and Procedure

Scope

This policy/procedure applies to all students (International and domestic students) and staff of ACE. The critical incidents covered in this procedure may occur at the training location or after hours.

Definitions

Critical Incident	Is a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which is likely to cause extreme stress, fear or injury involving ACE, its staff and/or students. Non-life threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents although serious illness or injury would probably not be considered a critical incident but a case-to-case basis is considered.
Death	Accidental, Suicide, Death as a result of injury or terminal illness, or Murder.
Serious Illness	Illness which causes the deterioration of the student /staff member’s health over time.
Serious Injury	Illness which prevents or severely affects the student’s ability to continue with or complete the course.
Traumatic Event:	A traumatic event is not limited to, but could include: Missing students; any fatality or serious injury; a serious traffic collision; murder or suicide; physical/sexual assault or domestic violence; severe verbal or psychological aggression; fire; explosion or bomb threat; a hold up or attempted robbery; serious threats of violence, and storms or natural disasters; drug or alcohol abuse.



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POLICY

1.1 ACE ensures that critical incidents are documented, reported and appropriately actioned and followed-up. ACE will take immediate steps to manage the critical incident, the follow-up required after the incident, and record the details of the incident and action taken by ACE during or following the incident.

1.2 The following Instances of critical incidents may include, but not limited to:

- Missing students
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Death, serious injury or any threat of these
- Natural disaster
- Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse; and
- Other –life threatening events

Examples of critical incidents that may occur to a Student are:

- **Death** (Including death of a dependent residing in Australia)
- Accidental death, suicide, death as a result of an injury or terminal illness, or murder
- **Serious Illness** which causes the deterioration of the student/staff member's health over time.
- **Serious Injury** which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to continue with or complete the course.

1.3 ACE will ensure that all appropriate staff that may be involved in a critical incident or management of the incident, will have contact information available to them for the police, the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE), Department of Home Affairs (**international students only**) and the parents of the student, if appropriate or any other organization that may be able to assist in such a situation for example Community/Multicultural organisations or phone – counselling services.

1.4 **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 CEO and/or Student Support Officer (SSO) 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 CEO and/or SSO who will communicate to other staff as appropriate. **Emergency 24 hrs contact number for ACE is 0405 546 581.**

1.5 ACE ensures that any action taken in regard to a critical incident is recorded to include outcomes or evidence if the incident is referred to another person or agency. In recording outcomes and evidence, ACE takes into consideration the information privacy principles. ACE will maintain and inform students list of designated members of ACE's staff to be the official point of contact for students during normal office hours.

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2.1 Where a Critical Incident is identified the following procedures must occur. As part of the reporting process the SSSO from the effected student's campus will confirm that the incident falls under the definition of a 'Critical Incident'.

2.2 Reporting

- When a staff member feels a critical incident has occurred they are required to contact emergency services where required and contact the CEO and SSO from the student's relevant campus immediately.
- If immediate action is required, then emergency services (police, ambulance or fire brigade as appropriate) are to be contacted and advised of the situation. All personnel are to be cleared from any dangerous area. Contact should be made with the family of any student involved.
- A *Critical Incident Report* shall 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 SSSO and given to the CEO.
- The *Critical Incident Report* shall contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.
- In the event of serious injury or death; ACE shall notify appropriate government agencies Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) and Department of Home Affairs (**international students only**) as soon as practical after the incident. In the case of a student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance, the incident shall be reported via Student Management System through SVTS and through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) for (**international students only**).

2.3 Processes

During Operating Hours

- Students and staff are required to notify any critical incident involving a student immediately to the SSO of the student's campus as well as the CEO.
- SSO/CEO will consider the details and severity of the incident and determine what action needs to be taken.
- If the incident is not severe and can be resolved with resources available SSO/CEO will initiate the action to ensure the appropriate level of support is provided.
- If the incident is severe and warrants a level of support/assistance from external resources SSO/CEO will initiate action to arrange that support. Personal details may be provided to the relevant emergency service/s if the student involved is incapacitated and unable to provide these particulars themselves.
- SSO will determine, based on the severity of the incident and in conjunction with ACE's Policies, whether other ACE staff and/or family members of the student/s involved need to be advised of the details of the incident. The SSO shall take the necessary action.

Outside Operating Hours

- Students and staff are required to notify any critical incident involving a student immediately to the CEO on the 24 hour access mobile number 0405 546 581.
- CEO will gain access to the records of the student/s involved (located at Head Office) to enable verification of details to any emergency services involved.
- CEO, with the support of the SSO from the student's relevant campus will determine if there is any care or support required to be provided and make the necessary arrangements.
- CEO and SSO will determine in conjunction with ACE's Solicitor (If required) whether other ACE's staff or family members need to be advised of the details of the incident. They will take the necessary action.

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Follow Up Action

The SSO from the student's relevant campus will undertake the following:

1. Follow up and complete de-briefing, counseling and prevention
2. Inform all staff and students involved in the incident of all outcomes from the incident.
3. Provide a recommendation as to the response to the critical incident is documented and included in the Incident Register.
4. Any further follow up required is documented and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff.
5. Monitor the condition of and provide appropriate support to the student/s through any period of treatment/convalence;
6. Co-ordinate the provision of any ACE based resources required during any period of treatment/convalence;
7. Liaise with the police and other emergency services personnel;
8. Advise and assist any family members who decide to travel to Australia for **(international students only)** to support the student/s with travel and accommodation requirements;
9. Ensure that detailed records are maintained on the student's records of the incident. These records must be recorded in date order and kept in the student file. This file is located at Head Office.

Additional Support

Where appropriate, ACE may be required to provide support to the family in the form of:

- 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 referral to a migration agent for assistance with visa matters **(international students only)**.

Concluding Steps

In the event of the death of a student, SSO / CEO will ensure the following is undertaken:

1. Contact the family and determine their wishes regarding repatriation of the body, personal effects and religious observances etc. **(international students only)**.
1. Coordinate the repatriation of the body and personal effects in line with the family's wishes and in accordance with Australian regulations **(international students only)**.
2. Organise the sending of a letter of condolence to the family (if deemed appropriate as per the discretion of the SSO or CEO);
3. Ensure all administrative actions are taken e.g. Adjust the student records database, process any tuition refunds, and notify PRISMS - **international students only**.

Public Relations

Where the circumstances of a critical incident involving a student/s is considered to have some public relations implication, the CEO is the only authorised spokesperson to speak to media representatives on behalf of ACE.

Strategic Management

The SSO, under the leadership of the CEO, manages responses, the continuity of business operations and contingencies, and the recovery and review phases.

Operational Management

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Trainers, under the leadership of the SSO and CEO, manage the incident scene until the arrival of Emergency Services in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Procedures.

Responsibilities

CEO
Student Support Officers
Trainers

Policy Base

- Standards for Registered Training Providers 2015 – Standard 1.7
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 – Standard 6

Forms/Record Keeping

Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Critical Incident Report	Head Office	Student Support Services Officer	7 years from date of incident

Continuous Improvement

This policy and procedures will be reviewed by the following staff annually to improve the orientation process, ensure its currency and that it shall meet the needs and expectation of students.

- CEO
- Compliance Manager
- Student Support Officers

Primary Documents (Related to this Policy)

Form

- Critical Incident Form

Secondary Documents (Impacted by this Policy)

- Student Handbook
- Student Support Service Guide

Version History

Version	Date	Description of changes
7.0	01.03.2022	Updated document to include Version History section; and other minor changes.
6.0	01.01.2021	Currently released version

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