

Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

1. Policy

Vocational Training Institute (VTI) has designed and implemented this policy in line with ESOS Act (2000), Education for Overseas Students Amendment Act 2014, National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students, Standard 6.8 & 6.9 of National Code 2018 and Standard 8.5 of Standards for Registered Training Organizations (SRTO) to ensure that VTI has formal mechanism to protect the interest and welfare of all individuals who are involved in critical incidents.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure ensures that any critical incident, which occurs, is documented, reported and appropriately actioned by VTI.

3. Scope

This policy relates to critical incidents directly involving VTI staff, students, visitors or contractors.

4. Definitions

Critical Incident: An event related to the operation of VTI, student or Staff member which are of such a serious nature that it has impacted or is a risk of impacting on the health, welfare, safety or interests of any involved individuals or VTI itself. These are the highest level of incident which may affect the VTI's operations and referred to crisis, emergency or other similar expressions.

It is a traumatic event, which is likely to cause extreme physical and/or emotional distress involving VTI, its staff and/or students etc. These 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
- issues such as domestic violence, physical, sexual or other abuse
- other non-life threatening events
- threat of widespread infection or contamination
- pandemics - an epidemic of infectious disease that has spread across a large region; for instance, multiple continents, or even worldwide
- information which has the potential to negatively affect the reputation of the VTI in the media and/or wider community
- any critical incident affecting students off campus while representing the VTI.

Serious Illness: Illness which causes the deterioration of the student /staff member's health over the period of time.

Serious Injury: Illness, which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to continue with or complete the course.

Death: Accidental Suicide, Death as a result of injury or terminal illness, or Murder.

Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT): This is a designated team of VTI personnel which consists of at least one member who is formally trained to deal with critical incidents. Other members should also be trained, at least internally by the qualified member.

Members will likely comprise:

1. Chief Executive Officer
2. Operations Manager
3. Compliance Manager
4. Training and Administration Manager
5. Administration Staff
6. Student Support Officer

Defusing an Explosive Situation: An intervention with an objective of preventing a violent critical incident during an explosive situation where there is a high degree of agitation.

5. Policy Statement

5.1 Every critical incident is unique and will need to be dealt with differently according to the nature and scale of the incident and the needs of the individuals affected. This policy does not apply to minor incidents for which the VTI provides support and assistance through Student Support Services.

5.2 Where VTI staff witness an event that may be considered a critical incident, or where staff are aware of an event which may either indicate or escalate to a critical incident, the Critical Incident form will be filled outlining details such as the type of incident, the exact location and details of any person or persons who might be injured, in distress, or at risk and Procedures will be followed as mentioned below in section 6.

5.3 VTI undertakes to exercise a duty of care to all individuals who access its services and visit its premises. From time to time, events of a critical nature may occur that require immediate, systematic and comprehensive organizational processes. Being witness to or being involved in a critical incident can have a deep and lasting impact on individuals and groups. Early and appropriate action during and following a critical incident can do much to assist in minimizing the effects of these incidents on the interests and welfare of involved parties.

5.4 By keeping these severity of impacts of these situations in mind, VTI shall:

- Support pro-active strategies which will help minimize the occurrence of some critical incidents;
- Encourage the early identification of potentially critical incidents within VTI;
- Ensure critical incidents are managed in line with established quality management and occupational health and safety objectives and emergency or disaster procedures;
- Provide clearly accessible and understandable directions for all personnel caught up in a critical incident;
- Assist people to cope with critical incidents by providing appropriate practical and psychological support;
- Provide appropriate assistance to people who may require longer term assistance;
- Ensure ongoing training, support and review of the critical incident management team.

5.5 VTI will maintain a written record of any critical incident and any remedial action taken by the VTI for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

5.6 VTI will maintain and publicise to students a list of designated VTI staff to be their official point of contact for students during normal office hours.

6. Procedure

VTI has formal streamlined procedure to follow in event of any critical incident happened as follows:

In case critical incident happened during operating hours:

- Students and staff are required to notify any critical incident immediately to the CIRT member.
- CIRT member 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 CIRT member 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 CIRT member will initiate action to arrange that support. Personal details may be provided to the relevant emergency service/s if the affected person involved is incapacitated and unable to provide these particulars themselves.
- Based on the severity of the incident and in conjunction with VTI's Policies, determination will be made whether other VTI's staff and family members/ emergency contact person involved need to be advised of the details of the incident.

In case critical incident happened outside operating hours:

- Students and staff are required to notify any critical incident immediately to the CEO mobile (24 Hours) (contact number available in student handbook and information provided during orientation).
- CEO will access to the records of the student/s involved to enable verification of details to any emergency services involved.
- CEO by involving other CIRT member will determine if there is any care or support required to be provided and make the necessary arrangements.
- CEO will determine in conjunction with Solicitor (If required) whether VTI's other staff or family members need to be advised of the details of the incident. They will take the necessary action accordingly.

Follow up action:

CEO/assigned member of CIRT will ensure:

- All staff and students involved in the incident have been informed of all outcomes from the incident.
- A recommendation as to the response to the critical incident is documented and included in the Critical Incident Register.
- Any further follow up required is documented and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff.
- Monitor the condition and provide appropriate support to the affected person through any period of treatment;
- Co-ordinate the provision of any VTI based resources required during any period of treatment;
- Liaise with the police and other emergency services personnel;
- Advise and assist any family members who decide to travel to Australia to support the student/s with travel and accommodation requirements;
- 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.

Concluding Steps:

In the event of the death of a Student CEO/assigned CIRT member will ensure the following is undertaken:

- Contact the family and determine their wishes regarding repatriation of the body, personal effects, religious observances etc.
- Coordinate the repatriation of the body and personal effects in line with the family's wishes and in accordance with Australian regulations.
- Organize the sending of a letter of condolence to the family.
- Ensure all administrative actions are taken e.g. Adjust the student records database, process any tuition refunds, and notify PRISMS etc.

Public Relations:

Where the circumstances of a critical incident involving a student/s (or any other affected person) is considered to have some public relations implication, CEO is the only authorized spokespersons to speak to media representatives on behalf of VTI.

Critical Incident Contacts:

Emergency Contacts	Contact
Police, Fire, Ambulance	000
Poison Information Centre	13 11 26
State Emergency Number	1800 226 226 (Victoria) 132 500 (Tasmania)
National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service	1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) www.1800respect.org.au
Health Direct – 24 hour health advice line	1800 022 222
Phone-based interpreting service via Department of Homes Affairs Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)	13 14 50
Local Hospitals- Melbourne	
The Alfred Hospital	(03) 9276 2000 55 Commercial Rd, Melbourne VIC 3004
Royal Melbourne Hospital	(03) 9342 7000 300 Grattan St, Parkville VIC 3050
Royal Women's Hospital	(03) 8345 2000
St Vincent's Hospital	(03) 9231 2211 41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy, VIC 3065
Local Hospitals- Hobart	
Royal Hobart Hospital	(03) 6166 8308 48 Liverpool St, Hobart TAS 7000
Hobart Private Hospital	(03) 6214 3000 Collins Street, Cnr Argyle St, Hobart TAS 7000
Calvary St John's Hospital	(03) 6223 7444 30 Cascade Rd, South Hobart TAS 7004
Mental Health Support Services	
Mensline Australia	1300 789 978
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
Women's Information Line	1800 817 227

Road Trauma Support Team	1300 367 797
Lifeline	131 114
Other Useful Contacts	
Department of Home Affairs	131 881 www.homeaffairs.gov.au
Overseas Ombudsman	1300 362 072 www.ombudsman.gov.au
Work Safe	1800 136 089 (Victoria) https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/ 1300 366 322 (Tasmania) https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/contact

7. Responsibility

The CEO has overall responsibility for the implementation, management and review of this policy as well as provision of information on ways to resolve complaints of breaches of this policy. Any complaints or breaches in relation to this policy should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer by email to: ceo@vocationalinstitute.com.au.

8. Relevant Documents

- Critical Incident Form
- Critical Incident Register
- International Student Handbook