



Policy and Procedures –

# Critical Incident Management

APPROVED

THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



## 1. Overview

This *Policy and Procedures* is designed to address various types of critical incidents that may occur within The Institute of International Studies (“TIIS”) in accordance with the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* (“*National Code 2018*”).

Preparation for, response to, and recovery from a critical incident affecting the students, education, administrative, information or human resources of TIIS requires the cooperative efforts of managers in different functional areas.

The objectives of this *Policy and Procedures* are to make sufficient preparations for responding to a critical incident or emergency so as to minimise the effect on students, personnel and operations of the business and fulfill TIIS’s duty of care to mitigate harm.

Apart from an overarching responsibility to all students, TIIS has a specific regulatory responsibility to respond to the needs of international students in the case of a critical incident. Further, any interruption to the normal operations of TIIS may damage future relationships with students and other stakeholders (including regulators) and affect TIIS’s public image.

This *Policy and Procedures* is not designed to provide a response for every type of critical incident that could happen, but rather to identify the approach on how to manage a critical incident.

## 2. Critical Incidents

### 2.1 Introduction

As defined in the *National Code 2018*, critical incident is a “traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury”. It does not include serious academic misconduct.

This *Policy and Procedures* sets out the overall emergency plan of TIIS and aims to provide guidelines to minimise the damage incurred during an emergency. It is designed to complement procedures laid down elsewhere concerning the provision of a safe environment for students and staff, regular maintenance of facilities and building evacuation procedures in case of emergency. Nothing in this *Policy and Procedures* is to be taken as contrary to guidelines and procedures laid down elsewhere concerning these matters. This *Policy and Procedures* assumes that:

- a. students are properly orientated in how to respond to a critical incident and what support is available to them.
- b. all facilities are subject to regular maintenance (see *Policy and Procedures – Facilities and Resources Review and Improvement*).
- c. emergency exits are clearly marked and kept clear of obstacles at all times.
- d. fire prevention measures and protection equipment are in place (e.g., fire wardens are appointed; smoke detectors, alarm systems and fire extinguishers are in place and maintained).
- e. normal safe work practices are routinely followed, and staff members are familiar with fire drill and emergency evacuation procedures; and
- f. backups of computer records are stored off-site and retrievable (see *Policy and Procedures – Record Management and Security*).

## 2.2 Examples of critical incidents

- a. The death or critical injury of a staff member, student or visitor on TIIS premises.
- b. The destruction of whole or part of premises that TIIS occupies (e.g., by fire).
- c. The threat of damage to premises that TIIS occupies (e.g., a bomb threat).
- d. Staff and/or students being taken hostage.
- e. A break-in accompanied by major vandalism.
- f. Students being killed/injured while engaged in a TIIS-sponsored activity.
- g. A natural or other major disaster in the community such as violent behavior, assaults, bomb scares, serious accidents, explosions, fire or deaths etc.

## 2.3 Impacts on international students

TIIS will ensure that it has in place a structured approach in responding to critical incidents as they occur and providing appropriate support and counselling services to international students.

TIIS will ensure that all international students are made aware at orientation of:

- a. What to do in the case of a critical incident.
- b. The point of contact for any issue that requires student support, including critical incidents.

TIIS will also ensure that where required, and as appropriate:

- a. As soon as practical after a critical incident occurs, the appropriate regulator(s) is/are notified about the details of the incident including the time, location and nature of the incident.
- b. In the case of an international student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance or course progress, the incident is reported via PRISMS.
- c. That the incident and its management are recorded on the affected students' files.

## 3. Policy and Procedures in Action

This *Policy and Procedures* comprises three major phases:

### 3.1 Reaction

In the case of a critical incident, it is important that key people are notified. In an emergency situation, the primary objective is the safety of human lives. Salvage and recovery operations will be of secondary importance and will take place only when the affected area is declared safe.

When a critical incident occurs, notify the Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Officer and the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO"). The contact details of the WHS Officer, the CEO and other key points of contact are detailed in *Appendix*.

The WHS Officer will be the Coordinator of the emergency response and will contact relevant emergency services or other personnel as required.

Immediate response to an incident includes:

- a. Notifying the responsible persons as outlined above.
- b. Immediately after notification of the incident, the Coordinator addressing the following questions:
  - i. What happened?
  - ii. What makes the event critical?
  - iii. When did the incident occur?
  - iv. Where did it happen?
  - v. Who was involved?
  - vi. Who needs assistance?
  - vii. What is the most appropriate intervention?
  - viii. If Emergency Support Services such as fire, ambulance or police are required, contact details are listed in *Appendix A*.
  - ix. In the case that it is decided that evacuation is an appropriate intervention the evacuation plans included at *Appendix B* should be employed.

## **3.2 Recovery & Restoration**

### **3.2.1 Timeframe for Recovery**

#### ***Within the first 24 hours:***

- a. Gather accurate facts and information.
- b. If possible, re-establish a sense of routine within TIIS. Staff members and students will feel safe once the regular patterns of management and organisation have been re-established.

#### ***Within the first 48 – 72 hours:***

- a. Restore routines while taking into account the needs of staff and students.
- b. Engage support services to manage the reactions of staff and students. Monitor the support services provided.
- c. Provide additional assistance if and when necessary.
- d. Hold a formal staff meeting with professional input (if appropriate).

#### ***Within the first two weeks after the critical incident:***

- a. Monitor progress of those involved in the incident, for example, the hospitalised or injured.
- b. Stay alert for delayed reactions from staff and students.
- c. Provide relevant information to those who require it.

### **3.2.2 Key Actions**

- a. Notify all key personnel of the critical incident and focus on recovery.
- b. Notify students about the critical incident to minimise panic or concern.
- c. Recall backup data if needed to continue operations.
- d. Organise alternate facilities if required to continue operations.
- e. During a critical incident, employees may be required to work longer and more stressful hours. A support system will be set in place to alleviate some of the stress and prepare staff ahead of time to ensure work runs smoothly.
- f. Provide counselling services as appropriate.

### 3.2.3 Review

After the critical incident has been dealt with, a formal evaluation (see *Standard Form – Evaluation of Critical Incident*) of the process involved in the management of the critical incident is to be carried out. Feedback is to be sought from those who have been involved in various aspects of the operation of this *Policy and Procedures*.

Any action taken in regard to the critical incident should be recorded along with the final evaluation of the handling of the critical incident.

## 4. Special Assistance to Affected International Students

If it is identified that the critical incidents that could affect an international student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm, TIIS will provide special assistance to the affected students during and after the critical incidents.

The assistance provided by TIIS may include any or a combination of the following:

- a. special training and assessment arrangements to suit the needs of the student(s).
- b. special consideration for suspension, cancellation or deferral of studies.
- c. special tuition fee arrangements or other financial assistance.
- d. counselling services; or
- e. any other assistance as determined necessary and appropriate.

## 5. Critical Incident Team

A critical incident team comprising the CEO, the Dean, the Program Coordinator, the Marketing Manager and the Accountant is to ensure critical incidents are attended to with the highest level of priority.

## 6. Version History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Details
1.0	Executive Management Committee	13 April 2016	
1.1	Executive Management Committee	7 July 2020	Minor changes
1.2	Executive Management Committee	14 October 2020	Minor changes

Document owner: CEO

## APPENDIX

### TIIS EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

Responsible Officer	Contact Details
<i>In all cases:</i>	
WHS Officer	Mobile: 0403 575 801 Phone: 612 8098 0702
Acting CEO	Mobile: 0411 826 650 Phone: 612 8098 0702
<i>For critical incident relating to marketing and student services:</i>	
Marketing Manager	Mobile: 0422 289 660 Phone: 612 8098 0702
<i>For critical incident relating to learning assistance:</i>	
Librarian	Mobile: 0423 099 938 Phone: 612 8098 0702
<i>For critical incident relating to IT infrastructure:</i>	
IT Officer	Mobile: 0403 575 801 Phone: 612 8098 0702

### EXTERNAL EMERGENCY AND SUPPORT SERVICES:

Name of Organisation	General	Local Sydney
Police	000	9265 6499
Fire	000	9265 2799
Ambulance	000	131 233
Lifeline	131 114	
Alcohol and drugs	1800 888 236	
Rape helpline	1800 424 017	
Sydney Hospital: 8 Macquarie Street, Sydney		9382 7111
Australian Red Cross	131 495	
Electricity	131 081	
Poison Information	131 126	
State Emergency Service (SES)	612 4251 6111	