



Pol -016 Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

Purpose of the policy:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the RTO's understanding and adherence to the relevant legislation directly to National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standard 6. Canberra Valley Institute also is ensuring appropriate policies and procedures in place in the event of a critical incident affecting any of its enrolled international students.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Canberra Valley Institute Campuses
- Students
- Student Support Officer
- Management Team-members

Definitions

Critical Incident - A critical incident is defined by the National Code as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'. International student means international students or intending international students on a student visa under the Migration Act 1958.

Critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- A fatality, being near a fatality or an incident that is likely to affect a number of staff member and/or a student.
- Missing student.
- Serious traffic accidents.
- Murder or suicide involving students/staff and their family members or close friends (or being a witness to) Physical or sexual assault.
- Injury or death of a colleague, carer or intimate friend.
- Fire, explosion, bomb threat.
- Chemical, radiation or biohazard spillage.
- Hold-up or attempted robbery.
- Threats of violence to staff/students.
- Major theft or vandalism.
- Threat of HIV infection.
- Storms/natural disasters.
- Acute illness (physical or mental); and/or Security incident.
- Home Country
- Missing relatives especially parents or siblings

Document Name:	Pol-016 Critical Incident Policy and Procedure	Created Date:	13/06/2023
Document No:	Version No: 2.0 Jan 2025	Last Modified Date:	8/01/2025
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- Natural disaster
- Political change
- Acts of war or other conflict
- Religious persecution

Responsibilities

- Student Support officer
- CEO

Policy Statement:

Canberra Valley Institute in the event of a critical incident recognises that appropriate procedures must be in place to ensure the provision of all necessary support services. This document outlines Canberra Valley Institute policy, support mechanisms and procedures for managing a critical incident.

This policy will ensure that Canberra Valley Institute has:

- An effective, evidence-based approach to responding to critical incidents as they occur.
- Makes available appropriate support and counselling services available to those affected; and
- Makes available appropriate training and information resources to all relevant staff.

Procedure

1. Risk reduction measures

Canberra Valley Institute will ensure that critical incidents are minimized through:

- Dissemination of this policy and critical incident procedures to all staff and students of Canberra Valley Institute.
- Providing information to staff and students to ensure they are aware of safety, prevention of risk and able to respond promptly to any perceived threats to safety.
- Ensuring that staff brings safety issues to the attention of the Student Support Officer /CEO Team or by completing a hazard incident form. The Student Support officer will record and assess the risk and take action accordingly. In the case of students, concerns should be brought to any staff member who will complete the form on behalf of the student.
- Regular emergency management training and information including critical incident responses.
- Ensuring that at least 2 staff members of the Canberra Valley Institute have current training in First Aid and at least 2 staff members who are designated as Fire Wardens; or Critical Incident Team When a critical incident occurs, the CEO and Student Support Manager will call a meeting with the appropriate staff to form a Critical Incident Team. The team will comprise of members of the Management Team and any relevant external body.

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.
- Counselling and managing students and/or staff not directly involved in the incident; and

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- Referring and managing students/staff directly involved in the incident to relevant professionals where needed.

The Critical Incident Management Team will meet monthly to review any incidents that may have occurred throughout the month. Where no incidents have occurred under this policy in the preceding (1) one month, the Critical Incident Team should refer to the Emergency Evacuation procedures and any WHS training and/or drills conducted.

2. On-campus Incidents

Where the Critical Incident Team believes that an incident requires the attendance of emergency services including the fire brigade, ambulance or police, the Critical Response Coordinator will organise this. The first on call or on scene will contact the CEO 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 the critical incident is off-campus, the person receiving the information must immediately contact the CEO who will communicate to other staff/members as appropriate. The Immediate Response Where there is risk to life or property:

- An incident or potential incident should be reported to the Emergency Services (Fire, Police, Ambulance) and Security services immediately.
- If necessary, evacuation procedures should be put in place before contacting Emergency Services; and
- If the incident does not appear to require the immediate despatch of Emergency services, the CEO should be notified immediately and given the full details of the situation including the exact location of the incident, the type of incident and details of any person or persons who may be injured, in distress or at risk. On arrival at the scene of a critical incident, the CEO will be responsible for its assessment. If it is assessed as a critical incident, the CEO will also be responsible for the assessment and coordination of responses to the incident, although other staff members may be co-opted as necessary to deal with specific aspects. It is the responsibility of the staff member arriving on the scene to contact the CEO or, where this is not possible, to delegate this responsibility to allow the staff member to remain present at the incident.

3. Reporting

- Where the incident may affect the student's visa conditions or program of study, BAA will notify Department of Education as soon as practical after the incident.
- Where a student dies or sustains serious injury, Canberra Valley Institute will liaise with the student's family and provide support as required. Canberra Valley Institute will also notify all other relevant and authorised parties.
- A review and evaluation of the response to the critical incident will be conducted by CEO. The purpose of the review and evaluation is to assess how well the incident was handled and to identify/minimize risks for the future.

4. Procedure to Guide the Coordinating Team

- a. The staff member receiving the news contacts the CEO.

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- b. The CEO or their nominee urgently deals with an emergency then calls a meeting with the staff (Critical Incident Team) involved to make decisions as to how to proceed.
 - c. The staff most likely to be present will be:
 - CEO;
 - Student Support Services Officer
 - d. At the initial meeting, the group is required to:
 - Identify all persons affected by the critical incident (both directly and indirectly);
 - Create a clear understanding of the known facts
5. Plan an immediate response:
- Initiate pastoral care:
 - Personal contact is to be made with individuals including victims and other persons affected by the incident.
 - Provision of a quiet area
 - A quiet area is to be established for the use of victims and/or their families. This area shall be protected from intrusion by anyone not immediately affected by the incident.
 - Brief staff and delegate a staff member to deal with telephone/counter enquiries; and
 - Confirm access to emergency funds if necessary.
 - Plan ongoing management strategies:
 - Monitor the need for counselling.
 - Initiate and maintain contact with those affected by the incident.
 - Provide those affected by the incident with educational material covering common responses to trauma and strategies for coping with these effects.
 - Assess the need for, and organise debriefing sessions for all those involved in the incident; and
 - A written bulletin to staff if the matter is complex.
 - Allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks. One member of the team will be delegated the task of taking minutes of all meetings to record all actions and decisions taken. These minutes and any related documents must be provided to the CEO at the earliest opportunity to assist with enquiries from police and emergency services, legal authorities, insurance companies etc.
6. Stress management support will be provided after any critical incident as follows:
- Debriefing for all staff and students affected by the critical incident (formally or informally) must be provided as soon as possible after the event on an individual or group basis.
 - Further debriefing will be provided one or more days after the incident on a group basis, however where required, individual sessions may be required. These sessions must be planned prior to close of Day 1.
 - Follow up 2-6 weeks later. This will occur mostly on a group basis however if required on an individual basis, this will also be provided. This should be planned prior to the end of Week 1 of the critical incident.
 - Ongoing counselling will be provided as required on a group or individual basis.
 - Recovery time for staff and students involved will be provided and will be guided by professionals.

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- Where it is deemed necessary by the CEO (who will be guided by professional opinion), support will be provided on the anniversary of the event on an individual or group basis.
- Counselling will be made available for staff and/or students and will be a priority for incidents where trauma may be experienced;
- Canberra Valley Institute will arrange for a suitably qualified counselling service to address staff and students and invite staff and students to attend a further individual counselling session with them if required at the organisation's expense; and
- Crisis Leave, or a suspension of studies will be considered where necessary and where required, PRISMS updated to reflect changes to enrolment. Legal Issues After the emergency response, the CEO must assess whether legal assistance may be required and seek legal assistance where necessary.

7. Insurance

Where damage to building or grounds has occurred or where Canberra Valley Institute may be liable for personal or property damage, the relevant insurance bodies should be informed as soon as possible. Insurers would normally organise repairs where damage is covered under a policy.

Canberra Valley Institute is covered by the following insurance policy:

Third Party Liability (public and product liability) current policies are maintained at Canberra Valley Institute. In the event of students being affected by a critical incident, an attempt should be made to notify the OSHC provider to facilitate handling of the student's claim. Evaluation The Critical Incident Management Team will meet within one (1) month after the critical incident to evaluate the implementation of procedures and responses. In the interest of continuous improvement, change may need to be made to the policy because of critical incident evaluation.

8. Emergency Services

Police, Fire & Ambulance: 000

ACT Emergency Services: [Emergency contacts](#) | [ACT Emergency Services Agency](#)

There are two numbers to call for ambulance assistance:

1. Emergency triple zero (000) for an emergency; and
2. Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPT) bookings
(02) 6200 4126 (Booking requires authorisation from a medical officer)

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Development & Approval Information

Policy Author:	Sunil Baby
Policy Owner:	CEO
Approval Body:	CEO
Policy Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> New Draft <input type="checkbox"/> Updated Draft <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Current
Key Stakeholders:	CEO
Date Approved:	December 2024
Approved by:	CEO
Date of next review:	March 2025

Version History		
Version	Date	Details
1.0	13/06/2024	Original Draft
2.0	08/01/2025	Approved by CEO

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