

## Purpose

This policy/procedure supports 'Standard 6 – Student Support Services' of the 'National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2018' which states:

"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." (ESOS 6.4)

This procedure ensures that any critical incident that occurs is documented, reported and action taken by the Polytechnic Victoria (RTO) where required.

## Scope

To articulate the Institute's Practices that will apply to students and Staff in compliance with the ESOS legislation. The critical incidents covered in this procedure may occur at the teaching locations or after hours.

## Definitions

<b>Critical Incident</b>	Is a traumatic event, which is likely to cause extreme physical and/or emotional distress involving Polytechnic Victoria, its staff and/or students.
<b>Death</b>	(Including death of a dependent residing in Australia) Accidental, Suicide, Result of an injury or terminal illness, or Murder.
<b>Serious Illness</b>	Illness which causes the deterioration of the student /staff member's health over time.
<b>Serious Injury</b>	Illness which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to continue with or complete the course.
<b>Traumatic Event:</b>	A traumatic event is not limited to, but could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>

Non-life threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents although serious illness or injury would probably not be considered a critical incident in the broader campus community.

**Critical incidents include but are not limited to**

- Medical emergencies involving a student
- Critical illness of a student
- Student death
- Missing students
- severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Natural disaster
- Public transport or road traffic accidents
- Traumatic events that affect students; such as
- Sexual Assault
- Mental Health Crisis
- Drug / Alcohol Overdose
- Campus Disturbance / Riot
- Fire / Explosion with Injuries or Significant Damage
- Natural Disasters (in Australia and overseas)
- Airplane Crashes
- Overseas Hostage Situations/ Kidnappings
- National Emergencies
- Hate/Bias Incidents



**Procedure**

Where a Critical Incident is identified the following procedures must occur. As part of the reporting process the Operations Manager will confirm that the incident falls under the definition provided above of a 'Critical Incident'.

**Reporting**

- When a staff member feel a critical incident has occurred they are required to contact emergency services where required and contact the CEO / Operations Manager 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' (Appendix A) is to 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 Course coordinator and given to the CEO of the RTO.
- The 'critical incident report' is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.
- The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires COLLEGE to notify Department of Home Affairs as soon as practical after the incident and in the case of a student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance, the incident will need to be reported via the Provider Registration and Overseas Student Management System (PRISMS).

### Process

#### During Operating Hours

- Students and staff are required to notify any critical incident involving a student immediately to the Operations Manager/ CEO.
- Operations Manager/ 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 Operations Manager/ 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 Operations Manager/ 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.
- Operations Manager will determine based on the severity of the incident and in conjunction with the Institute's Policies, whether other Polytechnic Victoria's staff and family members of the student/s involved need to be advised of the details of the incident. He will take the necessary action.

#### Outside Operating Hours

- Students and staff are required to notify any critical incident involving a student immediately to the Operations Manager (24 Hours).
- Operations Manager or CEO will contact the Student Support Officer who will gain access to the records of the student/s involved to enable verification of details to any emergency services involved.
- CEO or Operations Manager will determine if there is any care or support required to be provided and make the necessary arrangements.

- CEO and Operations Manager will determine in conjunction with the Polytechnic Victoria's Solicitor (If required) whether other Polytechnic Victorias' staff or family members need to be advised of the details of the incident. They will take the necessary action.

### Follow Up Action

Operations Manager will:

1. Ensure follow up such as de-briefing, counselling and prevention strategies have been completed.
2. All staff and students involved in the incident have been informed of all outcomes from the incident.
3. 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/convalescence;
6. Coordinate the provision of any Polytechnic Victoria based resources required during any period of treatment/convalescence;
7. liaise with the police and other emergency services personnel;
8. Advise and assist any family members who decide to travel to Australia 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 the SSO's office.

### Concluding Steps

When a student dies or sustains serious injury, the Institute may be required to assist the student's family. For Overseas students 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
- Public Relations

Where the circumstances of a critical incident involving a student/s is considered to have some public relations implication, CEO or Operations Manager, are the only authorized spokesperson to speak to media representatives on behalf of the Polytechnic Victoria.

## Responsibilities

CEO

Operations Manager

Student Support Officer

Course coordinators

## Strategic Management:

- Operations Manager, under the leadership of the CEO, manages responses, the continuity of business operations and contingencies, and the recovery and review phases.

## Operational Management:

- Course Coordinators, under the leadership of the Operations Manager and CEO, manage the incident scene until the arrival of Emergency Services in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Procedures.

## Policy Base

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code).

## Forms/Record Keeping

Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
<b>Critical Report</b>	<b>Incident</b> OM's Office	Operations Manager	7 years from date of incident

This policy (Student support services) also supports clause 10.2, 10.4 of standard 10 and clause 11.3 of standard 11 under ESOS framework

Staff member(s) (witness to incident or first contacted)  
Staff: Inform Operations Manager and give facts of the situations  
and Contact Emergency Services - Dial 000

Staff member(s) (witness to incident or first contacted)...

- Ensure safety & welfare of staff and students
- Contact first aid officer
- Administer first-aid until ambulance arrives

Note: Assess situation: focus on immediate safety of other students and staff  
All personnel are to be cleared from any dangerous area. Contact should be made with the family of any student involved

NB: Once police or fire brigade arrive at the Organisation they will determine if other resources such as State Emergency Services (SES) are required to assist

A 'critical incident report is to be completed by the appropriate staff member involved in the incident or notification of the incident.it should include as much information as possible

Notify Department of Home Affairs as soon as practical after the incident and in the case of a student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance, the incident will need to be reported via PRISMS.



**ADDITIONAL ACTION (When appropriate)**

When a student dies or sustains serious injury, the Institute may be required to assist the student's family. For international students 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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