

CRITICAL INCIDENT

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy and procedure aims to assist staff and students to respond appropriately to incidents that are likely to cause trauma to individuals and/or affect the college community as a whole. The purpose of this policy and procedure;

- Is to provide a clearly articulated position that is widely known so that when a staff member becomes aware of a critical situation involving a student(s), they can alert the necessary person(s).
- This will minimise the risk of independent action and assist in ensuring that each case is managed effectively and compassionately.
- It will also protect the College from conflict or ill will with those involved, including the family of the student, and emergency services.

Our response needs to be timely and professional, and also as personal and sincere as possible. The incident may vary in terms of the scale of the emergency, the level of response required and the level of media interest.

SPECIFIC DETAILS

Definition: a critical incident is defined as a traumatic event which causes or is likely to cause extreme physical and/or emotional distress to staff and/or students and may be regarded as outside the normal range of experience of the people affected. A critical incident is an incident which may put the college community or any part of it under major stress, injury or fear. In assessing a critical incident, consideration must be given to the prevailing factors and mood of the staff and/or students at the time of the incident. It will also depend on how public the incident is and how many people are affected.

Some examples of critical incidents are:

- Arrest;
- Being the victim of crime;
- Death;
- Emergency medical evacuation;
- Hospitalization;
- Mental illness;
- Physical or sexual assault; and
- Reporting of missing persons who are students
- Storms/natural disasters (including off shore);

Every critical incident is unique and will need to be dealt with differently, according to the needs of the people affected.

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

PREVENTION AND PREPARATION

The availability of appropriate resources and the development of safety measures will be monitored on a regular basis by the Operational Committee Team. Staff is encouraged to bring issues of safety to the attention of management.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

Where there is risk to life or property:

- An incident or potential incident should be reported to the Emergency Services (Fire, Police, ambulance) and Management immediately.
- If necessary, evacuation procedures should be put in place before contacting Emergency Services.
- 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 although other staff members may be co-opted as necessary to deal with specific aspects.

FOLLOW-UP ACTION

The CEO will assess the need for the following and liaise with appropriate staff for implementation.

- Access the relevant student record to verify details, including contact information.
- Gather background details of the incident from the informing source if possible and appropriate.
- If relevant, confirm with the Managing Director that the Police or the relevant emergency services agency has been in contact with next of kin/family.
- Where the circumstances are considered to have some implications in relation to or arising from the college's public profile, the Managing Director is to be briefed.

The CEO will provide timely advice to the following:

- Student Support Services
- Academic Manager
- The Student's Emergency Contact (if applicable)
- Homestay Family (if applicable)
- Student's Agent (if applicable)
- The Consulate/Embassy (where support such as travel for the family of the student may be available).

The CEO is responsible for responding to media enquiries and will, where appropriate, make statements on behalf of Discover English. Also, the CEO will take responsibility for managing the case including, where necessary, liaison with:

- Police;
- Medical Services;
- Family - ongoing contact (assist with travel and accommodation, as necessary)

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The CEO may be the first point of contact and is responsible for disseminating information to appropriate people within the College and responding to any special needs that might emerge.

EVALUATION

Management who were involved in the incident will meet within one month after the critical incident to evaluate the implementation of procedures and responses.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE PROCEDURE: Critical Incident Involving a Student

1. In the event of death, serious injury or illness, arrest or other serious incident involving a student of Discover English, the Police or other relevant emergency service agency should contact the college. Where the situation is first identified by (or referred to) the college, the college should contact the relevant emergency service agency.

2. Administration has access to student records for the purposes of verifying details to assist emergency services. Particulars of the student's home address are to be provided only in cases where the individual is incapacitated and unable to provide these particulars themselves.

3. Administration should immediately alert both the CEO/Academic Manager.

4. During office hours the Administration an media point of contact is the CEO info@discoverenglish.com.au or 03 9602 4800.

5. Where the matter arises after office hours, the after hours contact number is 0478 297 681.

6. After receiving notification, the CEO will assess the situation and organise any additional support required. This may involve liaison with:

- The Managing Director
- Academic Manager
- Student Support Services

7. Depending on the scale and nature of the event, responsibility for managing the situation might be transferred to outside sources.

In the event of a student death:

1. An appropriate person, who has had some relationship or contact with the student, is to compose a letter conveying condolences. The Academic Manager will be consulted to assist in identifying someone who was familiar with the student. Where the student stayed in a homestay, the homestay family will also be invited to provide input. The Managing Director should sign the letter of condolence. The final decision will depend on the circumstances.

2. Student details should be adjusted in the student's records (and arrangements for refunds of fees as entitled).

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4. Ensure that any personal effects are returned to the next of kin. Students bank accounts may need to be closed, and any other personal property disposed of, in consultation with the family.

RECORDING OF INCIDENTS AND ACTION TAKEN

The CEO is responsible for maintaining comprehensive records of the incident. These records must be documented the Incident Report Form, in date order and kept in the student's file.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

FOAD037 Incident Report

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Police, Fire, Ambulance – 000

Discover English Emergency Number: 0478 297 681

Medical Centre: Mid-Town Medical Clinic - 03 9650 4284

The Royal Melbourne Hospital emergency - 9342 7666 / 9342 7006

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) -131 881

BUPA OSHC Services include: (interpreter available)

- Emergency medical advice and assistance
- Referrals to doctors or medical centres for medical treatment and assistance with making appointments
- Access to a solicitor for general legal advice and referrals
- Phone assistance to replace travel documents or passports