

Critical Incident Policy

Policy Code: STU-062 **Version:** 1.0 **Effective Date:** 10 August 2017

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy and its related procedures and guidelines is to identify the personnel, structures and procedures for managing a critical incident.

Providers of education to overseas students are required by legislation to have documented critical incident policy and procedures, which outline the action to be taken in the event of critical incident. This includes the initial response, follow-up, reporting, review and improvement.

Definition of “College” – *In the higher education sector, Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health (Endeavour) and Wellnation; Study Group Australia Pty Limited trades as Martin College and Martin Higher Education (Martin HE). For the purpose of this policy, any reference to ‘College’ or ‘the College’ should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective entities or trading names.*

Definition of “International students” – *The College defines an International Student as someone **who is not an** Australian citizen or permanent resident or a New Zealand citizen or a permanent visa holder. This definition includes students studying onshore on a range of temporary visas (working holiday visa, tourist visa, student visa etc) or offshore as an online student. Information that applies only to students studying on specific visa classes (e.g. Student Visa) is specified when relevant. It should be noted that all international students pay fees specified for international students, regardless of visa subclass.*

Scope:

- All campuses
- Any location (worldwide) where College staff are engaged in College business
- Any location (worldwide) where students of the College are engaged in learning activities
- All full time and part time staff, casual, contract and contract academic staff

- All students – domestic and international
- All visitors

Policy Statement:

A **Critical Incident**: is any sudden or progressive development (event) which requires immediate attention and decisive action to prevent/minimise any negative impact on the health and welfare of one or more individuals. Critical incidents may include (but are not limited to) events such as:

- Death/suicide
- Serious accident or injury
- Death or serious illness of a student's family or friends overseas (from their homeland)
- An absent or 'missing' international student whereby the student has not attended class and is not contactable for a certain period of time
- Deprivation of liberty, threats of violence, assault, rape/sexual assault, aggravated burglary, biological or chemical weapons
- Fire, bomb, explosion, gas/chemical hazards, discharge of firearms
- Threat of widespread infection or contamination
- Civil unrest
- Serious damage to essential facilities
- Disruption to operations of the College
- Information which has the potential to negatively affect the reputation of the College in the media and/or wider community.

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The following table provides a guide to determining the severity of critical incidents:

Level of risk:	Determined by:	Examples:
SEVERE (Emergency services required)	Executive Director, Higher Education OR Director of Education OR Director, Student Services and Retention OR Campus Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death, suicide or threat of suicide, or life- threatening injury • Deprivation of liberty, threats of violence, assault, rape/sexual assault, aggravated burglary, use of firearms, biological or chemical weapons • Fire, bomb, explosion, gas/chemical hazards, discharge of firearms • Threat of widespread infection
SIGNIFICANT (Emergency Services required)	Executive Director, Higher Education OR Director of Education OR Director, Student Services and Retention OR Campus Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe occupational health and safety risk • Serious injury incurred by staff/student • 'Missing' international student • Activity where evacuation is required
MODERATE (Emergency Services MAY be required)	Executive Director, Higher Education OR Director of Education OR Director, Student Services and Retention OR Campus Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHS risk • Suspicious package left unattended • IT System crashes • Student suffers epileptic fit or psychological breakdown
MINOR (Emergency Services NOT required)	All Staff All First Aid Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor injury • Plumbing blockages • Phone/Electrical failure • Computer system or network breakdown

Designated Officer

Any College staff member who is either a witness to, or first to be informed about an actual or potential critical incident is referred to as the 'Designated Officer'.

The Designated Officer is to assume responsibility for alerting the most senior College staff member available as soon as possible who, in turn, will re-assess the situation and convene a Critical Incident Team if deemed necessary.

The Designated Officer may need to assume temporary control of a critical incident site and assign duties to available persons (such as calling emergency services, alerting other staff, assisting with first aid, crowd control etc.), until such time as relieved by either the Critical Incident Team or Emergency Services.

Critical Incident Team

The Critical Incident Team is responsible for managing the College's **response** to any critical incident which is considered to have a severe or significant level of risk or in some cases, moderate level of risk.

This team is convened by the most senior member of staff available at the time of the incident and will convene as soon as possible to plan an immediate response, allocate responsibilities and determine ongoing strategies.

Once the team is convened, the most senior staff member available (e.g. Director, Student Services and Retention) becomes the **Head of the Critical Incident Team**, or assigns a suitable alternative to head the team.

The team will be composed of the following members of staff:

- Executive Director, Higher Education (or nominee)
- Director of Education (or nominee)
- Director, Student Services and Retention (or nominee)
- Associate Director - Clinical Services
- National HE Compliance Manager
- Others as deemed appropriate by the Head of the Critical Incident Team (e.g. National Property Manager, National Manager Student Services, Campus Manager, Clinic Manager).

Where Emergency Services assume management of the critical incident, the Critical Incident Team will liaise with the managing body (e.g. Police Service or Fire and Emergency Services) for a coordinated approach to any response activities.

Where the College has assumed management of the critical incident, the Critical Incident Team will consult with and/or take instruction from the College Executive as necessary.

Responsibilities of the Critical Incident Team

The team's duties include, but are not limited to:

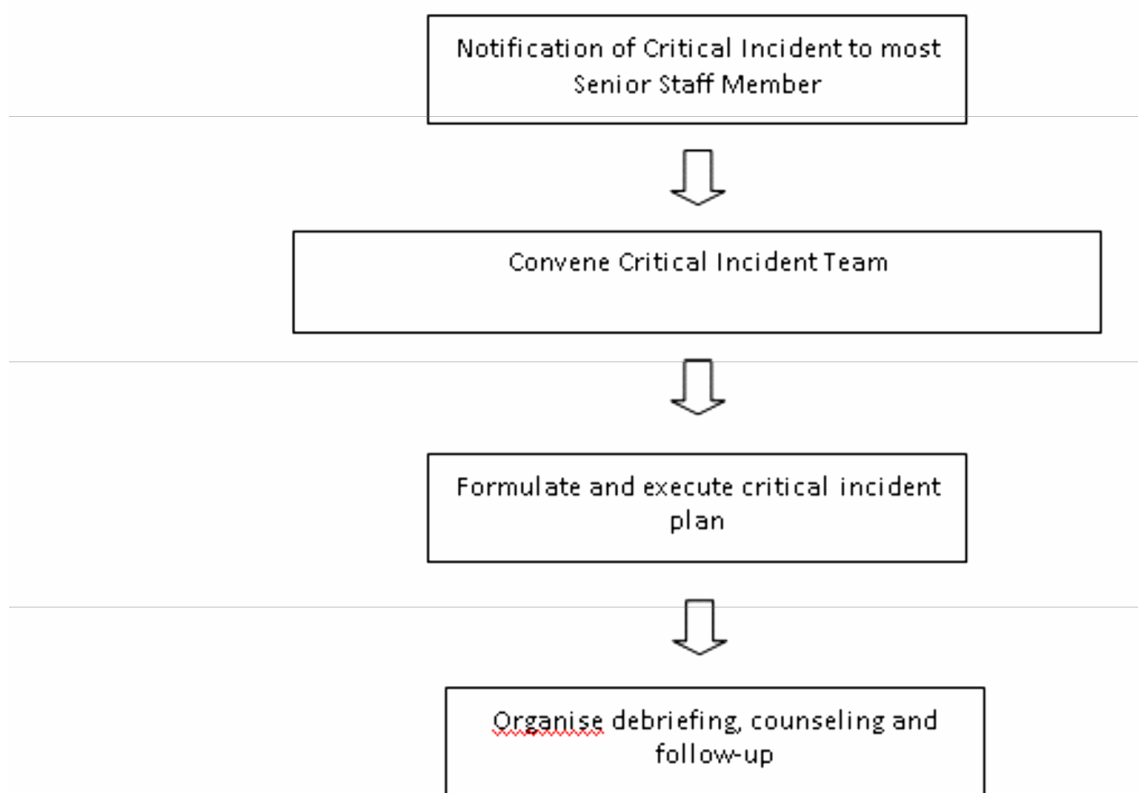
- preparing a *Critical Incident Initial Report* outlining details such as the type of incident, the exact location and details of any person or persons who might be injured, in distress, or at risk
- reviewing the situation, setting priorities, allocating tasks/responsibilities and

coordinating an immediate response including communications (to staff, students, families of those involved, helpers, and the media)

- organising ongoing response/follow up (including staff and student briefing, counselling, review and reporting)
- de-briefing to evaluate response procedures and make recommendations for handling future critical incidents.

This is summarised in the following diagram:

Critical Incidents Reporting and Procedure Flow Chart



Note: This section only applies to student visa holders

Absent International Students

Where an international student is studying on a **student visa**, the College has a duty of care to ensure the student is safely in Australia and remains compliant with the conditions of their visa (where appropriate). As such, an international student may be classified as 'missing' if:

- The student is newly enrolled in an award course and due to start in their first study

period on campus but has not arrived to their first week of classes.

- The student is a continuing student and has not re-enrolled in any subjects for the next study period and has not responded to any contact regarding enrolment by the end of the first week of that study period.
- The continuing student has enrolled in subjects but has not attended any classes on campus for two weeks without notice (at any point in the study period)
- It is brought to the attention of any staff member (academic or operational) that the student may be 'missing' either by another student, agent, or family member.

If an international student is classified as 'missing', the staff member responsible for identifying this situation is to immediately contact the National Higher Education Compliance Manager and the Director, Student Services and Retention. Steps will then be taken to contact the student directly and could include (but are not limited to):

- Phone calls
- Emails
- Formal written letters
- Home visits to the last known address
- Requesting the agent to contact the student.

If the student's welfare is of concern, the College reserves the right to contact the student's agent, listed next-of-kin and/or emergency contact in order to ensure the student is safe.

If the student has not responded to any contact after 7 days of being classified as 'missing', the student will be reported to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) through the PRISMS database and the student's next-of-kin or the Police may be notified.

Further information on the process when an international student has been classified as 'missing' can be found in the [Critical Incident Procedure – Missing International Students](#).

Definitions: **HE:** Higher Education

Award course is a formally accredited and approved program of study which can lead to a qualification granted by the College.

Health is the state in which an individual does not suffer from any disease or injuries as a result of work, work activities or the work environment.

Safety is the state in which the risk of harm (to persons), damage to property or the environment is limited to an acceptable level.

Student/Learner is an individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the College. The individual person is that who appears on the College's documents such as enrolment, admission and payment documents, and who is assigned an individual student ID.

Study Period: A "study period" is defined in the National Code as "a discrete period of study" in a course, namely, semester, trimester, short course or as otherwise defined by the College as long as that period does not exceed 24 weeks". This will normally reflect the period during which the student can normally be expected to complete a group of units. A study period may also refer to the delivery period of an online subject.

Further Information:

Related Procedures:	Critical Incident Procedure – Missing International Students Critical Incident Procedure – Physical incidents
Related Policies:	Health and Safety Responsibilities and Accountability Policy Risk Management Framework Policy
Benchmarking:	Federation Uni
Supporting Research and Analysis:	Nil
Related Documents:	Nil
Related Legislation:	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)
Guidelines:	

Policy Author:	National HE Compliance Manager
Policy Owner:	Director, Student Services & Retention
Contact:	Director, Student Services & Retention
Approval Body:	Executive Director, Higher Education Date: 10 August 2017
Policy Status:	Harmonised – fully harmonised for two brands
Responsibilities for Implementation:	Executive Director, Higher Education Directors of Education Director, Student Services and Retention National HE Compliance Manager Campus Manager
Key Stakeholders:	Directors of Education Director, Student Services and Retention Associate Director - Clinical Services National HE Compliance Manager National VET Manager National Property Manager Campus Managers All Staff All Students