



## CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

### Introduction

The Australian Academy of Commerce (AAC) is committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all students, staff and stakeholders. This policy provides a structured framework for responding to critical incidents in a timely and effective manner, minimising harm and ensuring appropriate support and resolution. AAC complies with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and National Code 2018, and English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (EICOS) Standards 2018 in ensuring a safe and responsive environment.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define what constitutes a critical incident.
- Provide a structured approach to managing critical incidents.
- Ensure all staff and students are aware of reporting procedures.
- Minimise the impact of critical incidents through effective response and support.

### Scope

This policy applies to all critical incidents affecting students (domestic and international), staff, contractors and stakeholders of AAC and covers all AAC campuses and locations where AAC activities take place.

### Policy Statement

AAC will take immediate and appropriate action in response to critical incidents to ensure the safety and well-being of those involved. AAC will provide post-incident support, including counselling and guidance to affected individuals.

### Definitions

<b>Critical Incident</b>	A critical incident is defined by the ESOS National Code, Standard 6, as a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents may include but not limited to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• missing students</li><li>• natural disasters</li><li>• accidents</li><li>• severe verbal or psychological aggression</li><li>• assault</li><li>• medical emergencies</li><li>• issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse</li><li>• serious injury or deaths.</li></ul>
<b>Critical Management Team (CMT)</b>	When critical incidents occur, a Critical Incident Management Team will be formed consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The CEO</li><li>• Compliance Officer</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A member of the Academic Team (VET or ELICOS depending on the student or cohort)</li><li>• Student Services Officer (SSO)</li><li>• First Responder (if not already included in the above roles)</li></ul>
<b>First Responders</b>	The first AAC staff members on the scene responsible for initial response and communication.

## References

- ELICOS Standards 2018
- ESOS Act 2000
- ESOS National Code 2018
- NVR Act 2011
- Standards for RTOs 2015
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth)

## Related AAC Policies and Procedures

- Bullying Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Data Integrity and Provision of Information Policy and Procedure
- Hazard Identification and Risk Management Policy and Procedure
- Student Records Management Policy and Procedure
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Student Code of Conduct
- Support for Students Policy and Procedure
- Workplace, Health and Safety Policy and Procedure

## Critical Incident Procedure

In the event of a critical incident, AAC will respond in line with this policy and procedure to ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff, except where legal obligations require alternative actions. A Critical Management Team (CMT) will be assembled, and they will be responsible for risk assessment and mitigation, liaison with emergency services, ensuring 24-hour access to emergency contacts and emergency resource management.

### 1. Preparation

To ensure a safe and prepared environment, AAC will conduct regular risk assessments to identify potential hazards. Based on these assessments, any updates to critical incident response procedures will be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders.

All staff, students receive WHS induction/orientation upon joining AAC and AAC encourages students to maintain up-to-date emergency contact details, which are crucial for efficient communication during emergencies.

AAC will also conduct regular training sessions and emergency drills to ensure individuals are well-prepared to respond appropriately in critical situations. Specific WHS training is provided for responding to critical incidents, including;

- First Aid
- Emergency Action Plan



- Mental Health First Aid
- Periodic Fire Drills, Evacuation and responses to various situations.

## 2. Notification

Any individual witnessing or experiencing a critical incident must report it immediately to AAC Management or a designated emergency contact. The report should include date, time, location, nature of the incident, individuals involved and any immediate actions to be taken.

## 3. Immediate Response

- **Assess the Situation:** Ensure safety and call emergency services. If required (Call 000 for police, fire, ambulance).
- **Secure the Area:** Evacuate or provide first aid as necessary. AAC first aiders are identified on-site, and their contact details are displayed in prominent locations across AAC premises to ensure quick access in emergencies.
- **Notify AAC Management:** Immediate reporting to the Student Services Officer (SSO) or a member of AAC management.
- **Emergency Response:** The matter will be escalated to the appropriate AAC staff member, and they will take control of the situation and implement the necessary response procedures.

## 4. Assessment and Planning

The CMT will confirm the identities of those involved and determine if evacuation or lockdown procedures are needed, they will gather accurate information about the incident and assign roles for specific response actions.

## 5. Intervention

- Where needed AAC will provide support to affected individuals (medical, psychological, legal).
- Notify emergency contacts of affected individuals sensitively.
- Maintain clear communication with stakeholders
- Manage media communications through AAC's CEO.

## 6. Follow Up and Support (48 to 72-hour post-incident)

- AAC will conduct post-incident review and debriefing.
- AAC will provide support services such as counselling and academic accommodations to affected individuals
- AAC will ensure compliance with reporting obligations, including external agencies where necessary.

## 7. Incident Reporting

- All critical incidents are recorded in AAC's *Critical Incident Register*
- Reports are submitted to the Compliance Manager within 24 hours of the incident.
- Investigations are conducted to determine causes and prevent recurrence.
- AAC will report critical incidents to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) via PRISMS where an overseas student is missing, dies or serious injury prevents them from attending classes.



- AAC will also report incidences of and responses to critical incidents to families of affected personas and the emergency contact of the affected person.

## 8. Media Management

- The CEO or a designated media liaison will manage all initial media calls and manage access of the media to the scene, to staff, students and relatives.
- All facts will be checked before speaking to the media and the CEO will determine what the official college response will be.
- AAC will avoid assigning blame or making speculative statements,
- If accurate information is unavailable or the issue is of a sensitive nature media question will not be answered.

## 9. Privacy and Recordkeeping,

AAC will ensure that any information provided is not disclosed to unauthorised parties, maintaining confidentiality in line with privacy laws and AAC's policies. All records related to critical incidents will be securely stored and only accessible to authorised personnel.

AAC will maintain contact details of essential bodies and relevant community resources such as emergency services, local medical services, legal services, counsellors, interpreters and consular representatives. (Appendix A)

Records of the incident, actions taken, and follow-up responses will be maintained for at least two (2) years after the affected student ceases to be enrolled under the ESOS Act.

## 10. Emergency Management

- Emergency procedures, including evacuation plans are displayed in all AAC premises.
- Regular evacuation drills are conducted to ensure preparedness.
- Fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and emergency exits are inspected regularly.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oversee compliance with Critical Incident Policy</li><li>• Provide leadership during critical incidents.</li></ul>
Compliance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure implementation of policies and procedure</li><li>• Coordinate training related to critical incident management.</li><li>• Manage external reporting requirements.</li></ul>
Student Services Officer (SSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Act a first point of contact for reporting critical incidents.</li><li>• Assist in the coordination of incident reporting and follow-up actions.</li></ul>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Immediately report and respond to any critical incidents they experience or witness.</li><li>• Provide support to affected individuals and follow emergency protocols.</li><li>• Maintain knowledge of the Critical Incident Policy to effectively respond to incidents.</li></ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow safety instructions during critical incidents.</li><li>• Report any critical incidents immediately.</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure overseas students hold and maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) as per visa requirements.</li> <li>• Provide up to date personal contact information, including emergency contact details, to AAC.</li> </ul>
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## Monitoring and Review

AAC reviews the Critical Incident policy and procedure annually to ensure compliance and effectiveness in managing critical incidents. Additionally;

- AAC evaluates the response to each critical incident to identify areas for improvement.
- Findings from these evaluations are documented, and action plans are developed to address any identified gaps.
- Continuous improvement measures are implemented to enhance AAC’s capacity to manage future incidents effectively.
- Documentation related to the review process and any changes made are maintained for accountability and future reference.

## Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Approved by	Approval date	Author	Review date
V1.0	Jan 2025	New policy for AAC	CEO	12 Feb 2025	Compliance Team	Jan 2026

## Policy and Document Information

<b>Author:</b>	Compliance Team
<b>Policy owner:</b>	Compliance Officer
<b>Approved by:</b>	CEO
<b>Approved date:</b>	12 February 2025
<b>Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Next review due:</b>	January 2026



## Appendix A - Emergency Contact Details

Role	Responsibility	Contact Details
Police, Fire, Ambulance	In case of emergency	Dial <b>000</b>
Local Police Station	Report crimes, safety concerns	Day Street Police Station 192 Day Street, Sydney NSW 2000 T: (02) 9265 6499
Local Medical Centre	General health services	MyHealth Darling Square 64 Darling Drive, Darling One Building, Darling Drive NSW 2000 T: (02) 9188 3893
Department of Home Affairs	Visa immigration and international student related enquiries	101 George Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 T: 131 881 (in Australia)
Service NSW	Government services, ID, driver's licence	Service NSW Haymarket McKell Building, 2, 24 Rawson Place, Haymarket NSW 2000
Poison Information Centre	Assistance with poisoning emergencies	T: 13 11 26 (24/7)
Crisis Support, Suicide Prevention	Mental health crisis support	Lifeline Australia T: 131 114
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence	Support services for affected individuals	T: 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)
International Student Health Hub	Health and safety resources for international students	<a href="https://www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/staying-healthy-and-safe/health-hub/">https://www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/staying-healthy-and-safe/health-hub/</a>
Translation Services	Language support for non-English speakers	Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS National) T: 131 450
Consulate	Support for international students from their home country	Contact details vary by country. <a href="#">Find your consulate</a>
Legal Support Services	Free legal advice for students	Redfern Legal Centre <a href="http://www.rlc.org.au">www.rlc.org.au</a> 73 Pitt Street, Redfern NSW 2016 T: (02) 9698 7277
Mental Health Support	Free mental health counselling services	Beyond Blue <a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">www.beyondblue.org.au</a> T: 1300 224 636
Housing Support	Assistance with accommodation issues	Tenant's Union of NSW <a href="https://www.tenants.org.au/">https://www.tenants.org.au/</a>
Public Transport Information	Timetables, fares and transport updates	Transport Info Line <a href="http://www.transportnsw.info">www.transportnsw.info</a> T: 131 500