

# Critical Incident Response Policy

## PURPOSE:

1. In accordance with the National Code, Perth College of Business & Technology is committed to having strategies in place to manage Critical Incidents, as well as documented processes to support or assist students. This policy is designed to ensure that Perth College of Business & Technology:
  - a) Meets its Duty of Care as an ESOS based Education Provider,
  - b) Is able to respond to a Critical Incident, and
  - c) Meets the requirements of the National Code
2. This policy shall be disseminated to all Staff and Student's to ensure that they are aware of these requirements in the event of a Critical Incident and shall form part of the orientation process.

## SCOPE:

3. Critical Incident Response is a comprehensive, integrated and systematic and approach to Crisis Intervention consisting of Core processes which can be applied considering the appropriateness of the specific intervention in relation to the incident.
4. A Critical Incident is defined as:

“A traumatic event, or threat of such (within or outside Australia) which has the potential to harm life or well-being, and causes extreme stress, fear or injury to the person experiencing or witnessing the event.”
5. Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:
  - Serious injury, illness, or death of a student or staff
  - A missing student
  - Severe verbal or psychological aggression
  - Physical or Sexual assault
  - Occupation Health & Safety Risk
  - Student or Staff witnessing a serious accident or violent act
  - Natural disaster
  - Fire, bomb-threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
  - Drug or Alcohol abuse
  - Damaging Media attention
6. This policy should not be confused with the standard incident reporting policy and procedures that pertain to staff and students contained within the college or whilst on Work Based Placement.
7. Should an incident be deemed to meet the above criteria, that incident report can be upgraded to a Critical Incident and be subject to the following procedures and guidelines.

## **PROCEDURE:**

Procedures in Critical Incident Response will address the actual management of a Critical Incident and include the following items:

- a) The time of the incident
- b) The type of incident
- c) Immediately after the incident
- d) Following the incident
- e) Post the incident
- f) Review the Critical Incident management

## **CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE**

### **Designated Officer**

8. The Designated Officer:

- a) Is any Full Time or Casual Staff Member who is either a direct witness or the first to be informed of the incident or potential incident, contract trainers are to direct the student directly to a SSO and are not authorised to deal with Critical Incident Reports. This definition is to be interpreted as immediately that a student raises the Incident and not after the student has explained the incident to a contract trainer.
- b) If the student wishes, the contract trainer can accompany the student to the SSO, the contract trainer must inform the Academic Manager immediately so the classroom is not left unattended.
- c) The SSO to assume temporary control over the Critical Incident and to assign duties and responsibilities to Staff and Students as required,
- d) The SSO is to alert the Compliance Manager at the first available opportunity,
- e) The SSO is to provide a brief to the Compliance Manager and form part of the Critical Incident Response Team,
- f) SSO is to start the Critical Incident Report Form and then provide that form to the Compliance Manager.

### **Critical Incident Response Team**

9. When an incident occurs, the Compliance Manager will form a Critical Incident Response Team – CIRT.

- a) The Compliance Manager shall be the designated Critical Incident Team leader,
- b) The CIRT is to take over control of the Critical Incident from the Designated Officer, after a handover brief, and
- c) The Designated Officer will form part of the CIRT
- d) Compliance Manager informs CEO/PEO
- e) Compliance Manager informs Admissions Manager

10. The CIRT is responsible for:

- Implementation of this procedure,
- Identifying the cause to the Critical Incident, assessing and controlling any further risk to the student.
- Implementing, monitoring and maintaining a response strategy that supports the student including any risk control measures.
- Regularly monitoring the effectiveness of the Critical Incident response and updating any response measures to ensure ongoing support of the student
- Consulting with the CIRT and stakeholders during the critical incident and maintaining an effective communication with all stakeholders,
- Liaison with Emergency Response Authorities,
- Liaison with Department of Education and the Department of Employment, DIBP and other relevant agencies,
- Ensuring the well-being of the student following the Critical Incident,
- Arranging Counselling or Trauma Services following the Critical Incident should the student request it. Counselling can be arranged should the Critical Incident Team leader deem it relevant.
- Monitor and review the critical incident responses, strategies and the support offered to the student during, immediately after and post incident.

### CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TIMELINE

11. At the time of occurrence and within 24 hours

- a) Identify the cause of the Critical Incident
- b) If practical, remove or minimise the cause for a potential further Critical Incident
- c) Ensure the Well-being of Student/s
- d) Ensure injured and/or traumatised and Student/s are provided with appropriate Emergency Care
- e) Arrange Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services
- f) Ensure support for Student/s in the event an incident is still continuing
- g) Keep all stakeholders informed of the progress or required needs of the student/s
- h) Marketing Manager is to manage all media reports if applicable.
- i) Designated Officer is to Complete the Critical Incident Report Form
- j) Commence a review to record real-time or factual data on the Critical Incident process

12. Immediately After

- a) Compliance Manager to ensure student has appropriate support. E.g. family, counselling, trauma or community support
- b) Compliance Manager to ensure students have contacted or reconnected with relatives and friends
- c) Compliance Manager debrief all relevant personnel involved in the Critical Incident
- d) Where applicable, ensure the site of the incident is not disturbed in relation to a police matter or when an investigation is required by Worksafe (if this critical incident is a serious workplace accident then this process must be started following Incident report policy and procedures.)

- e) Compliance Manager to ensure all stakeholders are briefed and effective communication system is established.
- f) Compliance Manager in consultation with Academic Manager and CEO is to restore normal operations as soon practicable.
- g) Compliance Manager to ensure SSO have started to complete a Critical Incident Form and that the critical incident is place on the CI Register located in Dropbox under compliance folder
- h) Marketing Manager is to manage media reports and releases.

### 13. Following

- a) CIRT to ensure students are provided with ongoing support via Counselling, Trauma or Community support
- b) CIRT members are to monitor student's attitudes and behaviour for any signs of PTSD
- c) CIRT is to monitor health and well-being of any student/s hospitalised.
- d) CIRT are to ensure all stakeholders are up to date with information
- e) CIRT to assist in the arrange of memorial proceedings if appropriate
- f) CIRT to conduct a review and provide a report to the CEO.
- g) CIRT ensures Admissions Manager is aware of the situation so CoE, DIBP and prisms are updated accordingly in a timely manner. (reference section 15.)
- h) Marketing Manager is to manage media reports or releases

### 14. Post

- a) Compliance Manager to ensure student/s are provided with ongoing access to counselling, trauma or community support
- b) Compliance Manager to seek feedback from all stakeholders involved in the response.
- c) Compliance Manager to review the findings of the CIRT procedures and actions and where necessary recommend continuous improvements in procedures if gaps are identified.
- d) Compliance Manager to end the Critical Incident and dissolve the CIRT ensuring all stakeholders have a final brief, review and feedback given to CEO.
- e) SSO files all documents and critical incident form in student files, updates
- f) Compliance Manager ensures that students involved in the critical incident are interviewed at 3 months, 6 months checking on their well-being.

## **REPORTING OF THE CRITICAL INCIDENT**

- 15.** In accordance with the ESOS Act, Perth College of Business & Technology is required to notify the Department of Education and DIBP as soon as practical after the incident and in the event of a student's death or other circumstance affecting the student's attendance. In this instance notification will be made initially by Phone followed by reporting via PRISMS.