

Critical Incident Policy

1) Australian Pacific College/English Unlimited/Australian Pacific Travel & Tourism (the College) recognises the duty of care owed to its students and that planning for the management of a critical incident is essential.

2) A critical incident is a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. This may include but is not limited to:

- a) serious injury, illness or death of a student or staff
- b) students or staff lost or injured on an excursion
- c) a missing student
- d) severe verbal or psychological aggression
- e) physical assault
- f) student or staff witnessing a serious accident or incident of violence
- g) natural disaster e.g. earthquake, flood, windstorm, hailstorm or extremes of temperature
- h) fire, bomb threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
- i) social issues e.g. drug use, sexual assault, domestic abuse
- j) pandemics or epidemics

3) Critical Incident Committee

a) The College has a Critical Incident Committee to assist the Principal Executive Officer in the prevention and management of critical incidents at the school, or off campus in the case of an overseas student for whom the school has undertaken care responsibilities.

b) The Principal Executive Officer is the critical incident team leader.

c) The Critical Incident Committee also includes:

- i) staff members
- ii) at least two (2) members of the Committee of Management (COM)
- iii) homestay coordinator (if relevant)
- iv) at least one of the WHS representatives

d) The responsibilities of the Committee include:

- i) risk assessment of hazards/situations which may require emergency action
- ii) analysis of requirements to address these hazards/situations
- iii) establishment of liaison with all relevant emergency services e.g. police, fire brigade, ambulance, hospital, poisons information centre, community health services
- iv) 24 hour access to contact details for all students and their families, agents, homestay families, carers, consular staff, embassies and interpreting services if necessary
- v) 24 hour access to contact details for all relevant staff members needed in the event of a critical incident e.g. welfare officer, legal services, school security, homestay co-ordinator
- vi) development of a critical incident plan for each critical incident identified
- vii) dissemination of planned procedures
- viii) organisation of practice drills

- ix) regular review of the critical incident plan
- x) assisting with implementation of the critical incident plan
- xi) arranging appropriate staff development
- xii) budget allocation for emergencies

4) Critical Incident Plans

A. All critical incident plans assign responsibilities among relevant staff members (as determined by the Principal Executive Officer)

B. Immediate Action (within 24 hours)

- a) Identify the nature of the critical incident
- b) The person, who is initially notified of the incident, be that the receptionist or homestay coordinator or student services officer or other staff member, should get as much information as possible regarding the nature of the critical incident.
 - i. Where did the incident occur - on campus or off?
 - ii. How severe is the nature of the incident?
 - iii. Where is the student now?
 - iv. Is the student injured?
 - v. Has an ambulance been called?
 - vi. Is the student in hospital?
 - vii. Is an interpreter required?
 - viii. Is a fatality involved?
- c) The information should be documented for further reference.
- d) The person who is initially notified of the incident should notify the critical incident team leader immediately.
- e) Assignment of duties to college staff
 - i. The critical incident team leader will identify the staff member responsible for any immediate action.
 - ii. The incident will then be referred to the identified staff member.
 - iii. The responsible staff member should keep in close contact with the critical incident team leader and any other staff members as required.
- f) Implement the appropriate management plan or action strategy
 - i) If the student is on campus:
 - ensure appropriate intervention to minimise additional injury
 - provide first aid where necessary
 - ascertain seriousness of injury
 - call ambulance if required
 - if ambulance is required, accompany student to hospital
 - ascertain seriousness of injury from hospital staff

- if ambulance is not required accompany student to relevant medical service e.g. doctor
- ii) If the student is off-campus
- if situation appears serious, call emergency services and either meet the emergency services team at the student's location
 - otherwise go to location of student
 - provide first aid where necessary (this should be done by one of the qualified first aid officers)
 - ascertain seriousness of injury
 - call ambulance if required
 - if ambulance is required, accompany student to hospital
 - ascertain seriousness of injury from hospital staff
 - if ambulance is not required accompany student to relevant medical service e.g. doctor
- iii) If the student has already been taken to hospital
- go to hospital
 - ascertain seriousness of injury from hospital staff
- g) Dissemination of information to parents and family members
- When there are a number of people to contact, such as when a student is in a homestay, the college should attempt to simultaneously contact all parties.
 - Contact the parents/legal guardian of the student
 - Contact the carer of the student e.g. they may be living with a relative
 - Contact the homestay family of the student
 - Contact the student's education agent
 - If information is available contact the police or relevant consular staff
- h) Completion of a critical incident report [see appendix a]
- i) Media / social media response and information release for students and staff if required
- i) Inform critical team leader of any relevant factual information to be conveyed to the media liaison.
- k) Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved
- l) If the student is seriously injured or requires hospitalisation, the College should enlist aid of overseas consular staff to assist the family if they are travelling to Australia, with interpreting services to aid in communication with the relevant medical services and with counselling services if required.
- m) The college should assess whether other staff and students have been affected by the incident and provide support and counselling as required.
- C) Additional Action (48 – 72 hours)
- a) Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved (ongoing)

- b) Provide staff and students with factual information as appropriate. Depending on the nature of the incident, it may be appropriate for the Principal Executive Officer or delegate to address the College and inform them of the facts of the incident and the condition of the student concerned.
- c) Restore normal functioning and college school delivery
- i) Where the incident occurred on College premises, there will be other procedures to follow in relation to any possible safety issues and the College's legal obligations. The critical incident committee should identify the appropriate staff member to follow up these issues.
- D) Follow-up – monitoring, support, evaluation
- a) Identification of any other people who may be affected by critical incident and access of support services for affected community members. The effects of traumatic incidents can be delayed in some people; the College needs to be aware of any emerging need for support and/or counselling.
 - b) Maintain contact with any injured/affected parties
 - c) If the student is in hospital for some time, the College needs to maintain contact with the student and their family in relation to
 - i) Support and assistance for the student and family
 - ii) Depending on the condition of the student, the College could provide study materials for the student to enable them to remain in touch with College activities
 - iii) Discuss with the family any required changes to the enrolment of the student e.g. suspension or cancellation of enrolment and make any changes required on PRISMS
 - d) The college should also contact DIBP and inform them of the incident using the course variation function in PRISMS in the event that suspension or cancellation of their visa is required.
 - e) Provision of accurate information to staff and students where appropriate. Depending on the nature of the incident, it may be appropriate for the Principal Executive Officer or delegate to address the College and inform them of the facts of the incident and the condition of the student concerned.
 - f) The critical incident committee meeting should be held to evaluate the critical incident report and the effectiveness of the management plan and to make modifications if required. In addition they should identify any possible longer term effects on the College, staff and student well-being e.g. inquests, legal proceedings etc.

4) Resources

The nature of critical incidents is such that resources cannot always be provided in anticipation of events. The critical incident committee uses its discretion to provide adequate resources – both physical and personnel – to meet the needs of specific situations. Staff will be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses.

5) Managing the Media

- a) The Principal Executive Officer should normally handle all initial media calls and manage access of the media to the scene, and to staff, students and relatives

- b) Determine what the official college response will be
- c) All facts should be checked before speaking to the media
- d) If accurate information is unavailable or the issue is of a sensitive nature, explain that questions cannot be answered at this time
- e) Avoid implying blame or fault for any part of the incident as this can have significant legal implications
- f) The Principal Executive Officer may delegate media liaison to another member of staff

6) Evaluation and review of management plan

After every critical incident, a meeting of the critical incident committee will be held to evaluate the critical incident report and the effectiveness of the management plan and to make modifications if required. If appropriate this process will incorporate feedback from all staff, students and local community representatives.

7) Policy review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the three year cycle of review or as required by legislative changes.

HEAD OFFICE:

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Critical Incident Report
(To be completed after all critical incidents)

Date: _____

College staff name: _____

Position: _____

Brief summary of incident: include where, when, who, and why as appropriate. Further information/ documentation may be attached.

Immediate action taken:

Further action required:

Persons or staff notified and time & date of notification:

Signature

Date