

## Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

### 1. Purpose

This policy provides a clear framework for the Asia Pacific International College Pty, the Higher Education Leadership and the ECA Higher Education Pty Ltd trading as the ECA College of Health Sciences (hereafter collectively and individually referred to as ‘the College’) in responding to and managing critical incidents and ensuring appropriate action is taken to address any underlying causes. The procedures cover the immediate action to be taken, the and the recording of incidents.

### 2. Scope

Unless otherwise stated this policy applies to all students, whether on or off-campus. Some overseas students may require additional support because they will not have close family available, and the College will endeavour to assist in these cases as much as possible.

### 3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Critical Incident	<p>A <b>Critical incident</b> includes a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes or is likely to cause extreme stress, fear, or injury. This includes physical or psychological harm, extreme emotional distress, fear or injury.</p> <p>These may include and are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any fatality or serious injury, or threat of these, that affect or are likely to affect staff or students</li> <li>• Missing student</li> <li>• Attempted suicide of a student</li> <li>• Life threatening illness/injury of a student or staff</li> <li>• Sexual and/or physical assault of a student or staff</li> <li>• Threats or acts of violence by or towards students, staff and/or their family members</li> <li>• Severe verbal or psychological aggression</li> <li>• Staff and/or students being taken hostage</li> <li>• Sudden or unexpected death or suicide of colleague, classmate, teacher</li> <li>• Natural disasters</li> <li>• Cybersecurity attack and business continuity</li> <li>• Terrorist attacks including bomb threats</li> <li>• issues such as domestic violence, physical, sexual, or other abuse</li> </ul>

### 4. Principles

1. The College maintains its duty of care towards students at the College.
2. The College respects the privacy of students and staff and acts in accordance with its respective Privacy Policy.

### 5. Policy

The College will ensure that a process is in place that will manage critical incidents.

The College will:

1. minimise the risk to its students and staff of critical incidents
2. protect its assets and environment
3. minimise disruption to teaching and other activities caused by critical incidents
4. protect its reputation as a safe and supporting educational provider.

The College will take action to minimise the risk of a critical incident occurring by planning for, preparing against and encouraging the detection of any possible risks and mitigate them.

If a critical incident occurs, the College will respond in a timely and professional manner with the idea of minimising harm to our students and staff.

After a critical incident, the College will attempt to minimise disruption and to continue normal operations as quickly as possible but only if the risk of harm has been mitigated.

The process of responding to critical incidents will involve recording the critical incident, learning from it by identifying any gaps, errors or inadequacies that can be addressed and taking steps to minimise risk of the critical incident reoccurring.

## 6. Procedure

The following steps outline the process to manage a critical incident. It applies to all staff including sessional staff members who may be present when the incident occurs or who may be the first point of contact for the student.

### Critical phase

The critical phase is the time immediately after the incident has occurred, or the point in time when the student or staff member first contacts the College. Staff should assess the situation and ensure that they consider the following:

1. Ensure that the student and or staff member is safe and is receiving adequate medical supervision in a safe environment
2. Ensure that other students are safe
3. Contact relevant authorities as appropriate (e.g., police, ambulance)
4. Determine if evacuation procedures are required to be implemented
5. Report incident to the relevant College Manager
6. Once the student is out of danger and receiving medical attention resume activities if appropriate
7. As soon as possible, ascertain what happened and any ongoing problems
8. Support other students or arrange for counselling to occur
9. Address any other immediate needs, that is, additional support, police report, report stolen goods etc.
10. Follow the procedures outlined in Appendix 1 in the case of a death of a student.

### Ongoing supervision and follow-up

Once the incident has been managed and necessary contact has been made with relevant personnel, it is important that the student support follows up with the student. This may include:

1. Keeping in contact with the student and relevant family members or close friends while observing the Privacy Policy. Monitor the situation with a daily call
2. Checking that the student is receiving ongoing medical help and counselling if appropriate.
3. Passing on findings to the appropriate manager and other relevant authorities while observing the provisions of the Privacy Policy

## Investigation and taking action

To ensure that the incident is accurately recorded and managed, the Registrar or the designated officer shall:

1. Collect facts about the incident (e.g., injuries to person, any witnesses, information from the scene). This may be in written form or using media such as photographs, as appropriate.
2. Examine any work/operating procedures or training that may have impacted the incident.
3. Determine the cause of the accident/incident paying attention to contributing factors, environmental factors, mechanical failure, and systems failure.

Take action that will minimise risk of the critical incident happening again. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Review work procedures, training, and/or safe operating procedures.
2. Document recommendations and communicate results of investigation to the relevant persons or parties.

## 7. After-hours emergency contact details

Where a critical incident occurs outside standard business hours, students and staff must first contact emergency services on 000 where there is an immediate risk to life, safety or property, or where urgent police, ambulance or fire services are required.

For critical incidents occurring after hours across all campus locations and across all three Colleges, the designated emergency after-hours contact is:

Contact	Phone	Applies to	Purpose
Ms Lena Shifrina	0420 309 633	All three campus locations and all three Colleges	Emergency after-hours College contact for critical incidents

The after-hours emergency contact is intended to support timely escalation, coordination and communication where a critical incident occurs outside normal operating hours. This may include liaising with emergency services, building management, relevant College staff, senior management, student support staff, and other appropriate internal or external parties.

Where a student or staff member contacts the after-hours emergency contact, the matter must be recorded and escalated in accordance with this Policy and Procedure. A *Critical Incident Report Form* must be completed as soon as practicable and provided to the most senior manager on the relevant campus or other designated officer.

The after-hours emergency contact details are to be made available through appropriate student-facing and staff-facing channels, including but not necessarily limited to the relevant College website, student support information, and critical incident guidance materials.

## 8. Reporting

The respective College's *Critical Incident Report Form*, as published on the respective College's website, is to be completed and provided with any verbal reports to the most senior manager on the campus, including any recommendation on ways to prevent similar occurrences. Media enquiries should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer. Social media is to be monitored and responded to by the social media officer.

Written reports, endorsed by the student, are to be put on the student's file on the Student Management System, and on *Critical Incident Register* and sent to the parents of the student and other relevant authorities with the student's written permission.

## 9. Related Documents

- Critical Incident form
- Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures
- Critical Incident Register

## 10. References and Legislation

- Higher Education Support Act 2003
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011
- Standard 6 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code 2018)
- Standards 2.3.4, 2.3.5, 6.2.1.j and 7.3.3.c of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- Commonwealth Privacy Act and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)
- Biosecurity Act 2015
- National Health Security Act 2007
- eSafety Commissioner Resources and Guidance ([eSafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au))
- NSW State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW)
- Victoria Emergency Management Act 2013 (VIC)

## 11. Version Control

<b>Document ID</b>	Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
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Version	Summary of changes	Approval date
1.0	Amalgamation and cobranding of previously separate policies across the ECA IHE's.  Addition of emergency after hours contact details.	1 June 2026 (CEO)

## Appendix 1- Procedures in Case of a Student Death

In the case of a critical incident that results in the death of a student the Academic Registrar should form a taskforce comprising relevant officers. The taskforce is responsible for:

- Assessing risk and planning immediate response actions
- Liaising with emergency and other services
- Allocating individual roles and responsibilities for tasks
- Contacting appropriate persons which may include:
  - Next of kin
    - Other students (those involved, friends)
    - Hospital
    - Counselling/support staff
    - The person assigned to deal with the media
    - Teaching/academic and other relevant staff
    - Student representatives
    - Contact Department of Home Affairs (if relevant) or the Consulate, Sponsor, Accommodation provider (for overseas students).
- Liaising with other external bodies
- Arranging counselling of students and staff not directly involved in the incident
- Keeping careful records throughout the process
- Establishing what costs can be met by the College
- Discussing fee reimbursement
- Investigating any insurance issues
- Arranging condolence letters to everyone involved
- Arranging Thank you letters
- Offering follow up support to those involved
- Reviewing critical incident procedure
- For overseas students, the responsibilities of the taskforce may also extend to:
  - Arranging a funeral or memorial service
  - Obtaining a copy of the death certificate and related documents
  - Arranging for repatriation
- Arranging for the student's possessions to be stored or sent to his/her family.