

CRITICAL INCIDENTS POLICY

A critical incident is defined as:

“A traumatic event, or the threat of such [within or outside Australia], which causes extreme stress, fear or injury”.

Policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with the relevant Homestay Organisation’s, Anglican Schools Commission (ASC) and Schools’ policies.

Anglican Schools Commission International (ASC International) has a Duty of Care obligation to its students, all members of staff, and other persons working at, or visiting, the School and to provide standards of health, safety and support in the case of a critical incident occurring on campus or involving a member of the School community. The procedure ensures that members of staff are able to respond immediately to a critical incident or crisis and to manage the follow-up actions to be taken during the period immediately following the event, and of any related longer term consequences of the incident. Where the provider co-shares a campus with another provider, both providers will coordinate their procedure drills.

Definition

Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:

- serious injury, illness, or death of a student or staff member, visitor, or worker;
- student(s) or staff member(s) lost or injured during excursions;
- a missing student;
- severe verbal or psychological aggression or abuse;
- physical assault;
- student(s) or staff member(s) witnessing a serious accident or incidence of violence;
- natural disaster e.g. epidemic, earthquake, flood, windstorm, hailstorm, or extremes of temperature;
- traumatic incident within an international student’s home country, such as a political coup, religious persecution, natural disaster; fire, bomb-threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard; or
- social issues e.g. sexual assault, drug use and/or abuse, alcohol abuse, internet abuse;
- attempted suicide by a student;
- fire, explosion or bomb threat;
- chemical, radiation or bio-hazard spillage;
- acute illness (physical or mental);
- Any of the above to which staff on business-related travel may have been exposed. Staff undertaking business-related travel will be given information on what to do and who to contact should they experience a critical incident whilst away. This will include the policy and contact numbers of our Travel Insurer together with details of how and when to lodge a claim.

Critical Incident Team

ASC International, appoints a Critical Incident Team (CIT) at the beginning of each year for the management of any critical incidents that may arise during that year.

The critical incident team includes some or all of:

- Director, International Programs;
- Student Support and Welfare Coordinator
- On Campus School Representative
- “Designated Officer” (as this person has the most detailed current knowledge of the incident).
- If the incident involves homestay, the homestay organisation’s nominated representative will also form part of this team.

Designated Officer

Any member of staff, who is either a witness to, or first to be informed about, an actual or potential critical incident. This officer is to assume responsibility for alerting the most senior member of staff available as quickly as possible. There may be a period of time when the Designated Officer will need to assume temporary control of a critical incident site and assign duties, such as calling emergency services, alerting other staff and/or students, assisting with first aid, etc., to available persons in the vicinity of the incident.

The responsibilities of the team include:

1. Ongoing risk assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action;
2. Analysis of requirements to address these hazards;
3. Establishment of contact with all relevant emergency services e.g. police, fire brigade, ambulance, community emergency services, hospital, poisons information centre, community health services;
4. 24-hour access to contact details for all students and their families [for overseas students this includes agents, consulates, embassies, interpreter services];
5. 24-hour access to contact details for all relevant faculty or staff members needed in the event of a critical incident e.g. Director, International Programs, CIT leader;
6. Development of a critical incident plan for each type of critical incident identified;
7. Implementation of the critical incident plan;
8. Dissemination of planned procedures to all members of staff;
9. Organisation of practice drills;
10. Coordination of appropriate PD sessions for staff; and
11. Regular review of critical incident plans (including an annual review of contact numbers to ensure currency).

Procedures

1. Immediate Responses [within 24 hours]

- 1.1. Identify the nature of the critical incident;
- 1.2. Notify the critical incident team leader or most senior member of staff available;
- 1.3. Assess the risk(s) to students, others and self and take action to prevent any further harm;
- 1.4. Arrange medical treatment as soon as possible;
- 1.5. Provide appropriate personal support and assistance;
- 1.6. Contact emergency services [under no circumstances are students/staff to be transported in private vehicles];
- 1.7. Secure or evacuate the area, activate sirens and make an announcement over PA;
- 1.8. In the case of evacuation follow 'Emergency Evacuation' procedure;
- 1.9. Critical Incident Team leader to liaise with emergency services, hospital, medical services and appropriate government agencies if necessary (e.g. Dept. of Health);
- 1.10. Refer to ASC Communications Team to handle all media and publicity;
- 1.11. Refer to Principal or Director, International to inform parents and family members;
- 1.12. Identify students and staff members most closely involved and at risk;
- 1.13. Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and/or indirectly involved; and
- 1.14. In the case of involvement of international student(s), liaise with Department of Home Affairs and appropriate Embassy/Consulate (as they may provide support such as travel for the family);
- 1.15. Arrange access to counsellors and/or pastoral care for students and staff affected; and
- 1.16. Establish an information point for students, family and others who have a legitimate interest in the matter.

2. Secondary Response [48-72 hours]

- 2.1. Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and/or indirectly involved [ongoing];
- 2.2. Provide students, staff, and wider School community, with factual information as appropriate;
- 2.3. Arrange debriefing for all students and staff most closely involved and who may remain at risk;
- 2.4. Restore School to regular routine, program delivery, and community life as soon as practicable;
- 2.5. Complete an 'Incident and Accident Report'; and
- 2.6. Confirm availability of emergency accommodation needed for overseas relatives of international student(s) involved.

3. Follow-Up Responses

- 3.1. Identify any other persons who may be affected by the incident and provide access to support services for community members;
- 3.2. Provide accurate information to students and staff;
- 3.3. Arrange a memorial service and/or special chapel service as appropriate, if necessary;
- 3.4. Maintain contact with any injured and affected parties to provide support and to monitor progress;
- 3.5. Monitor students and staff for signs of delayed stress and the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder; providing access to specialised treatment if necessary;
- 3.6. Evaluate critical incident management;
- 3.7. Plan for, and be sensitive to, anniversaries of the incident;
- 3.8. Manage any possible longer term disturbances;
- 3.9. Attend to personal effects of affected student(s) in the case of prolonged severe illness or death;
- 3.10. Assess whether legal assistance might be required and refer accordingly;
- 3.11. Inform relevant insurance bodies as soon as possible, if this is applicable;
- 3.12. Adjust student's records and status where necessary;
- 3.13. Inform parents and staff (with regard to Privacy requirements) of what media contact has been made before the news is disseminated; and
- 3.14. In the event of a student death, a person who has had some personal relationship with the student should be asked to convey the condolences of the community to the family.

Evaluation and Review of the Critical Incident Management Plan

After any critical incident, the Critical Incident Team will meet to debrief about the incident and to contribute to the critical incident report and comment on the effectiveness of the management plan. They will make suggestions for improvements and modifications, as required. The evaluation process will incorporate feedback gathered from all involved students, staff and local community representatives. An evaluation report, written by the CIT Leader, will be presented to the Board of Governance.

Useful Contact Information

State Emergency Services:	(Police, Fire, Ambulance)	Dial 000 or 112 from a mobile
Free Support Services:	Samaritans: 24-hour crisis line	13 52 47
	Youthline:	1800 198 313
	Lifeline Australia:	13 11 44
	Translation and Interpreting Service:	13 14 50

Response to a Missing Person(s) Report

If the School is contacted by a relative, or other person, to report that a student is missing; that person is required to give the School their full details and those of the missing student. They are then referred immediately to the Police.

Members of staff need to be very aware of the privacy constraints involved in passing on any information, whether or not this is to the family of the missing person.

[The Salvation Army has a family tracing service but, due to their international protocol, will not initiate any enquiry in Australia. Relatives need to contact the Salvation Army **in their home country** to use this service].

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