

# Critical Incident Policy

## 1. Purpose

The *Critical Incident Policy* (“policy”) outlines the Institution’s approach for planning, responding to and managing critical incidents in a clear, consistent and timely manner. Its primary aim is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, staff, and visitors by providing clear guidelines and processes for handling serious or traumatic events that may occur on campus or in connection with institutional activities. This policy is in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff and visitors on any campus, including domestic and international students, and covers incidents occurring both on and off campus as part of domestic or overseas Institution-related activities. It is relevant to all individuals engaged with the Institution, regardless of their role or location.

## 3. Definitions

See *Glossary of Terms*.

## 4. Policy statements

### 4.1 *Prevention: mitigating and minimising impact*

4.1.1 The Institution actively promotes and fosters a safe environment by advising students and staff on actions to enhance safety and security on campus. Immediate actions to take during a critical incident are outlined in this policy and in the *Critical Incident Management Procedures*.

4.1.2 All students and staff are provided with information on how to seek assistance and report incidents that significantly impact their wellbeing, including critical incidents.

4.1.3 Robust monitoring processes are in place to detect potential critical incidents that may disrupt operations. All identified risks are documented on the

Risk Register and reviewed regularly, with significant threats escalated promptly to senior management. This approach enables early intervention and protects the continuity and integrity of operations.

4.1.4 The Institution monitors and evaluates critical incidents as part of its Risk Management Framework. This process informs ongoing the risk prevention and mitigation strategies, ensuring that responses remain effective and appropriate.

## **4.2 Preparedness**

4.2.1 The Institution maintains a high level of preparedness for critical incidents by allocating appropriate resources, conducting training and drills and keeping emergency response procedures up to date.

4.2.2 All staff and students receive information on emergency procedures during induction and orientation.

## **4.3 Response**

4.3.1 The institution is committed to ensuring the continuity of services and minimising disruption during and after critical incidents by identifying essential business activities, implementing and testing business continuity and recovery plans, and enabling the rapid and orderly restoration of services within agreed timeframes.

4.3.2 The Institution maintains a clear incident response structure and communication channels to effectively manage, document, and report critical incidents.

4.3.3 The Institution provides access to counselling and appropriate support services to all affected individuals.

4.3.4 The Institution engages promptly with authorities in accordance with legal requirements.

4.3.5 All actions and decisions taken during a critical incident are documented to support review and continuous improvement.

4.3.6 All personal information is managed in accordance with the Privacy Policy.

## **4.4 Recovery and follow-up**

4.4.1 The Institution allocates appropriate resources to support effective recovery.

4.4.2 Each incident is reviewed, and formal debriefs conducted with those involved, to identify lessons learned and to improve future responses.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The **President and Managing Director** is the Responsible Officer of this policy. The President establishes a dedicated Incident Response Team to coordinate response and recovery efforts, and to ensure the disruption of services is identified and minimised.

5.2 The **Executive Management Group (EMG)** receives reports from the Incident Response Team and has oversight of the management of critical incidents and emergencies at the Institution. The EMG is responsible for overseeing post-incident reviews and implementing improvements to policies and procedures.

5.3 The **Incident Response Team** has overall responsibility for the management of the critical incident and executes all responsibilities outlined in Table 1 of the Critical Incident Management Procedures. The chair is responsible for preparing a comprehensive report once the incident has been resolved and reporting to EMG and the Board of Directors.

5.4 The **Chief Operations Officer (COO)** is responsible for:

- ensuring that the induction program for staff includes familiarisation with the Critical Incident Policy, how to report an emergency, and how to respond to an emergency situation;
- responsible for critical incident management outside of normal business hours;
- regularly scanning the internal and external environment to detect potential critical incidents that may disrupt operations. All identified risks are documented on the Risk Register and reviewed regularly, with significant threats escalated promptly to senior management.

5.5 The **Work Health and Safety (WHS) representative** is responsible for ensuring up-to-date information about personal security, emergency contact

numbers and emergency procedures is published on the Institution's website and displayed prominently in the common areas and corridors of the Institution's campus/sites. The WHS representative also ensures emergency evacuation drills are held regularly and that learnings from those drills are documented and acted upon.

5.6 The **Associate Vice President (Campus and Operations) (AVPCO)** is responsible for ensuring that the orientation program for students includes clear information on how to report an emergency. This includes:

- ensuring students under 18 years of age are given age-and culturally appropriate information on:

a. who to contact in emergency situations, including contact numbers of a nominated staff member and/or homestay provider;

b. seeking assistance and reporting any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse;

- providing information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including critical incidents.

5.7 **Student Success Centre (SSC)** is responsible for supporting and monitoring students who may be affected by critical incidents in accordance with the *Student Wellness Policy*. The SSC maintains regular communication with affected students. This may include their emergency contact person, when necessary, based on the nature of the incident and in accordance with the student's wellbeing and consent where appropriate. The SSC collaborates with academic and administrative staff to support students' academic progress and wellbeing during recovery from critical incidents.

5.8 The **Vice President (Marketing)** is the communication lead and assigns responsibility for managing internal and external communications, including updates to staff, students, and media as appropriate.

## 6. Related documents

*Business Continuity Policy*

*Business Continuity Procedures*

*Critical Incident Management Procedures*

*Health and Safety Policy*

*Incident Reporting Procedures*

*Infectious Diseases Policy*

*Infectious Diseases Procedures*

*Risk Management Framework (Risk Appetite Statement, Risk Management Policy, Risk Register)*

*Sexual Harm Policy*

*Sexual Harm Procedures*

*Student Wellness Policy*

*Student Wellness Procedures*

## **7. Change history**

<b>Summary of changes</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Approval date</b>
Created	Board of Directors	2 August 2019
Comprehensive review.	Board of Directors	6 October 2021
Comprehensive review. Substantial changes to all sections but mainly grammatical. Updated definition for a critical incident.	Board of Directors	9 September 2025