

PURPOSE

The policy ensures that critical incidents or potential critical incidents that could affect a student's ability to undertake or complete the course in which they are enrolled.

This complies with Standard 6 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, along with institutional safety operations.

This policy is designed to ensure that Sapience College:

- a) Meets its Duty of Care as an ESOS based Education Provider
- b) Is able to respond to a Critical Incident effectively and promptly
- c) Provides appropriate support services to those affected
- d) Applicable information is provided to staff and students

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and staff in compliance with the ESOS Framework. The critical incidents covered in this procedure include, but are not limited to, those incidents which occur at our premises and/or training and assessing locations either during or after hours.

DEFINITIONS

A **Critical Incident** is any 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.

Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:

- Serious injury, illness, or death of a student or staff
- A missing student
- Serious illness, such as any illness which causes the deterioration of the student /staff member's health over time
- Serious Injury which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to complete the course
- 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
- Traumatic events that affect students; such as
- Sexual Assault
- Plague
- Mental Health Crisis
- Drug / Alcohol Overdose

Critical Incident Team means a group of persons specified by SC to plan an immediate response, allocate responsibilities and determine ongoing strategies.

Designated person means any SC staff member who either witnesses or is informed about an actual or potential incident. The designated person should immediately inform the most senior member of staff available of the incident. In the meantime, however, the designated person may need to assume temporary control of a critical incident site.

DE means Department of Education

Emergency Services include:

- Emergency Services - Police, Fire and Ambulance Phone: 000
- Police Headquarters (24 hr) Phone 131 444
- Lifeline (24-hour crisis counselling line) 131 114
- Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26
- State Emergency Service 03 9256 9000
- Health Department 1800 020 103

PRISMS mean Provider Registration and International Students Management System

POLICY

This policy should not be confused with the standard incident reporting policy and procedures that pertain to staff and students contained within the college.

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 information within this policy.

- SC is committed to protecting staff and students in the event of a critical incident and will take appropriate actions to maximise the safety of all staff and students and any other persons involved in the critical incident.
- SC ensures that as far as possible risk reduction measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a critical incident.
- A designated officer and/or critical incident team will manage critical incidents.
- All staff will receive induction into their role which will include information about health and safety, as well as critical incidents. Training and updates to information will be provided to staff on a regular basis.
- Students have received information about health and safety, including critical incidents, in this Student Handbook, and will receive during their orientation as well. This will include information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia and how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their well-being, including critical incidents. Updates to information will be provided to students as required.
- SC will ensure that appropriate post-incident support is provided as required.
- SC response to critical incidents will always be evaluated and improvements identified and implemented as required.

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

- The time of the incident
- The type of incident
- Immediately after the incident
- Following the incident
- Post the incident

- Review the Critical Incident management

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.

The students will be provided with information about assistance available and how to seek assistance or, and report any incidents. Assistance will also be available for reporting and seeking assistance through Student Support Services and staff.

Critical Incident Response

To ensure that staff members are well-versed in responding to and managing critical incidents involving students, SC is committed to implementing a comprehensive training program in alignment with the requirements of SRTOs 2015. SC has this policy specifically addressing critical incidents, making these documents easily accessible to all staff and how to manage the cases. The training program accordingly is designed to cover key aspects of critical incident response and is structured to comply with regulatory standards.

- If a member of Sapience College's staff believes that a critical incident has occurred, that staff member is required to contact emergency services (if required) and contact the RTO Manager immediately
- The staff member shall contact emergency services (if appropriate) immediately
- Wherever emergency services are required to be contacted all personnel are to be cleared from any dangerous area without delay
- In the instance of injury or onset of illness on premises, Sapience College Student Support Officer or Student Administration should be notified whenever a student or staff member requires assistance
- Contact should be made with the family of any student involved in situation requiring emergency services
- A Critical Incident Report Form is to be completed by the appropriate staff member involved in the incident

The *Critical Incident Report Form* available on SC website is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.

Training

New staff members will undergo a thorough orientation that includes an in-depth overview of Critical Incident Policy, as well as the specific roles and responsibilities they may be assigned during such situations. Recognising the dynamic nature of critical incident response, SC prioritises regular refresher training sessions to keep staff updated on any policy changes or procedural adjustments. To enhance practical skills and confidence, SC may conduct simulated exercises and drills, providing hands-on experience in a controlled environment, as part of training program.

Additionally, SC will establish connections with external resources such as emergency services, counselling services, and relevant government agencies. This proactive approach will ensure that the staff members have access to vital information and contacts for swift and effective response during critical incidents.

Reporting of the critical incident

In accordance with the ESOS Act, SC is required to notify the Australian Department of Home Affairs 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.