



## CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

<b>Approving Authority</b>	Council	<b>Approval Date of Last Revision</b>	14 Dec 2023
<b>Approval Date</b>	15 Dec 2017	<b>Effective Date of Last Revision</b>	14 Dec 2023
<b>Effective Date</b>	15 Dec 2017	<b>Review Date*</b>	31 Dec 2028
<b>Document No</b>	PLO1	<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>Policy Category</b>	Operational		
<b>Governing Authority</b>	General Manager		
<b>Reporting Authority</b>	Head of School for academic related incidents General Manager for Non-academic related incidents		
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	General Manager		
<b>Related Documents</b>	Critical Incident Procedure Disaster Recovery Plan Work Health and Safety Policy Enrolment Terms and Conditions Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code)		

\* Unless otherwise indicated, this Policy will still apply beyond the review date.

### Document Control

Version #	Date	Key changes
1.0	15/12/2017	Approved by Council
1.0a	16/12/2021	Revised sections 2.2, 4.0 and 5.2 to update definition, Principles and Responsibilities in managing critical incidents. Updated reference to 2021 HES Framework and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students.
2.0	14/12/2023	Additions made to: (i) classify examples of critical incidents under item 2.2 to be incidents that post immediate risk to life and property on campus and those outside campus; (ii) add texts under 3.2 re the principle for critical incidents involving AIHE staff or students in a situation or location where AIHE has limited direct responsibility or influence; (iii) add the role of General Manager in ensuring staff who come in contact with students will be made aware of the Critical Incident Policy and Procedure under item 5.2: and (iv) add words for ensuring written records to be retained for at least two years under item 4.8.

## 1. PURPOSE

1.1 The Critical Incident Policy provides the framework and rationale to plan for, respond to, and manage, critical incidents as they may occur while students are undertaking their study at the Adelaide Institute of Higher Education (AIHE).

## 2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to staff, students, volunteers, visitors and clients of AIHE for critical incidents occurring at or affecting AIHE's students, volunteers, visitors, clients and/or AIHE's property and ongoing business.

2.2 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'. The definition is documented in the AIHE Glossary and adopts the critical incident definition stipulated in Standard 6 of the ESOS National Code.

Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- missing students;
- severe verbal or psychological aggression;
- death, serious injury or any threat of these;
- natural disaster;
- issues such as domestic violence, physical, sexual or other abuse; and
- other non-life threatening events.

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 AIHE recognises that critical incidents can occur anywhere and at any time, and that every critical incident is unique and will need to be dealt with differently, according to the needs of the people affected.

3.2 AIHE commits to identify, prevent and manage critical incidents within its sphere of responsibility and influence. This will include:

- developing and implementing an effective approach to respond to critical incidents as they occur;
- providing appropriate support and counselling services to those affected; and
- providing appropriate training and information resources to staff.

## 4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 AIHE will regularly identify and evaluate threats and potential crisis events to enhance preparedness for such events.

4.2 AIHE will develop appropriate plans, systems and processes to ensure it swiftly and effectively responds to and manages critical incidents.

4.3 Critical incidents will be managed with the foremost goals of preserving life and ensuring the safety and welfare of the organisation's people.

4.4 Appropriate services will be made available to students and staff through any critical incident, including for international students who may be away from family or community support mechanisms.

4.5 AIHE has staff members designated to assist in the prevention and management of critical incidents at AIHE, or off AIHE premises in the case of an international student for whom AIHE has undertaken care responsibilities, or other students and staff involved in AIHE-related activities.

4.6 AIHE will establish a Critical Incident Team to assist the General Manager in the prevention and management of critical incidents affecting AIHE. AIHE shares resources and facilities with other related entities, and as such the Critical Incident Team may comprise of non-AIHE staff to ensure appropriate representation and expertise is available to extinguish AIHE's responsibilities and duty of care.

4.7 Other than the General Manager, members of AIHE staff will not communicate with the media concerning a critical incident unless they are approved by the General Manager to be a spokesperson in relation to the incident.

4.8 AIHE will have effective processes for record-keeping and records management in relation to critical incidents. AIHE will retain the critical incident records and reports for at least 2 years.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Council is ultimately responsible for the management of critical incidents at AIHE. Operationally, the Critical Incident Team, General Manager and the Head of School will deal with critical incidents as per their responsibilities.

5.2 The Critical Incident Team of AIHE is responsible for:

- risk assessment of hazards and situations that may require emergency action;
- analysis of requirements to address these hazards;
- disseminating and communicating planned procedures;
- organising practice drills;
- coordinating and monitoring appropriate staff development;
- establishing liaison with all relevant emergency services e.g. police, fire brigade, ambulance, community emergency services, hospital, poisons information centre, community health services;
- maintaining 24 hour access to contact details for all students and their families (for overseas students this includes agents, consular staff, embassies)
- maintaining 24 hour access to contact details for all relevant staff members needed in the event of a critical incident e.g. critical incident team leader, General Manager, Administration Officer;
- development of a Disaster Recovery Plan for each critical incident identified;
- assisting with implementation of a Disaster Recovery Plan; and
- regularly reviewing a Disaster Recovery Plan.

5.2 The General Manager is responsible for:

- developing and implementing critical incident procedures, including membership of the Critical Incident Team;
- fulfilling the role of Critical Incident Team Leader in the event of a critical incident, or designating an appropriate member of the critical incident team as Team Leader;
- ensuring AIHE staff who come in contact with students will be made aware of the Critical Incident Policy and Procedure;

- Informing the Head of School of likely academic implications of critical incidents; and reporting to Council regarding critical incidents.

5.3 The Critical Incident Team Leader will:

- guide the response to a critical incident response;
- manage a critical incident from the first report of an incident to completion of the response, including review and evaluation of responses to the incident;
- ensure the written records and reports are retained as per this Policy requirement; and
- Report to the General Manager on critical incidents if the General Manager is not the Critical Incident Team Leader.

5.4 Head of School is responsible for reporting to Academic Board on academic related critical incidents.

## **6. DEFINITIONS**

6.1 See the AIHE Glossary of Terms for definitions.