



Critical Incidents Policy and Procedures

Purpose of the policy:

This Policy relates to critical incidents directly involving staff and students on any campus which impact not only the individual but also other members of the Ace College community. Where a Critical Incident is defined as a traumatic event where: physical safety or life is threatened such as rape, personal assault, armed robbery, hostage situation, act of violence, accident, natural disaster, or suicide, and may include, but is not limited to: Being witness to, or being involved in, a critical incident such as a robbery, act of violence, accident or suicide can affect people. Early appropriate professional intervention following an incident can assist in minimising psychological, physical, educational, and social effects and the related human and financial costs to organisations such as Work-cover.

Scope:

This policy applies to:

Staff members and those who are responsible for the critical incident response.

Students and relevant authorities and where an incidents impacts the operations or functions of ACE College.

ACE College Responsibilities:

1.1 Ace College has a responsibility to abide by relevant Acts of Parliament such as Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Mental Health Acts, Disability Services Acts, and Freedom of Information Act (Commonwealth) 2016.

1.2 Ace College has a responsibility to staff and students in terms of their physical safety and emotional well-being, so that optimal learning and employment outcomes can be achieved.

1.3 Coordinated, systemic institutional procedures enable rapid, appropriate and comprehensive responses to a critical incident.



Therefore, it is the Policy of this Ace College to ensure optimal educational and employment outcomes for all students, through effective Comprehensive Critical Incident Management, which:

2.1 Enables the Ace College community to deal with all stages of critical incidents promptly and professionally in order to prevent the development of post-traumatic stress syndrome or harm to the learning environment.

2.2 Supports pro-active strategies which will help minimise the occurrence of some critical incidents.

2.3 Encourages the early identification of potentially critical incidents within the Ace College.

2.4 Ensures critical incidents in the workplace are managed in line with established Quality Management and Work Health and Safety objectives and Emergency or Disaster procedures.

2.5 Provides clearly accessible and understood directions for all personnel caught up in a critical incident.

2.6 Assists people to cope with critical incidents by providing appropriate practical and psychological support.

2.7 Provides appropriate assistance to people who may require longer-term assistance.

2.8 Ensures ongoing training, support, and review for staff.

Procedure

The CEO is responsible for the implementation of this procedure and for ensuring that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implement its requirements. Critical incidents are not limited to but could include:

- absent students.
- severe verbal or psychological aggression.
- death, serious injury, or any threat of these;
- natural disasters; and
- issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.

Ace College will notify relevant authorities as soon as practical after the incident. Any Ace College staff member receiving news or information regarding a critical incident must contact the CEO as soon as practicable. If this is not possible then the most senior person available must be contacted and informed.

On receipt of news or information regarding a critical incident, the CEO or senior person must:



- Create for themselves a clear understanding of the known facts.
- If an emergency exists, contact the relevant emergency services by phoning 000.
- If translators are required contact Translating and Interpreting Service by phoning 131 450.
- If counselling services are required contact Lifeline on 131 114.
- Plan an immediate response.
- Plan ongoing strategies; and
- Allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks.

Based on an evaluation of the critical incident the CEO or most senior person must, where appropriate, make and implement the following actions:

- contact with next of kin/significant others.
 - Informing Ace College staff and students.
 - Prepare a guideline to staff about what information to give students.
 - Prepare a written bulletin to staff and students if the matter is complex; and
 - Briefing staff and delegating a staff member to deal with telephone/counter inquiries.
- Managing media/publicity.
- Identify students and staff members most integrally involved with the incident and ensure they are offered support and counselling;
 - Arrange a time and place for an initial group/individual debriefing session with the Counsellor/s; and
 - Arrange access to emergency funds if necessary.
 - Record the incident on the student file and include the following key details:
 - The time of the incident.
 - The location and nature of the incident.
 - The names and roles of persons directly involved in the critical incident.
 - The action taken by Ace College including any opportunities for improvement.
 - The organisations and people contacted by Ace College. Students who request or are referred to welfare-related support services to assist with issues that may arise during their study, including course progress and attendance requirements and accommodation issues will not be charged for the service. If Ace College refers a student to external support services for any reason, Ace College will not charge for the referral, but the student will be responsible for all external fees.



Document Control

Policy Owner	ACE College
Endorsed by	RTO Manager
The person responsible for the implementation	All staff members and student support Officer
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