

Student Critical Incident Response Policy

Category:	<i>Company Wide</i>	Approval Date:	<i>March 2023</i>
Last Reviewed:	<i>New Policy</i>	Next Review	<i>February 2025</i>

Authorised by: Chief Executive

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) provide a framework for delivering a timely, effective, sensitive and coordinated response to critical incidents involving students studying at Vision College Limited (Vision College).
- b) mobilise the Critical Incident Response Team to oversee and respond to all Student Critical Incidents as required
- c) provide guidance on measures to be taken to ensure an appropriate response to potential critical incidents
- d) establish the primary lines of responsibility and communication.

The Student Critical Incident Response Plan (SCIRP) is a companion document to this policy and provides detailed protocols to be followed when responding to reported critical incidents.

Scope

Company wide - Vision College Limited.

This policy will cover Student Critical Incidents, examples of which are indicated below.

Definitions

1. Student Critical Incident:

It is an unplanned or unforeseen traumatic event affecting a student or students which has an impact on Vision College, its staff, its students and/or the wider community, whether:

- directly, through a student being the immediate victim of a traumatic event or
- indirectly, through students being affected by, but not directly involved in, the event

Some examples of Student Critical Incidents are set below:

- death of a student
- serious injury of a student
- serious assault of a student
- serious self harm or psychiatric illness of a student
- arrest or detention of a student
- serious natural disasters in a student's home country
- serious threat to a student or group of students

2. Critical Incident Response Team:

- A team of staff responsible for planning and assisting with tasks in response to a Student Critical Incident
- Co-opted members may be included depending on the scope and circumstances of the Student Critical Incident.

Guidelines and Expectations

1. Priorities in responding to Student Critical Incidents will include:

- saving the life of anyone at risk
- protecting others from the effects of the incident
- informing those with the need and the right to know
- managing publicity

- minimising any long term impact on the organisation
 - restoring normality as soon as possible
 - preventing reoccurrences or resulting events, where possible.
2. Critical Incident Response:
 - The Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) will determine if an incident qualifies as a student critical incident, and whether to initiate the required response or not
 - Once the Student Critical Incident is identified, the CIRT will determine Vision College's responses, priorities and actions
 - The CIRT will seek to respond to a Student Critical Incident in a co-ordinated and appropriate manner, taking into account the nature of the incident and the needs of students, their families, Vision College and its staff
 - The CIRT shall provide the necessary support for people immediately affected by the incident
 - The SCIRP provides further information and protocols to guide the CIRT.
 3. Stakeholder notification:
 - The relevant stakeholders/agencies will be notified of the critical incident by the CIRT
 - All notifications will comply with the Privacy Act 2020 and the Health Information Privacy Code 2020 to protect the privacy of the student and their family members.
 4. Communicating guidelines with family members where English is a second language:
 - Establish if family or next of kin speak English before making contact
 - A translator will be appointed if necessary. The translator must indicate on whose behalf they are calling the family or next of kin. If a translator is not available, a staff member may translate. As a last resort, students can be used to translate.
 - It is essential that privacy and confidentiality expectations are clearly communicated to the student translator and strictly adhered to for further guidance.
 5. Communications guidelines with affected groups:
 - Provide factual information about the Student Critical Incident
 - Provide information on support services available to students and staff
 - Ensure that the privacy of those involved is not breached
 - Advise staff and students on the appropriate use of social media to minimise distress and harm to the affected groups
 - Ensure proper conveying of condolences and sympathy to the affected parties.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All information collected will be treated with appropriate care to maintain confidentiality. The collection, use and storage of personal information will comply with the Privacy Act 2020.

Personal information may be shared where:

- it is not practicable or desirable to obtain individual authorisation
- there is a serious risk to individual health and safety
- the threat is imminent
- disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen the threat.

References

- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 – Section 14
- Privacy Act 2020
- Health Information Privacy Code 2020
- Vision College Privacy Policy
- Education and Training Act 2020
- Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021
- The Student Critical Incident Response Plan (SCIRP)
- The Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)

Records

Policies will be kept in this location:

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Amendments to this Policy

Vision College reserves the right to change this Policy from time to time.

Disclaimer

Vision College reserves the right to change or replace this policy at any time. Where there is a dispute with regards to the interpretation of this policy or any part thereof, Vision College reserves the right to clarify the intention and meaning of this policy. The clarification as provided by Vision College will be seen as the final decision on the interpretation of this policy.