

Purpose:

This procedure ensures that any critical incident that occurs is documented, reported and action taken by the ANC where required.

Scope:

This policy applies to:

- Students enrolled at ANC
- ANC Marketing, Admissions, Academic, Student Services and Administrative staff.

All staff are made aware of the requirements of this policy through regular meetings, staff updates and continuous improvement practices. Students are made aware of this policy through Student Handbook, during the enrolment and orientation processes and also throughout the course.

Definitions

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.

Such Critical Incidents are not limited to but may include:

- Missing students
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Death, serious injury or any threat of these
- Natural disaster
- Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse

Background

There is a need to have a clearly articulated procedure that is widely known so that when a staff member becomes aware of a critical situation involving a student(s), they can alert the necessary person(s). This will minimise the risk of independent action and assist in ensuring that each case is managed effectively and compassionately. It will also protect the institution from conflict or ill will with those involved, including the family of the student, and emergency services. The response needs to be timely and professional, and also as personal and sincere as possible.

Critical incidents include but not limited to arrest; being the victim of crime; death; emergency medical evacuation; hospitalisation; mental illness; sexual assault; and reporting of missing persons who are students. The incident may vary in terms of the scale of the emergency and the level of media interest. Some international students may have special needs because they will not have close family available to offer support and the ANC would want to try to assist in these cases. This procedure addresses issues from the perspective of students resident in Australia.

Key Roles and Steps

ANC Administration plays a pivotal role, and will be the first point of contact. Director of Studies is responsible for disseminating the information to appropriate people within ANC and responding to any special needs that might emerge.

Recommended Procedure: Critical Incident Involving a Student

- 1) In the event of death, serious injury or illness, arrest or other serious incident involving a student of the ANC, the Police or other emergency service contacts the ANC Admin Staff. Or, when the situation is first identified by (or referred to) the ANC Administration, he/she contacts the relevant emergency service.
- 2) Administration staff has access to student records for verification purposes in order to assist emergency services. Particulars of home address are to be provided only in cases where the individual is incapacitated and unable to provide these particulars themselves.
- 3) Admin Staff immediately alerts the CEO / Director of Studies.

4) Contact Person During Office Hours & After Hours

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- 5) It is the responsibility of these staff to judge whether the circumstances are such as to warrant any further immediate action.
- 6) After receiving the notification, Director of Studies will assess the situation and organise any additional support required. This will involve liaison with:
 - Student Welfare Officer & Student Counsellor
- 7) Depending on the scale and nature of the event, responsibility for managing the situation might be transferred to another officer within the ANC.
- 8) All internal communication is to be channelled through the Director of Studies Only CEO can deliver any information to media.
- 9) Any direct contact with the family / next of kin in an official capacity is to be established by the Director of Studies

10) Preliminary Action by the Director of Studies:

- Access student record to verify details, including contact information
- Gather background details of the incident from the informing source if possible and appropriate
- Confirm with the Admin staff that either Police or Emergency Service (as indicated) has been in contact with next of kin/family
- Where circumstances are considered to have some public relation implications, the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Studies are to be briefed by the Student Administration.

- The Director of Studies will provide timely advice to the following (as indicated):
 - Chaplain
 - Counselling Centre
 - Director of studies
 - Chief Executive Officer
 - Relevant Trainer
 - Students' Representative Council, Welfare Officer
 - Admin Staff, if notification is not through that channel.
 - Library (for action regarding any loans)
 - Consulate/Embassy in case of international student (as they often provide support such as travel for the family).

Recommended Procedure - Missing Persons

Parents or other family members of a student or recent graduate will contact the ANC to report that student or graduate as missing. These enquiries should be referred to the Director of Studies immediately.

In the first instance, the relative should be referred to Police. However, there are circumstances where the family may be reluctant to pursue that option and if so, the following charitable organisations may be a suitable alternative (Depending on the advice provided by the family, you may wish to check with Student Services to ascertain whether they have had any contact with the student and have current contact with them, through which a message will be passed.

If a current student address is on the system, you may offer to send a letter on behalf of or from the family to that address or to call phone contact numbers on the student's record. Generally, you must be very aware of the privacy constraints in passing any information to the family).

Salvation Army - Phone (61 2) 9211 0277

The Salvation Army have a family tracing service, however, due to their international protocol they will not initiate the enquiry in Australia. The relatives have to contact the Salvation Army in their home country (they operate in 100 countries) and they in turn contact Australia. This applies even if the family have arrived in Australia to look for their relative. If the Salvation Army finds the "missing" person they in turn ask them to let their family know they are all right.

Mission Australia

24-Hours Support Line - Free call 1800 227 772

This is a Family and Friends of Missing Persons support line. They offer support and a referral service.

Ongoing Liaison

The Director of Studies, will take responsibility for managing the case including, where necessary, liaison with:

- Police
- Medical Services
- Director of Studies
- Family - ongoing contact (assist with travel and accommodation, as necessary)
- Chief Executive Officer - for information, and where an ex gratia payment is made to assist with travel and accommodation.
- Concluding Steps (initiated by Director of Studies)

In the event of a student death:

- An appropriate person, who has had some relationship or contact with the student, is to compose a letter conveying condolences. The relevant Course Trainer will be consulted to assist in identifying someone who was familiar with the student. Where the student was a resident, the friends will also be invited to make an input. The Director of Studies will recommend whether the Chief Executive Officer or another senior person, such as a Director of Studies, should sign the letter of condolence. The final decision will depend on the circumstances.
- Adjust Student Information System details (refunding fees as entitled) and advise Finance, Library and Information Technology Service (cancellation of email services).
- Ensure that any personal effects are returned to the next of kin. For international students bank accounts will need to be closed, and any other personal property disposed of, in consultation with the family.
- If student is domestic Apprentice/Trainee, ANC must notify the Manager of Apprenticeship Administration at the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) by email within 24 hours of being notified of the death of an Apprentice/Trainee.

Follow up & Review of Critical Incident

Where a critical incident has occurred and reported to Department of Education and DIBP (Department of Immigration and Border Protection), ANC will conduct a follow up and review of the specific critical incident. This follow up and review will involve those members initially involved in the action plan meeting and will ensure:

- Any required follow up such as de-briefing; counselling and prevention strategies have been completed.
- All staff and students involved in the incident have been informed of all outcomes from the incident
- Any recommendation arising as an outcome to the critical incident is documented and included in the continuous improvement submissions and to be included in the agenda list for next management meeting
- Any further follow up required is documented in involved student's file and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff

Reference:

This policy/procedure supports 'Standard 6' of the 'National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2007'.

Documents/Forms:

1. Critical Incident Report Form