

# Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

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## CONTENTS

1	PRELIMINARIES.....	1
	Commencement.....	1
	Purpose.....	1
	Application .....	2
2	DEFINITIONS .....	2
3	POLICY.....	4
4	RESPONSIBILITIES.....	4
5	PROCEDURES .....	4
	The Designated Officer .....	4
	The Critical Incident Team.....	5
	Administration .....	5
6	RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS .....	5
	Institute Documents .....	5
	Applicable External Standards and Codes .....	5
7	FEEDBACK .....	6
8	APPROVAL DETAILS .....	6
9	APPENDIX 1 - Critical Incidents Report and Procedure Flow Chart.....	7

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## 1 PRELIMINARIES

### Commencement

This policy and procedure commence on 9 June 2022

### Purpose

This policy and procedure outline how the Polytechnic Institute Australia (“PIA”) will manage events, incidents and critical incidents from a human, hazard identification, and risk management perspective.

This policy and procedure demonstrates PIA’s commitment to:

- protecting the health and safety of staff, students, contractors, visitors and the PIA community both in Australia and overseas;
- identifying and preventing Events, Incidents and Critical Incidents;
- allocating appropriate resources and building relationships to manage Events, Incidents and Critical Incidents in compliance with PIA’s mission, legal obligations and standards;
- delivering the highest possible standard of health and safety for staff, students, contractors, visitors, the PIA community and the public;
- managing its reputation for the benefit of students, staff, and stakeholders; and
- evaluating the effectiveness, adequacy and ongoing suitability of its Event, Incident and Critical Incident responses.

Providers of education to overseas students are required by legislation to have documented critical incident policy and procedures that outline the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident. This includes the initial response, follow-up, reporting, review and improvement.



# Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

## Application

This policy and procedures apply to staff, students, contractors, and visitors while they are participating in PIA-related activities, both on and off-campus, within Australia or overseas

## 2 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply in this document:

**Critical incident:** A critical incident is a sudden or developing event that causes disruption to an organisation, creates significant danger or risk and that creates a situation where staff and/or students feel unsafe, vulnerable and/or under stress. Critical incidents require immediate attention and decisive action to prevent or minimise any negative impact.

Critical incidents include the following events:

- death or suicide;
- serious accident or injury;
- death or serious illness of a student's family or friends overseas (in their homeland);
- deprivation of liberty, threats of violence, stalking, assault, sexual assault, aggravated burglary, biological or chemical weapons;
- fire, bomb, explosion, chemical hazards, discharge of firearms;
- threat of widespread infection or contamination;
- serious damage to PIA's facilities;
- disruption to operations of PIA; and
- the release of information that has the potential to negatively affect the reputation of PIA in the media or wider community.

**Critical Incident Team** The team convened to organise the immediate response to the incident

**Designated Officer** Any PIA staff member who is either a witness to, or first to be informed about, an actual or potential critical incident is referred to as the 'Designated Officer'.

**Event** an unforeseen or unexpected occurrence

**Incident** an event that has a negative impact on student(s) and staff regarding their wellbeing or their safety or has a negative impact on PIA's reputation

**Risk Level** As defined in the following table:

Risk level	Instances
<b>Severe</b> (Emergency Services required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death, suicide or threat of suicide, or life-threatening injury;</li> <li>• Deprivation of liberty, threats of violence, assault, rape/sexual assault, aggravated burglary, use of firearms, biological or chemical weapons;</li> <li>• Fire, bomb, explosion, gas/chemical hazards, discharge of firearms; or</li> <li>• Threat of widespread infection or contamination.</li> </ul>



## Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

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Risk level	Instances
<b>Significant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risk</li> <li>• Serious injury incurred by staff member or student</li> <li>• Activity where evacuation is required</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OHS risk</li> <li>• Suspicious package left unattended</li> <li>• IT system crashes</li> <li>• Student suffers epileptic fit</li> </ul>
<b>Minor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor injury</li> <li>• Plumbing blockages</li> <li>• Phone/electrical failure</li> <li>• Computer breakdown</li> </ul>

# Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

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## 3 POLICY

- 3.1 Where PIA staff witness an event that may be considered a critical incident, or where staff are aware of an event that may either indicate or escalate to a critical incident, the procedures identified in this document must be followed.

## 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 All staff have the responsibility to evaluate the level of risk and to respond to minor incidents and refer incidents of higher risk to their manager.
- 4.2 The following staff have the responsibility to evaluate the level of risk and to respond to moderate level incidents and refer incidents of higher risk to their manager:
- Registrar;
  - IT Manager; and
  - Finance Officer.
- 4.3 The following staff have the responsibility to evaluate the level of risk and to respond to significant level or critical incidents:
- The most senior members of the PIA Staff - the CEO, COO, Registrar and Dean as members of the PIA Executive.
- 4.4 The Critical Incident Team is responsible for
- managing PIA's response to any critical incident that is considered to have a severe or significant level of risk or, in some cases a moderate level of risk;
  - for maintaining a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken;
  - preparing a Critical Incident Report outlining details such as the type of incident, the exact location and details of any person or persons who might be injured, in distress, or at risk;
  - reviewing the situation, setting priorities, allocating tasks/responsibilities and coordinating an immediate response, including communications (to staff, students, families of those involved, helpers, and the media);
  - organising ongoing response and follow up (including staff and student briefing, counselling, reviewing, and reporting); and
  - de-briefing to evaluate response procedures and make recommendations for handling future critical incidents.

## 5 PROCEDURES

### The Designated Officer

- 5.1 The designated officer:
- 5.1.1 is to assume responsibility for alerting the most senior PIA staff member available as soon as possible who, in turn, will re-assess the situation and convene a Critical Incident Team if deemed necessary.
- 5.1.2 may need to assume temporary control of a critical incident site and assign duties to available persons (such as calling emergency services, alerting other staff, assisting with first aid, crowd control etc.), until such time as relieved by either the Critical Incident Team or Emergency Services.

# Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

## The Critical Incident Team

- 5.2 This team is convened by the most senior member of staff available at the time of the incident and will convene as soon as possible to plan an immediate response. Once the team is convened, the most senior staff member available (e.g. Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer or Registrar becomes the Head of the Critical Incident Team, or assigns a suitable alternative to head the team).
- 5.3 The team wherever possible will include the following members of staff:
- Dean (or delegate);
  - Registrar or delegate (where staff are impacted); and
  - other members of staff as deemed appropriate by the Head of the Critical Incident Team (e.g. Administration Officer or Finance Officer).
- 5.4 Where Emergency Services assume management of the critical incident, the Critical Incident Team will liaise with the managing body (e.g. the police or ambulance officers) for a coordinated approach to any response activities.
- 5.5 Where PIA has assumed managing a critical incident, the Critical Incident Team will consult with or take instruction from the Institute's Executive as necessary.

## Administration

- 5.6 A written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken will be kept on a student file for at least two (2) years after any student involved ceases to be an admitted student

## 6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

### Institute Documents

Critical Incident Report form  
 Quality Assurance Framework  
 Risk Management Framework  
 Compliance and Risk Management Policy and Procedure  
 Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy and Procedure  
 Wellbeing and Safety Policy and Procedure

### Applicable External Standards and Codes

This policy and procedures support compliance with the following

Standards/Code	Standards/Clauses
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	Standard 2.3 Standard 6.2
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	Standard 6.8



## Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

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### 7 FEEDBACK

- 7.1 PIA staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policy@pia.edu.au](mailto:policy@pia.edu.au) for such feedback to be incorporated into a future review.

### 8 APPROVAL DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Board of Directors
Administrator	CEO
Approval Date	9 June 2022

# Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

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## 9 APPENDIX 1 - Critical Incidents Report and Procedure Flow Chart

Table 1: Critical Incidents Report and Procedure Flow Chart

