

Critical Incident Policy

Purpose

This policy and related procedures are intended to manage critical incidents of a physical or psychological nature that would have a significant impact on the safety and wellbeing of students at the Institute of Creative Arts and Technology [ICAT].

Scope

This policy and related procedures apply to all students at ICAT and Institute staff who teach and/or support students. It outlines the requirements for managing a critical incident involving one or more students.

This Critical Incident Policy is to be adhered to in the event of 'incidence' that diverges from 'business as usual' practice and needs 'crisis' response and action.

Relevant Legislation and Standards

Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)

Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021–Domains 2,6 and 7

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018–Standard 6.

Related Policies

- Privacy Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Policy
- Staff Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Student Record Management Policy
- Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Definition of Key Terms

Critical Incident refers to a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear, or injury and that requires a structured and coordinated response.

Critical Incidents are distinguished from significant or routine (non- critical) incidents in that they:

- have (or have the potential to have) a fatal or severe impact on a person or persons
- have the potential to significantly disrupt the operations of ICAT
- may involve a significant cost to rectify the situation promptly.

Critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- fatality or serious injury (or any threat of these)
- a missing student or staff member
- fire, explosion, bomb threat or terrorist attack
- civil disobedience or disorder
- physical or sexual assault
- severe verbal or psychological aggression
- a mental health episode requiring hospitalisation
- robbery or other serious crime
- child protection matters
- a public health alert
- drug or alcohol abuse
- suspicious packages
- physical site malfunctions, such as burst water pipes or loss of lighting
- unexpected weather events, such as storms and flood
- the presence of venomous creatures, chemical or radiation hazards.

Principles

This Policy is designed to:

- deal with critical incidents in an effective and compassionate manner
- protect staff, students, visitors, and other stakeholders
- provide appropriate training and information sources
- provide appropriate support and counselling services to those affected by an incident
- protect the assets and physical environment of the Institute
- ensure the continuity of operations in the physical environment
- protect the Institute's reputation

Each Critical Incident will be assessed according to its severity and risk and dealt with according to the needs of those involved. In some instances, effective incident management will require involvement and support from external Building Managers and emergency services agencies.

Reporting of alleged sexual assault will be made using the Critical Incident form in accordance

with the ICAT Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Policy.

Non-critical incidents will be managed under the Work Health and Safety Policy.

In accordance with the National Code [Standard 6.8] ICAT as a registered provider uses this policy and procedure for managing critical incidents that could affect an overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm. The Institute maintains a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.

ICAT takes all incidents seriously and is committed to ensuring a safe and positive environment for all students.

In accordance with the National Code [Standard 6.9] ICAT will:

- take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus and advise overseas students and staff on actions they can take to enhance their personal security and safety
- provide information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including critical incidents
- provide overseas students with or refer them to (including electronically) general information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia.

Policy Statement

Preparedness

The associated procedures document the processes to be followed if a critical incident occurs.

The Institute provides training in these procedures for the designated ICAT First Responders on each campus. All students and staff are made aware of these procedures through Student Orientation or Staff Induction and through (at least) annual rehearsals of possible scenarios. The staff member conducting an authorised Institute event off-campus takes the First Responder role in this case.

ICAT maintains an up-to-date schedule of medical and emergency contact numbers and referral agencies at the student support hub of each campus, in the student learning management system and Student Handbook.

The Institute Executive Leadership serves as the Critical Incident Management Team, led by the Director of Operations and Compliance [DOC].

Mitigation

ICAT identifies its students and staff and provides secure access to its facilities through the

provision of digital ID cards and a manned reception desk.

Each ICAT campus has at least two Safety Officers who are trained in St Johns Ambulance First Aid and there are First Aid kits readily available and a Fire Warden who has undergone training as part of the Tenant Emergency Management Training at each Campus.

Reporting a Critical Incident

All Critical Incidents must be reported using the form which can be found on the staff or student intranet. These records are kept for two years after a student, including an overseas student, ceases to be an enrolled student at the Institute.

Response, Recovery, and Evaluation

The Critical Incident Response Framework is provided at Table 1 and has five components:

- the initial response (immediate)
- debriefing and support (immediate to short-term)
- operational adjustment (immediate to short-term)
- intervention and support (mid to long-term)
- review and reporting (mid to long-term).

In the event of a critical incident, ICAT takes a structured approach to resolution and support.

- Following intervention, immediate measures will be taken to address the situation and provide necessary support to individuals involved.
- Subsequently, a thorough review process will be initiated to assess the incident, identify root causes, and implement corrective actions.
- Before the final review and reporting, a comprehensive analysis will take place to ensure that all aspects of the incident have been adequately addressed.
- This approach ensures a systematic and transparent response, fostering continuous improvement and preventing the recurrence of similar incidents.

Key Contacts

Emergency Services	Redfern Police Station – 8303 5199 Ambulance/Police/Fire – 000
Campus Head Office	55 Regent Street Campus – 9698 9919
Student Services	55 Regent Street Campus – 9698 9919
Director of Operations and Compliance	55 Regent Street Campus – 9698 9919
Director of Education	55 Regent Street Campus – 9698 9919
Student Support Advisor	support@icat.edu.au
People Sense Counselling	1300 307 912
Lifeline Australia	13 11 14

Table 1: ICAT Critical Incident Response Framework

	Position	Responsibilities
Initial Response	First Responder	Assess the situation, determine level of threat and appropriate response
		Take a lead role in directing the response
		Alert relevant authorities, including the CEO
		Ensure immediate safety/wellbeing of affected people with emphasis on removing them from the immediate area/threat, including people with a disability or impairment
		Mobilise on-campus Safety Officers and/or Fire Wardens
		Implement and oversee evacuation procedures if necessary
		Provide a general alert to other people who are not in the area of immediate threat but may become affected if the threat intensifies
	Manage the situation until it can be handed over to the Critical Incident Management Team	
	DOC	Inform the members of the Executive Management and the Corporate Board Chair
		Form the Critical Incident Management Team
Registrar	Manage media contact if required and internal communication strategy	
	Ascertain the involvement of any overseas students in the incident and inform the appropriate authorities (Consulate and Department of Human Affairs); inform the listed emergency contacts for the student or staff member	
	All staff and students	Promptly follow the instructions of the First Responder and the relevant authorities
Debriefing and Support	Any staff or student	Complete a Critical Incident Report on the approved form
	DOC	Mobilise professional advice and assistance to assess the situation and the appropriate response
	CEO	Mobilise resources and funds to support provision of immediate counselling and support for affected staff and students
	DOC	Prepare a comprehensive report for the Corporate Board and manage ongoing briefings
	DOC	Act as the ongoing contact point for external authorities
	Critical Incident Management Team	Monitor the situation and reactions within relevant work and/or student group
	Oversight	Corporate Board
Critical Incident Management Team		Make changes to ongoing operations, including the closure of a campus if required
Operational Adjustment	Critical Incident Management Team	Make changes to ongoing operations, including the closure of a campus if required

Intervention and Support	Critical Incident Management Team	Take responsibility for ongoing staff and student support and adjustment
Review & Reporting	Critical Incident Management Team	Interview relevant parties to establish effectiveness of their level of preparedness and clarity of responsibilities
		Review response effectiveness with external authorities if involved
		Review operational aspects (e.g., access, security, safety, communications, liaison with authorities) and propose adjustments where necessary
		Review relevant College policies, procedures and delegations and update where necessary
		Identify changes needed and clear timeframes for these
	DOC	Provide a final review report to the Corporate Board
	Corporate Board	The Board will provide oversight, high-level management and direction, and governance during 'business-as-usual' and during a 'crisis' event. The Board will also provide high-level structural change advice and change management.

Roles and Responsibilities

The DOC [as delegate of the CEO] has overall accountability to the Corporate Board for the effective management of critical incidents, including the development and implementation of policies and procedures and review and ongoing improvement processes. As members of the Critical Incident Management Team, Executive Management carry responsibility for coordinating a response within their areas of responsibility and across the Institute.

ICAT's First Responders are members of staff who have been trained to provide the Initial Response (as described in Table 1). The DOC is accountable for the maintenance of an up-to-date schedule of medical and emergency contact numbers and referral agencies at the front reception desk of each campus.

All staff and students are made aware of procedures at their campus, to notify the campus if they witness such an incident and to promptly and safely follow any instructions from First Responders and/or the Executive Management.

Change and Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Authored by	Approved by	Description
v1.1	29/09/2021	Dean	CEO	Minor administrative updates to change titles and campuses
V1.2	14/09/2022	Compliance & QA Manager	CEO	Minor administrative updates to branding
V1.2	29/06/2023	Director of Operations and Compliance	CEO	Minor administrative updates to campus facilities and delegations

Document Information

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