


POLICY & PROCEDURE		
Ref. to Legislative Frameworks: HESF2021: Standard 2.3.5 / 6.2.1 / 7.3.3 Outcome Standards 2025: 4.3 National Code 2018: 6.8 / 6.9	Critical Incident Management	
Version: 3.0	Approved By: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Issued on: 17/04/2025 Review by: 17/04/2027

Revision History

Current Version	Description of Change	Policy Author:	Effective Date
1.1	Added reference to National Code 2018 Conducted final proofreading and editing to ensure alignment with other relevant policies and procedures	General Manager, Operations and Risk Management Quality Assurance Support Officer	28/12/2017
1.2	Update on references and approval	Compliance Manager	24/02/2020
2.0	Integrated the Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedure. The standalone Critical Incident Management procedure has been retired. Updated reference to HESF2021, Added relevant State WHS legislations, Updated references to internal documents.	CEO	12/09/2023
3.0	Updated the procedure and added the Incident and Hazard Reporting Form	Compliance Officer	17/04/25

PURPOSE

This policy and procedure provide the guidelines and the course of actions to be taken by Academies Australasia Polytechnic (AAPoly) in the event of a critical incident, required follow up to the incident and recordkeeping of the incident and actions taken. This policy and procedure serve to ensure that AAPoly is compliant with legal requirements and all relevant reports on critical incidents are maintained for at least five years in accordance with the Victoria Work Health and Safety Act 2011, NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and WA Work Health and Safety Act 2020. The policy also addresses the obligations and requirements under the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 and the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000.

POLICY STATEMENT

AAPoly has a documented policy and procedure explaining the actions to be taken in the event of critical incidents. It is acknowledged that the responses to critical incidents will vary on the circumstances of an individual incident and there is a requirement to allocate functional responsibilities in managing every critical incident.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant AAPoly policies and procedures below:

- Risk Management Policy and Procedure;
- Critical Incident Management Procedure;
- Information Privacy Collection and Disclosure of Personal Information Policy and Procedure;
- Work Health and Safety Procedure;
- Records Management Policy and Procedure;
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure.

SCOPE

This policy covers life threatening and non-life-threatening injuries or illnesses. It also pertains to close calls and near misses. The policy is applicable to all incidents:

- that occur on AAPoly premises, and/or;
- that occur on premises under the supervision of AAPoly staff member, and/or;
- that involves AAPoly staff member or student, while conducting work related to their studies.

DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident (CI)	<p>It is defined by the National Code 2018 as ‘a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury’¹.</p> <p>Non-life-threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents; refer to procedure details for further information.</p>
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¹ National Code Part D, Standard 6: Available at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/regulatory-information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/National-Code/nationalcodepartd/Pages/ExplanatoryguideD6.aspx>, Accessed 11/09/2023

	<p>Critical incidents may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Campus	The buildings, general facilities, grounds - that is, the physical environment of Academies Australasia Polytechnic at various locations within Australia (VIC, NSW and WA).
Hazard	Any source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of injury or illness, damage to property/equipment or damage to the environment
Near Misses	It may be incidents that involve very minor losses or no loss as such, and when there is no injury/illness involved. Near misses, however, highlight workplace hazards and the need to initiate corrective action.
First Aid	When a person, because of an accident in the workplace, receives onsite first aid assistance.

POLICY

- AAPoly will provide support to staff members and students in the event of critical incidents within the guidelines of applicable legislative frameworks such as:
 - The state and federal laws on work health and safety;
 - National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.;
 - Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021;
 - Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000.
- Responses to critical incidents will be overseen by the CEO with the assistance from the Critical Incident Team.
- General protocol applies to the following categories of critical incidents:

On-campus Critical Incidents (Students and Staff)

- All on-campus critical incidents are to be reported immediately to the CEO ((03) 86104193) or the designated delegate and when necessary, emergency services (police, ambulance or fire brigade - dial 000).

- The CEO will notify the Board of Directors and Designated Head of Student Services (DH- SS) upon the first instance of being aware of the incident.
- In critical incidents involving students, the DH-SS must be informed of any incident resulting in, or that could have potentially caused, severe injury (hospital visit) or death of a student while on campus
- In addition to the CEO, the relevant Head of Department has to be notified upon critical incidents that involve staff members.

Off-campus Critical Incidents (Students and Staff)

- In critical incidents off campus involving students who are not engaged in AAPoly activities, the DH-SS has to be notified as soon as possible.
 - Off-campus critical incidents that occur during AAPoly activities such as field trips, open day visits or work integrated learning will be managed by the relevant Head of Academic Department with the support of DH-SS.
 - Critical incidents triggered by significant world events such as civil unrest, natural disasters and acts of terrorism occurring in countries where AAPoly draws students from or where staff or students are travelling on AAPoly business will be managed in accordance with this policy and associated procedure.
 - Critical incidents affecting an individual student or staff member involved in academic activities or official AAPoly business offshore, including a study abroad program, will be managed jointly by the relevant Heads of Departments and DH-SS.
 - The objectives of AAPoly's responses to such incidents are to assist the students and staff members in securing their personal safety and welfare, offer reasonable personal support such as counselling and help them obtain special consideration for leave or to resume or continue their study or employment activities.
- In critical incidents that impact students, the DH-SS is responsible for leading and managing the responses to critical incidents; create and maintain a detailed record of the incident and subsequent actions; and file the record in accordance with AAPoly Records Management Policy and Procedure.
 - Staff involved in responses to the critical incidents must respect and protect students' or staff members' confidentiality and personal information. The related information should be released only with the written consent of the individual, his/her next of kin, or if it is necessary to protect the health and wellbeing of the individual or others. Refer to AAPoly Privacy Collection and Disclosure of Personal Information Policy for further guidance on how AAPoly protects students' and staff members' confidentiality.

AAPoly recognises that each critical incident is unique, and the dynamics of each situation will need to be assessed when it occurs. The Chief Executive Officer handles all media releases and;

- gathers information;
- checks all facts;

- determines the official AAPoly response;
 - ensures training/advice is provided for all staff members to respond to telephone or occasional enquiries following a critical incident;
 - In the event of the absence of the CEO, the Chairman of the Board of Directors will attend to media releases and media liaison.
- Costs incurred by a student or student's next of kin or family because of a critical incident will be met by the student and/or the student's family, unless approval to provide *ex gratia* financial support has been granted by CEO.
 - In critical incidents involving staff members, if they take place during official AAPoly business duties, AAPoly will comply with the applicable laws and regulations on claims pertaining to work-related injuries.
 - Supporting staff and students impacted by the critical incident:
 - The CEO is responsible for the identification of staff and other students who may be indirectly affected or traumatised as a consequence of a critical incident;
 - The CEO ensures that relevant support is offered and available and there is effective communication with affected staff and students;
 - Immediate and/or ongoing personal support for affected staff and students will be coordinated jointly by the Counsellors and DH –SS.

PROCEDURE

A. Life-threatening Injury Response

1. Person observing incident or injured person calls 000 and notifies AAPoly staff member or any of the Critical Incident (CI) Team member. If in a crisis situation (e.g., fire), follow the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.
2. Team Leader/the most senior AAPoly staff member onsite stops all work in the immediate area, identifies the nature of the critical incident, informs the Critical Incident (CI) Team and helps guide responders to the scene. The Critical Incident (CI) Team also convenes at this stage.
3. From this point forward the procedure is the same as for a non-life-threatening procedure in the next section.

B. Non Life-Threatening Injuries/First-Aid Initial Response

1. Injured/reporting person immediately notifies supervisor or AAPoly staff member about injuries.
2. Injured person's supervisor/AAPoly staff member ensures that the injured person gets medical help as soon as possible (If the injury occurs after normal working hours,

approach the nearest appropriate and approved medical facility). The AAPoly staff member informs the Critical Incident (CI) Team immediately.

3. AAPoly First Aiders makes the first determination of the nature of the injury, as required by the circumstance or requested by the injured person and provides the initial first aid assistance and care.
4. CI Team also conducts the investigation which includes:
 - Interviews with relevant parties;
 - Identification of root cause;
 - Establishment of appropriate corrective and preventative actions with the help of subject matter experts, if needed.
5. CI Team implements corrective and preventative actions and enters the record of incident to Critical Incident/Hazard Register as early as practicable within 24 hours and forward it to the Designated Head of Student Services (DH - SS). Any improvement/corrective action identified is escalated to the relevant head of department for continuous improvement.
6. CI Team follows up the incident and maintains incident related records and documentary evidence for at least 5 years.
7. DH-SS analyses incident data and presents findings to the AAPoly WHS Committee.

C. Non-Injury Incident, Close Call, and Near Miss Response

1. Person observing/experienced the incident informs AAPoly staff member.
2. AAPoly staff member immediately makes the required notifications and notifies the Critical Incident Team immediately as early as practicable.
3. AAPoly staff member and/or the CI Team Member completes [Critical Incident/Hazard Reporting Form](#) within 24 hours of an incident.
4. DH – SS receive the Critical Incident/Hazard Report and inform to the CI team if it is necessary.
5. CI Team conducts the investigation.
6. CI Team implements corrective and preventative actions and enters the record of incident to Critical Incident/Hazard Register. Any improvement/corrective action identified is escalated to relevant designated head for continuous improvement.
7. CI Team follows up the incident and maintains incident related records and documentary evidence for 5 years.
8. DH -SS analyses incident data and presents findings to the AAPoly WHS committee.

D. Mass critical incident and building lockdown procedure

1. CI Team and Wardens communicate and follow Building Management and Building Security building lockdown procedure and instructions, in the event of such as bomb threat, civil disorder etc.
2. CI Team should timely initiate communications to be sent to all students and staff and prevent the entering and leaving of the building.
3. CI Team and Wardens should coordinate with Building Management and Building Security during the lockdown and take appropriate actions.

E. Critical Incident Team

1. Melbourne Bourke Street Campus

- DH (SS) (Team Leader)
- CEO
- Heads of Departments (HE/ VET)
- Fire Wardens
- First Aiders

2. Melbourne Swanston Street Campus

- Teacher
- Head of Department (VET)
- Student Services Staff Member
- First Aiders

4. Sydney Goulburn Street Campus

- Lecturer
- Heads of Department (HE)
- Student Services Staff Member
- Fire Wardens
- First Aiders

5. Perth Campus

- Operations Manager
- Course Coordinator
- Student Services Staff Member
- Fire Wardens
- First Aiders

F. Critical Incident/Hazard Plan Checklist (AEIOAU)

A - Assess	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Verify information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Take appropriate safety precautions (e.g. turn off water and/or electricity)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Call for First Aid where appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact emergency services as appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Activate an incident management team to plan further actions and enact the response plan, then allocate specific responsibilities	
E - Evaluate	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> CI Team investigate and evaluate the incident for further actions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Liaise with Building Management or Security for emergency procedure	
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan action plan accordingly	
I - Inform	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Inform AAPoly Management	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate to students and staff	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate to key stakeholders	
O-Organise Support	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Offer immediate comfort and support to those most affected	
<input type="checkbox"/> Make direct contact with affected students or staff	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare adequate support based on incident analysis	
U - Undertake recovery action	
ACTIONS	COORDINATED BY
<input type="checkbox"/> Debrief all staff as necessary and review with the Emergency Management team and plan for further recovery actions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Organise necessary relief/additional staff to meet teaching, support, administration and front office needs.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Report to AAPoly WHS Committee for future management plan	

G. Contacts

Emergency Services	Police/Fire/Ambulance	000
	Australian Federal Police (non-urgent crime)	131 444
	Emergency translation (Translation service for emergency situations only)	131 450
	National Relay Service (The National Relay Service (NRS) can help if the person is Deaf or find it hard to hear or speak to hearing people on the phone).	13 36 77
	National Security Hotline	1800 123 400
	Australian Search and Rescue – Aviation	1800 815 257
Specialised Services	Respect Org Domestic Violence Support 24X7 Helpline	1800RESPECT 1800 737 732
	Centre Against Sexual Assault (VIC)	1800 806 292
	Mental Health Hotline (Healthdirect)	13 11 14 or text 0477 131 114
	Family Drug Support	(02) 4782 9222
	Poisons Information Centre	131 126
	Pregnancy, Birth and Baby Support (Healthdirect)	1800 882 436
	Maternal and Child Health Line (VIC)	132 229
	Pregnancy Help Australia	1300 139 313
	Lifeline 24-hour crisis help line (for suicide prevention)	131 114

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Person Observing Incident (student/staff) – reports any critical incident to AAPoly senior staff member who immediately reports any critical incident to the relevant Critical Incident (CI) team available and responds to a critical incident according to the advice from Critical Incident Team.
- Critical Incident (CI) Team –
 - Conduct risk assessment of hazards and situations which may require emergency action and analysis of requirements to address these hazards.
 - Establish liaison with all relevant emergency services e.g., police, fire brigade, ambulance, community emergency services, hospital, poisons information centre or community health services.
 - Provide 24-hour access to contact details for all students and their emergency contacts (for overseas students this includes agents, consular staff, embassies).

- Provide 24-hour access to contact details for all relevant staff members needed in the event of a critical incident e.g., critical incident team leader, chief executive officer, director.
 - Develop a critical incident plan for each critical incident identified.
 - Assist with implementation of critical incident plans.
 - Disseminate planned procedures.
 - Organise practice drills and coordinate other appropriate staff training.
 - Regularly review critical incident plans.
 - Completes Critical Incident/Hazard Investigation Form as early as practicable within 24 hours.
 - Assists the CEO in the management, evaluation and prevention of critical incidents.
 - Maintain the Critical Incident/Hazard Register
- CEO of AAPoly -
 - communicates and ensures awareness and understanding of this Policy and the pursuant Procedures;
 - sets in place the necessary resources to mitigate and respond effectively to foreseeable critical incidents;
 - considers and advises on matters related to insurance;
 - ensures the area responsible for leading and managing the response to the incident conducts an experiential learning debrief to go through the lessons learned and identify opportunities to improve responses to future critical incidents.
- AAPoly Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Committee - Reviews the information related to WHS performance, discusses with management details of proposed changes, reviews risk management activities and conducts periodic inspections at campuses.
- Heads of Academic Departments -
 - assist the student to defer, seek special consideration and to continue or resume study;
 - express and convey compassion and where necessary condolence to the student and/or the student's family;
 - where necessary, liaise with relevant partner organisations involved in the incident such as work integrated learning providers;
- Designated Head of Student Services (DH - SS) -
 - ensures AAPoly complies with the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 as relevant;
 - publicise, offers and ensures that students have access to relevant support within AAPoly and externally;
 - analyses incident data and presents findings to the CEO, including determination if an assessment is necessary to ascertain whether the student poses a threat to self or others.
- Compliance Manager - ensures compliance with applicable work health and safety legislation and regulations.
- Fire wardens (Floor Wardens and Area Wardens) are appointed by AAPoly for the floors and areas of AAPoly premises, to assist in implementing and improving effective emergency procedures at AAPoly.

- Counsellors – provide emotional support to affected students, staff and close relatives.

FEEDBACK

Please email the CEO through **suggestionstotheceo@aapoly.edu.au** if you have any question or feedback about this policy. The CEO will respond to the question or feedback within two (2) weeks after the receipt, unless extenuating circumstances require an urgent response. The query or feedback and its resolution will be recorded in the Continuous Improvement or Corrective Action register for quality assurance purposes.

References

Source	Document Title
Internal	Academies Australasia Group Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
	Critical Incident Report Form
	Work Health and Safety Procedure
	Information Privacy Collection and Disclosure of Personal Information Policy and Procedure
	Student Internship or Work Integrated Learning Policy
	Risk Management Policy and Procedure
	Records Management Policy and Procedure
	Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure
External	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
	Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
	TEQSA Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety
	Deakin University Critical Incident Policy
	Department of Home Affairs website
	NVETR (Outcome Standards for RTOs) Instrument 2025
	National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
	Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (National)