



**International  
College**

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# Critical Incident Policy & Procedure

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HIC Policy Number  
STUD010

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CRICOS Number 02790D  
Provider Number 21838

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# Hays International College

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## 1. Purpose of policy

This policy ensures that Hays International College complies with all the requirements of 'Standard 6 – Student Support Services' of the 'National Code of Practice for Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2018'. This policy and procedures has been designed to ensure that Hays International College (HIC) will establish a comprehensive and integrated Disaster Response Plan and Critical Incident Response Plan as soon it becomes aware of a critical incident affecting a staff member, a student or a group of students, or members of the public on HIC premises.

## 2. Responsibility

The PEO is responsible for the implementation of this Policy and procedure and to ensure that all staff are aware of its application and implementation requirements. Students are also informed of this policy and procedure at their pre-enrolment, enrolment and orientation.

## 3. Definitions

**Critical Incident** - Is a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which is likely to cause extreme stress, fear or injury involving HIC, its staff and/or students. Non-life threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents although serious illness or injury would probably not be considered a critical incident but a case-to-case basis is considered.

**Death** – Accidental, Suicide, Death as a result of injury or terminal illness, or Murder.

**Serious Illness** - Illness which causes the deterioration of the student /staff member's health over time.

**Serious Injury** - Illness which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to continue with or complete the course.

**Traumatic Event** - A traumatic event is not limited to, but could include: Missing students; any fatality or serious injury; a serious traffic collision; murder or suicide; physical/sexual assault or domestic violence; severe verbal or psychological aggression; fire; explosion or bomb threat; a hold up or attempted robbery; serious threats of violence, and storms or natural disasters; drug or alcohol abuse.

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## 4. Key Features

This policy and its set of procedures have been developed to assist staff and the HIC community to overcome traumatic stress reactions and to deal with emergency situations and any Critical Incident.

- HIC will take immediate steps to manage the critical incident, the follow-up required after the incident, and record the details of the incident and action taken by HIC during or following the incident.
- HIC will ensure that all appropriate staff that may be involved in a critical incident or management of the critical incident post the actual incident will have contact information available to them for the police, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and the parents of the student, if appropriate or any other organisation that may be able to assist in such a situation e.g. community/multicultural organisations or phone-counseling services.
- HIC will maintain and publicise to students a list of designated members of HIC's staff to be the official point of contact for students during normal office hours. HIC shall ensure that a liaison is established and maintained with community organisations that may be involved in a response to a disaster or critical incident.
- HIC shall ensure that all staff and students have appropriate trauma debriefing, counselling and support programs made available to them through its referral system.
- The following Instances of critical incidents may include, but not limited to:
  - Missing students
  - Severe verbal or psychological aggression
  - Death (Including death of a dependant residing in Australia)
  - Accidental, Suicide, Result of an injury or terminal illness, or Murder
  - Serious Illness which causes the deterioration of the student/staff member's health over time.
  - Serious Injury which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to continue with or complete the course.
  - Natural disaster

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- Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse
- On-campus Incidents

If the incident is on campus, the first action will be to contact the PEO and/or Student Support Officer immediately when the incident involves death, serious injury or a threat to life or property and call emergency services - fire, ambulance or police (Calling “000”) – as would be the case with other OH&S matters.
- Off-campus Incidents

If the critical incident involves a student or staff member and is off-campus, the person receiving the information must immediately contact PEO who will communicate to other staff as appropriate. Emergency 24 hr contact number for HIC is **0433 888 347**.
- HIC ensures that any action taken in regard to a critical incident is recorded to include outcomes or evidence if the incident is referred to another person or agency taking into consideration all privacy information principles as per the legislation.
- A copy of this policy and procedure is made available to staff and students through the HIC website, Staff Manual and Student Handbook.

## 4. Procedure

**Scope** - To articulate HIC’s Practices that will apply to international students in compliance with the ESOS legislation. The critical incidents covered in this procedure may occur at HIC, Work-place (host employer) training locations, after hours and off-shore.

### Staff Coordination of Information

Emergency Checklist – maintained by the PEO.

Initial Contact - the PEO, Administration Staff, Course Coordinators, Trainers, or Emergency Services (Dial 000).

The person present at the time of the incident will make the decision to contact any of the above based on the seriousness of the accident/incident. However, the PEO is to be informed at the earliest opportunity.

If the incident is serious and involves multiple personal or potential injury and damage to equipment and machinery, such as in a fire, gas leak, chemical spills or explosions then Emergency Services will provide direction and utilise HIC resources where relevant. The PEO is to be contacted immediately and will assist in assessing the situation regarding

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injury/illness and potential risks to the health of staff and students. If there is a need for critical incident debriefing, the PEO will contact the appropriate agencies and coordinate this service.

## Central Contact Person

The PEO will assume the role of Central Contact Person and Critical Incident Debriefing Coordinator. The role will include coordinating an immediate professional response to maintain the psychological well-being of all staff and students affected by the trauma. This will occur through:

- initial utilisation of counsellors through HIC referrals
- accessing other appropriate agencies.
- monitoring of the situation and coordinating action as required; and
- notifying the appropriate persons for each incident.

On notification of a critical incident the PEO or nominee shall contact:

- For staff: If the incident involves staff members, the PEO shall be notified.
- For students: If the incident involves students, the PEO or delegate shall be contacted. Decisions to inform students parents, spouses etc or to utilise other agencies, counsellors or other staff is the responsibility of the PEO or delegate. However, it may also be necessary to advise the appropriate trainers for the student/s affected by the critical incident.

## Reporting of the Critical Incident

### By students

All students will be advised during orientation of the details of the HIC's Critical Incident Policy and Procedure. Each student will be given documentation which contains details of relevant emergency student services contact person/s and telephone numbers. This will be contained in the Student Handbook, and for students who will have a host employer for any portion of their training, the department contact person/s and telephone numbers will be noted in their course outline handbook.

### By staff

All members of staff will be made aware of the HIC's Critical Incident Policy and Debriefing Procedure. Staff will be given documentation which contains details of emergency contact numbers and the coordination of information. Once a student has been missing from HIC for 5 working days, Student Services or the PEO is to be notified.

### By the host employer

All host employers will be advised before the commencement of a student's work placement of the details of the HIC's Critical Incident Policy and Procedure. Each host employer will be given documentation which contains details of relevant emergency

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contact details of the HIC supervising person/s.

Once an international student has been absent from the work place for 2 consecutive working days without notifying their workplace, the HIC work-placement trainer/ coordinator or HIC administration is to be notified.

## Identified Critical Incident

Where a Critical Incident is identified, the following procedures must occur. As part of the reporting process the PEO will confirm that the incident falls under the definition provided above of a 'Critical Incident'.

## Action Plan

Any student that experiences a critical incident should immediately inform where possible their trainer or supervisor or host employer. If this is not possible they should immediately inform their course coordinator. If they are not available they should next try the PEO.

In the workplace situation, the host employer is to immediately inform HIC. The HIC staff member, who receives the report, or the reporting HIC staff member or HIC supervisor will ensure that the student identified in the critical incident receives all appropriate assistance and care. They are to contact emergency services where required and must contact the PEO immediately.

The PEO in conjunction with the management will assess the Critical Incident and implement a plan of action to follow up the Critical Incident.

Where required, a meeting with appropriate staff/students will be organised to follow up the incident.

This meeting will determine issues and responsibilities relating to:

- Assessing risks and response actions
- Liaison with emergency and other services
- Contact with students' relatives and other appropriate contacts
- Liaison with other external bodies, such as home stays, carers or foreign embassies, and
- Counselling and managing students and staff not directly involved in the incident.
- Media Management (Where required)

Where appropriate HIC may be required to provide support to the family in the form of:

- hiring interpreters( Can be arranged in person or over the phone through All Graduates Telephone Interpreters and Translation services, 03 9605 3000/ Interpreter line 1300 739 731 or Centrelink)
- making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
- obtaining a death certificate

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- assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues
- assisting with visa issues

A 'critical incident report' form is to be completed by the appropriate staff member or supervising staff member involved in the incident or notification of the incident. All reports will be reported and verified by the PEO of HIC.

The 'critical incident report' is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.

The critical incident report will be stored in the critical incident folder stored in administration.

The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) requires HIC to notify the Department of Education and Training (DET) as soon as practical after the incident and in the case of a student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance, the incident will need to be reported via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).

## Follow up & Review of Critical Incident

Where a critical incident has occurred and reported to the DET, HIC 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
- A recommendation as to the response to the critical incident is documented and included in the continuous improvement submission
- Any further follow up required is documented and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff.

Note: People who experience a critical incident become unusually vulnerable to the normal pressures of daily living and particularly in their interpersonal interactions. Therefore, the timing and the way in which those with expertise respond after a traumatic incident is a significant factor, influencing the long term recovery of staff or students who have been adversely affected by the event.

## Critical Incident Debriefing (CID)

CID is a preventative health measure aimed at minimising the impact of traumatic incidents and the development of major psychological health problems such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The availability of CID is also an essential component of HIC's accident/incident management.

CID may occur at a number of different levels, ie on scene or near scene debriefing, initial debriefing, and formal debriefing, and will occur within 24 - 72 hours after the incident.

It will be about feelings, emotional ventilation, and will aim to facilitate the return to

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normal functioning. If the initial cognitive, emotional and behavioural reactions of those affected by a traumatic incident are unrecognised, unaddressed or misunderstood, they may develop into dysfunctional reactions with long term negative health consequences.

Since the debriefing is about emotions, points that may be the subject of coronial, law court or disciplinary procedures will not be discussed. The aim of the debriefing is to remove the feeling of isolation from individuals and reinforce team spirit. It may also include several levels of counselling - individual, group, staff and students, and HIC community.

The debriefing will also aim to show staff and/ or students that all have the same feelings and responses to events, and that their reactions to critical incidences are normal.

## **CID Protocol**

The CID protocol will usually begin with an initial debriefing session and follow through with one or a number of debriefing sessions.

Initial defusing will occur as soon as possible after the incident, preferably within a few hours. Depending on the type or severity of the critical incident, initial defusing may include:

- A short factual statement about what is known about the incident, the possible effects on those involved, what is being done for them and what is going to happen in the future, e.g., planned debriefing sessions.
- Information on acute stress response (what is happening to people now) and how people can care for themselves.
- An arrangement for a structured meeting within 24 - 48 hours.
- The provision of different levels of service for those differently effected – referrals to various resources including counsellors

## **Confidentiality**

HIC and other agencies will maintain confidentiality to ensure that:

- only a record of when and where a debriefing took place will be kept; and
- no information will be released without the agreement of the individual or group.



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## EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Organisation	Phone
Police	000 1 Kangerong Road, Box Hill 03 8892 3200
Fire Brigade	000
Ambulance	000
Local Hospital	Box Hill Hospital 8 Arnold St, Box Hill Victoria 3128 1300 342 255
State Emergency Centre	132 500
Drug Rehabilitation Counselling	Lifeline – 13 11 14 SANE – 1800 18 SANE
National Association of Loss & Grief	03 9329 4003
Centrelink	132 307
Centrelink Assistance and information in languages other than English.	131 202
Referrals	See Student Services

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

<b>ESOS</b>	National Code Standard 6		
<b>POLICIES</b>	DHA Notification Policy and procedure; Deferral, suspension and cancellation policy and procedure		
<b>Last Updated</b>	Jan 2019	<b>Updated by</b>	JW