



**New England College** is the trading name of **New England Institute of Technology Pty Ltd**

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## **Critical Incident Policy and Procedure**

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### Document Control

#### Version History

Version	Date	Description
V1.0	01.11.2020	Policy defined and created
V2.0	04.11.2022	Review and update of minor details including address

**Review Process:** This policy shall be reviewed annually in compliance with education industry standards including the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs) 2015, the ESOS Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education to Overseas Students 2018 and the ELICOS Standards 2018.



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## Purpose

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

The purpose of the Critical Incident Policy and Procedure is to identify the personnel, structures and procedures for managing a critical incident and to ensure that New England College operates in accordance with Standard 6 of the National Code 2018.

## Scope

This policy applies to all the college staff, students and visitors who have been exposed to a critical incident - either on-campus or off campus including staff on business related travel interstate or overseas.

Where the college staff witness an event that may be considered a critical incident, the policy and procedures should be followed.

Where staff is aware of an event which may either indicate or escalate to a critical incident, the policy and procedures should be followed.

## Overview

The National Code defines a critical incident as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'.

Critical incidents usually require immediate attention and decisive action to prevent/minimise any negative impact on the health and welfare of one or more individuals.

Critical incidents may include (but are not limited to) events such as:

- Serious accident or injury
- Missing students
- Deprivation of liberty, threats of violence, assault, rape/sexual
- Aggravated burglary, biological or chemical weapons
- Fire, bomb, explosion, gas/chemical hazards, discharge of firearms
- Threat of widespread infection or contamination
- Natural disaster in home country or country of study
- Civil unrest
- Death/suicide
- Serious damage to essential facilities
- Disruption to operations of the college.

A critical incident includes information which has the potential to negatively affect the reputation of the college in the media and/or wider community.

Any college staff member who is either a witness to, or first to be informed about an actual or potential critical incident. The Designated Officer is to assume responsibility for alerting the most senior the college staff member available as soon as possible. The Designated Officer 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.).



## Responsibilities of the Critical Incident Team

This team will convene as soon as possible to plan an immediate response, allocate responsibilities and determine ongoing strategies.

The Critical Incident Team will comprise of three representatives of New England College, including the Executive Level Officer, the Academic Manager and Campus Manager.

In the event that emergency services attend the event, they will be given authority to assume control of the critical incident upon arrival. If a Designated Officer is in attendance, their role will be to act in the best interests of any student/staff member/visitor affected by the incident.

Any critical incident will be followed up and recorded in the New England College Critical Incident Report Form. Action will be taken to identify the cause of any incident with the express purpose of removing/minimizing the risk of the incident occurring again and return the college to normal operations as soon as possible. All reports will be forwarded for college management to review.

## Critical Incident Procedure

As soon as staff member becomes aware of a critical incident, and depending on what the incident is, they must immediately call for assistance and where necessary a staff member or designated person will phone internal personnel and/or outside authorities to assist.

If there is an immediate threat **the area must be secured** e.g. campus/office/classroom locked down, to isolate the number of people at risk.

During a critical incident, the follow process must be observed:

1. Identify the nature of the critical incident
2. Contact emergency services - 000 or 112 via a mobile if applicable
3. Notify the Campus Manager
4. Implement an appropriate critical incident plan
5. If applicable secure the area – keep everyone safe.
6. Ensure safety and welfare of staff/students/visitors
7. Liaise with emergency services, hospital and medical services
8. Manage media and publicity - additional embassies /departments may require notification eg Department of Home Affairs (DHA) refer to Head Office for advice.
9. Contact and inform parents and family members
10. Identify students and staff members most closely involved and at risk
11. Assess the need for support and counselling for those directly and indirectly involved
12. Ensure only factual information is shared with the community
13. Arrange debriefing for all students and staff most closely involved and at risk
14. Restore the college/campus to its regular routine, program delivery, and community life as soon as practicable
15. Officer in charge or designated person to complete a Critical Incident Report
16. Identify any other persons who may be affected by the incident and offer support
17. Maintain contact with any injured and affected parties to provide support and to monitor progress
18. Evaluate the management of incident - The evaluation process should include feedback gathered from all staff, students, and other parties involved
19. An evaluation report must be made available to the CEO



## Fire Evacuation Procedure

When you first go to an area to work or study look out for the Evacuation Plan, location of exits and the location of fire extinguishers. Emergency plans will also list important contact numbers including emergency services.

In the work area always ensure emergency exits are not obstructed by furniture or other items.

Emergency Exits are clearly marked.

When the fire alarm evacuation tone sounds, usually a high pitched 'whoop whoop whoop' sound, or when instructed to evacuate by a staff member or the designated officer, evacuate the building observing the following steps:

- If evacuating in the event of a fire, close doors and windows to slow the spread of fire.
- Assist others who may need help.
- Remain calm and move in an orderly fashion.
- Do not take personal items, such as bags, with you as this will slow down the evacuation.
- Once a building is evacuated you should not re-enter the building until given the all clear by the designated officer.
- After exiting the building proceed to the nearest Emergency Assembly Area.
- The main assembly area of the New England College is the parking area in front of the building.
- All students and staff must meet at the assembly area where a roll call will be conducted by the fire warden or responsible officer.

The designated Officer should take the following actions:

- Designate a person to supervise the Assembly Area
- Count heads as staff, students and visitors leave the building
- Do a final check of toilets, offices and store rooms.
- Check rolls and visitor registers to ensure all persons are accounted for.

**Knowing that no one is still in the building is the most important fact.**

**If there is smoke keep as close to the floor as possible. Smoke kills faster than fire.**

## Critical Incidents Outside of Australia

As soon as the College becomes aware of the incident, staff will endeavour to identify all students who may be affected.

If necessary, students directly affected will be allowed to return home, in accordance with the New England College Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy and Procedure.

New England College staff will arrange counselling support for affected students onshore immediately.

All critical incidents will be recorded fully (including outcomes and evidence as applicable) and copies kept on student file where relevant.

For further information, refer to the New England College Student Support Policy available on the website.



## Follow up & Review of Critical Incidents

Where a critical incident has occurred New England College 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 will be 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 submissions
- Any further follow up required is documented and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff.

### Important information:

- Students and their families can access New England College's Student Support Officer at all times.
- During a critical incident, New England College's emergency telephone number (+61 7 3164 7070) becomes a hot line, where information can be received.
- Where appropriate, New England College's website and social media accounts will be updated to keep students and families informed. Student's privacy will be upheld at all times.

A full copy of the New England College Critical Incident Policy and Procedure is available on the website.