

<b>AUDIENCE</b>	<b>INTERNAL</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>EXTERNAL</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>POLICY ID</b>	EDN-019-POL – Critical Incidents Policy and Procedure	
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	General Manager, Education	
<b>CONTACT OFFICER</b>	National Manager, Operations and Governance	
<b>ENDORSED BY</b>	Continuous Improvement Committee	
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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Modification History

VERSION	COMMENTS
1.3, 2011	Policy update due to new policy template.
3	Updated DIAC - Department of Immigration and Citizenship to DIBP - Department of Immigration and Border Protection
4	Updated DIBP Acronym to Department of Immigration and Border Protection
5	Removed reference to MEGT Education Group
6	Annual policy review
7	Updated to incorporate changes to the RTO VET Standards 2015
8	Deferred review date until second half of 2016

## 1.2 Purpose

MEGT Education recognises that appropriate infrastructure must be in place to ensure the provision of all necessary support services in the event of a critical incident.

Support mechanisms and procedures for managing critical incidents are in place. These ensure an effective approach in responding to critical incidents as they occur, including appropriate support and counseling services.

Students and staff are made aware of MEGT Education's Critical Incident Policy and processes. The policy will be available for reference by staff and students via the MEGT Education provider's websites. Students are informed about Critical Incident processes at Orientation.

Appropriate training and information resources are provided to staff.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to MEGT Education:

- MEGT (Australia) Ltd
- Ability Education Pty Ltd

### 3. Legislative Context

This policy satisfies the requirements of Standard 6 of the National Code 2007.

### 4. Definitions

#### **MEGT Education:**

MEGT (Australia) Ltd, Trading as MEGT Institute  
 Ability Education Pty Ltd, Trading as ABILITY English

**Critical Incidents:** A critical incident is defined as ‘a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury’.

Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- Missing students
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Bomb threat, assault threats, fire
- Death, serious injury or any threat of these
- Natural disaster
- Life threatening pandemic
- Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse
- Non-life threatening events which are considered to be of a critical nature due to the affect it may have on a person or persons.

### 5. Policy Statement

#### 5.1 International students

MEGT Education recognises the special needs of international students who may require additional support, interpreters, communication with relatives in other countries, communication with consulates, and communication and/or reporting to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection as soon as possible after a critical incident.

The incident may affect visa conditions or the student’s program of study and in the case of a student's absence from classes, return to their home country or death the incident must be reported to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection via PRISMS.

When an international student sustains serious injuries or dies, MEGT Education will work closely and respectfully with the student's family to provide necessary and appropriate support. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Hiring interpreters

- Making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/ repatriation
- Obtaining a death certificate
- Assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues
- Assisting with visa issues
- In addition MEGT Education will notify all relevant and authorised parties, including but not limited to, the accommodation provider, delivery partners and providers of services such as library and internet/computer access.

## **5.2 On-campus Incidents (includes Trade School and Head Office Ringwood, and other Campus and State Office sites)**

If the incident is on campus and involves death, serious injury or a threat to life or property, the General Manager Education and Campus Manager, State Manager or the Manager of the site/campus will be contacted immediately.

## **5.3 Off-campus Incidents (including students on work placement)**

If the critical incident involves a student or staff member who is off campus, the person receiving the information must immediately contact the General Manager Education or delegate (eg Campus Manager or State Manager) who will communicate to other staff and relevant persons as appropriate.

## **5.4 Incident reporting**

All reports will include as a minimum:

- Time of incident
- Detailed location of the incident
- Nature of the incident (e.g. threat, accident, death or injury)
- Names and roles of persons involved (e.g. staff, international or domestic student, other parties)

## **5.5 Management of incidents**

Immediate priorities in the management of any incident will be primarily:

- Action evacuation procedures if required
- Activating emergency assistance if required
- Provision of first aid or medical assistance if required

And then

- Information gathering
- Reporting to appropriate authorities
- Access and provision of relevant support services

The release of information to the press or public rests with the MEGT (Australia) Ltd CEO, the General Manager Education, or formal delegate, and must comply with the requirements of Privacy legislation and other legal requirements. The MEGT CEO or the Critical Incident Team will identify a staff member as a single point of contact for all media and other public communications

(Media Coordinator). It may be necessary to check with the police, ambulance or fire brigade etc, before making a statement.

No staff are to speak to media or make any kind of formal statement regarding the incident unless authorised by senior management.

The General Manager Education, or delegate, will convene a meeting with relevant staff and support services personnel who will constitute the Critical Incident Team. In particular situations and as required, assistance will be sought from other staff with responsibilities for occupational health and safety, first aid, fire wardens, counseling, and public relations.

The Critical Incident Team will enlist the assistance of other staff or agencies or services as deemed appropriate to ensure timely and effective management of the incident in the interests of the students and/or staff, and the business partners.

The approved incident forms and checklists will be used to ensure communication and management of the incident as well as consistent and complete record keeping.

The first priority of the Critical Incident Team will be:

- To identify the facts to the best of their abilities, what is known and what is not known
- Identify persons involved in the critical incident
- To determine how to gather more information
- To develop and implement a plan for responding appropriately in a timely manner
- To develop and implement a plan for communicating with all relevant persons / stakeholders including as relevant: family members, staff, students, agents, police, medical services, consuls, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, other providers, media.

The Critical Incident Team will have ongoing responsibility for:

- Ensuring staff, students, family, authorities and services are kept informed in a timely and appropriate manner
- Follow-up support services
- Review and analysis of the response to the incident regarding the appropriateness in the circumstances, interests of the students, staff, family, MEGT (Australia) Ltd and Ability Education Pty Ltd and delivery partners.
- Appropriate services and assistance being engaged to assist with the management of the incident
- Ensuring appropriate and timely documentation and reporting of the incident and the response to it
- Confirming that all legal responsibilities of MEGT (Australia) Ltd and Ability Education Pty Ltd are considered and met.

## 5.6 Staff Awareness Training

It is essential that all MEGT Education staff who come in contact with students be made aware of the existence of this Critical Incident Policy and Procedure.

Staff will be provided with appropriate and sufficient training to enable them to manage the implementation of this Critical Incident policy and its associated procedures.

MEGT Education will ensure that awareness of the Critical Incident policy is included in staff induction.

All MEGT Education staff will be made aware of all relevant community resources in the immediate local area. These include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency services
- Police
- Medical authorities
- Religious leaders
- Ethnic group leaders
- Funeral Directors
- Embassy or Consular representatives.

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 First Steps

1. The first priority in the case of a Critical Incident is to action evacuation procedures if required and provide essential first aid or medical assistance.
2. Report and inform are secondary priorities. The General Manager Education or delegate must be notified of any occurrence which could be defined as a Critical Incident involving a student or staff member.
3. As soon as MEGT Education is advised of a critical incident the following procedures will become effective.
  - Where a Critical Incident policy exists for a site on which the incident occurs, (eg one of the workplaces where a student is placed), the procedures will be enacted in concert with the existing site policy. Responsibilities for action may be shared between MEGT Education and the site involved.
  - Regardless of the existence and details of a site policy, the General Manager Education must be kept informed of all actions and decisions taken in the management of the incident and nothing in the site policy diminishes MEGT's duty of care to staff and students.
4. As soon as possible upon being advised, the General Manager Education or delegate will liaise with relevant persons and staff to:
  - Establish a Critical Incident Team.
  - Ensure a Media Coordinator and Critical Incident Coordinator are identified (this may be one person with two functions).
  - Ensure the Critical Incident Policy is implemented.
  - Ensure a plan is established and communicated to all relevant staff.
  - Ensure ongoing strategies for managing the incident and response.

- Ensure agencies, support organisations and other individuals are involved in responding to the incident, including liaison with police, doctors, hospital staff and other relevant professionals.
- Legal assistance is provided if required.
- Family members (identified emergency contact person, next of kin, authorised guardian, parents, siblings) are advised of the incident and advised about what is being done in response, who is involved, and what support is available to them.
- Appropriate and adequate records are kept.

If required, assist family members to arrange travel to Australia, or return of the student to his or her home country.

5. The Critical Incident Team will enlist assistance from and co-opt others as required.

## 6.2 First Response Checklist

Issues to be considered:

- Is evacuation required, and if yes, was it managed appropriately?
- Is first aid or medical assistance provided in a timely manner?
- Is a person appointed to act as Critical Incident Coordinator and/or Media Coordinator?
- Is contact with next of kin/significant others made in a timely and appropriate manner?
- Are there adequate arrangements for informing staff and students?
- Are there guidelines to staff about what information to give students?
- Is there an appropriate written bulletin to staff, if the matter is complex?
- Is there appropriate and sufficient briefing for staff and students?
- Is there a staff member delegated to deal with telephone/counter enquiries if required?
- Is media and publicity being managed appropriately?
- Is there adequate identification of those students and staff members most closely involved and therefore most at risk?
- Has assistance been sought from others who have experienced a similar past trauma if appropriate?
- Has relevant and culturally appropriate counseling been implemented?
- Is there a plan for ongoing feedback and regular meetings as a post-critical incident activity?

## 6.3 Other considerations which have a link with a critical incidents

- Availability of mobile phones
- Hiring Independent Interpreters
- Refund of student's fees to pay repatriation or associated expenses
- Consideration of personal items and affairs (household and academic)
- Insurance Matters, OHSC Coverage, Ambulance Cover
- Formal Stress Management interventions required for students and/or staff (release from classes, leave, rescheduled assessment or exams)
- Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required
- Fees issue to be resolved if student cannot continue with their studies
- Legal Issues: helping students gain access to legal assistance if required.
- Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required

- Follow up condolences
- Financial Assistance for families of affected person(s) if residing in Australia
- Organising students/staff for hospital visits
- Sensitivity to anniversaries, inquests and legal proceedings

#### 6.4 Stress Management Checklist

- Debriefing as soon as possible after the event on an individual or group basis
- Further debriefing - one or more days after the incident (group basis)
- Follow up 2 - 6 weeks later - (individual or group basis)
- Ongoing counseling as required (staff and their families can access MEGT (Australia) Ltd Employee Assistance Program)
- Recovery time for staff involved and the Coordinating Team members.

#### 6.5 Student Records Checklist

- Ensure the following as a minimum is kept and up-to-date within the students records, and can be made available in hard copy if required:
- Colour Photograph (from ID CARD)
- Copy of Passport, including number, photo page and visa page
- Student's address and telephone number
- Student's religion if provided
- Emergency contact telephone, with next of kin details, agent or sponsor (if applicable)
- Any other identification details - student ID, course details,
- Known Medical conditions, allergy information etc.

#### 6.6 Staff Awareness Training

The following considerations should be included in critical incidents staff awareness training

- Attitude and perceptions – how staff present and manage themselves can be critical in effective management of the incident.
- Effective communication skills are essential to effective management of a critical incident - Listening to what is said and what is not said is a key component of this.
- Making use of networks, community groups, cultural groups and religious groups should be considered to provide support to students, family, friends and staff – persons injured or directly effected by the critical incident as well as those providing support to them may benefit from this broader support circle.
- Culturally, ethnically, religiously and personally sensitive and appropriate responses by staff will reduce escalation or complication of the situation.
- Available services and support, and how to access them.
- Self protection is important – you can not help others effectively if you are overly stressed or become injured.
- Staff will not be singled out to take sole responsibility for management of the incident.

#### 6.7 Timelines

The successful management of critical incidents depends on MEGT Education taking appropriate action and providing support during and after a critical incident.

## 6.8 Police Involvement

Where critical incidents are cases of sudden unexpected death, injury or disaster, the police and others must be contacted.

The police are required to investigate all cases of sudden unexpected death. If the injury or death results from a criminal act, such as assault, the police will also need to be contacted.

Police actions include:

- Recording a report of the incident
- Where appropriate investigating the incident
- Reporting death to the Coroner
- Notifying next of kin in cases of death
- Obtaining official identification of the deceased (this must be done by someone who has known the deceased for some time)
- Conducting investigations on behalf of the Coroner - for example, interviewing witnesses and others who may have been involved, collecting clothing and other items for use in evidence, delivering specimens for analysis.

## 7. Related Policies and Procedures

EDN-006-POL-Student Support Services Policy

## 8. Implementation

EDN-019-POL – Critical Incidents Policy and Procedure is made available via the on the MEGT Intranet internally

## 9. Responsibilities

The National Manager, Operations and Governance will review this policy annually, or in case of legislative changes requiring amendments.

## 10. Attachments

INCIDENT & HAZARD REPORT AND INVESTIGATION FORM

## 11. Process Map

N/A

