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**OVERSEAS STUDENTS:**

**CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE**

[CRICOS REGISTRATION 00643J]

CRICOS: Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students

OVERSEAS STUDENTS: CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

This procedure must be read in conjunction with the *Overseas Students: Critical Incident Management Policy* as well as the ACT Education Directorate’s (Directorate) *Critical / Non-Critical Incident Management and Reporting Policy* and its associated *Procedure*.

1. Overview
   1. This procedure assists the effective management of an actual, or threat of a, critical incident that impacts overseas students, particularly those under 18 years for whom welfare is held by the Directorate and may be disrupted.
2. Rationale
   1. Whilst common and normal for people to experience a range of reactions to critical incidents, there is potential for additional impact for overseas students due to isolation from their usual support systems. Cultural, legal, political, social or welfare issues may need specific sensitivity.
3. Procedure
   1. The standard notification and reporting processes as described in the Directorate’s *Critical / Non Critical Incident Management and Reporting Procedure* apply. These include determining incident criticality, promptly engaging with relevant stakeholders and legislative bodies (eg WorkSafe ACT), adhering to information privacy protocols, obtaining witness statements, initially containing, then recovering from, the situation. These actions typically are facilitated at the local site level and are supported by the International Education Unit (IEU) if overseas students are implicated.
   2. The IEU is included, as relevant, if a Directorate Critical Incident Management (CIM) team is convened and, depending on circumstances, may establish a separate team specific to the needs of overseas students. Membership of an IEU CIM team, reviewed annually, is drawn from the Directorate’s Education Support Office, ACT public schools and the tertiary sector:

* Education Support Office
  + Executive Branch Manager Universal School Support (Chair)
  + Senior Director International Education
  + Assistant Director (Student Welfare or Student Transition) International Education
  + Senior Director Clinical Practice
* ACT Public Schools
  + IPS Co-ordinator
  + Principal
* Tertiary Sector
  + University of Canberra Senior Director International
  + Canberra Institute of Technology Senior Manager International Services
  1. When critical incidents occur, the IEU team works collaboratively with school personnel, other Directorate staff and community agencies to respond to, recover from, and evaluate contexts.
  2. The IEU provides support for administrative or legal requirements (eg with embassies, police) that may arise for overseas students during, or after, a critical incident. Sensitivity to cross cultural issues and to the challenge of distance and language with families abroad is essential.
  3. The IEU enacts a duty of care responsibility to provide information, reassurance and general support to the overseas student, family in their home country and host parents following a critical incident. This includes monitoring safety and mental well-being, providing appropriate out of hours contacts to access help, assisting translation, offering debriefing opportunities, establishing community connections and extending flexibility relating to study requirements.
  4. There is a particular risk factor for overseas students, for whom the Directorate holds care, accommodation and welfare (CAaW) responsibility, if the critical incident, or threat thereof, is such that welfare arrangements are disrupted. These students are accommodated in Homestay or the Family, Friends and Relatives Program (FFaRP). The IEU will activate approaches such as:
  + negotiate an alternative Homestay;
  + identify extended family members or other trusted, approved adults willing to accept temporary care;
  + arrange overnight or short term motel booking for overseas student and a responsible adult (eg a Youth Worker to support out of hours duty of care);
* re-purpose or setup a shared facility (eg Birrigai) for a limited period, noting there are implications for interagency co-operation.
  1. The IEU assists overseas students or their families, as needed, with logistics (such as international travel, the Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs requirements, memorial service).
  2. The IEU maintains a written record of critical incidents impacting overseas students, including the nature of the event, notifications, actions taken, outcomes and future recommendations. These records are retained for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student

1. Contact
   1. The Executive Branch Manager Universal School Support is responsible for this procedure.
   2. For support, contact the IEU on (02) 6205 9178 or via email at [ieu@act.gov.au](mailto:ieu@act.gov.au).
2. Complaints
   1. Any concerns about the application of this procedure or the procedure itself, should be raised with:

* the IEU via email at [ieu@act.gov.au](mailto:ieu@act.gov.au) or by phone on (02) 6205 9178 in the first instance;
* the Family, Students Complaints and Feedback team on (02) 6205 5429;
* online at [www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/contact\_us](http://www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/contact_us).
* see also the [Complaints Policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate-policies/school-administration-and-management/complaints/complaints-policy) on the Directorate’s website.

1. References
   1. **Definitions**

Critical Incident – A traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury.

* 1. **Related Policies and Documents**
* *Overseas Students: Critical Incident Management Policy*
* Directorate *Critical / Non-Critical Incident Management and Reporting Policy (CNCIMR201301)* and associated *Procedure*