



Policy and Procedure - Critical Incident

Purpose

The National Code 2018 states that the registered provider

- Must have and implement a documented policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm; but does not include serious academic misconduct. [s6.8]
- 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'. This does not include serious academic misconduct.

This policy and associated procedure outlines how Lawson College Australia will ensure compliance with the above requirements. This includes consideration of privacy principles <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles/> and as appropriate to Victoria, OVIC (Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner) <https://ovic.vic.gov.au/>

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant Lawson College Australia Policy – particularly:

- Policy & Procedure – Student Support Services
- Policy & Procedure - Privacy

The **Policy & Procedure – Critical Incident** relates to all students who enrol in Lawson College Australia courses and all teaching, administrative, support, and management staff.

Definitions

Action Plan	An action plan is a detailed plan outlining actions needed to reach one or more goals. Reasons for creating an action plan. It is an organisational strategy to identify necessary steps towards a goal
Contact Information	Contact details relevant to a critical incident that include: Emergency Services (Police, Ambulance, Fire, Public Health authorities in the case of Social Distancing requirements), Department of Home Affairs (DoHA), Overseas student's family and other relevant organisations for example community organisations or phone counselling
CRICOS	Commonwealth Register for Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students
Critical Incident	A critical incident is defined in the National Code as a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents could include, but are not limited to, events such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Missing students ◆ Severe verbal or psychological aggression ◆ Death, serious injury or any threat of these ◆ Natural disaster; and ◆ Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse. A critical incident does not include serious academic misconduct.
Critical incident action plan	A critical incident action plan details actions needed to prevent risks or minimise risks of a critical nature.

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Critical Incident Team	A group of persons specified by Lawson College Australia to plan an immediate response, allocate responsibilities and determine ongoing strategies. Lawson College Australia Critical Incident Team includes: CEO/ Delegate; Relevant Management, Operations, Administrative, Compliance, Training and Assessment, and Support and Progression and others as deemed required. <u>Please see designated person definition below. (also See Attachment)</u>
Designated person	Any Lawson College Australia staff member who either witnesses or is informed about an actual or potential incident. The designated person should immediately inform the most senior member of staff available of the incident. In the meantime, however, the designated person may need to assume temporary control of a critical incident site including, for example, calling emergency services, alerting other staff, assisting with first aid, crowd control etc. <u>Please see critical incident team definition above.</u>
DE	Department of Education
DoHA	Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) – Immigration https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au
Emergency (Critical Incident emergency – threat to life or property) CALL – Triple Zero 000	<p>In an emergency phone Triple Zero '000' and/ or '112' from a mobile*</p> <p>Triple Zero (000) should only be called (police, fire or ambulance) for <u>threat to life or property</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An automated message will ask you to select 'fire', 'police' or 'ambulance'. You will be connected to a person who will ask you questions including your location and the phone number you are calling from • Stay calm, don't shout, and talk slowly and clearly. Tell the person what the problem or emergency is and how it happened • Give them the address or location • Tell them if there are people hurt, how many there are and their estimated age • Ask for an interpreter if needed • Stay on the phone and follow emergency instructions <p>Wait for the ambulance and make sure they can see you when they arrive (https://www.esa.vic.gov.au/000-process)</p> <p>Triple Zero can also be called using the Emergency+ app with a smartphone. The Emergency+ app to call 000 uses the existing GPS functionality of your smartphone to enable you to provide emergency call-takers with your location information as determined by your smartphone.</p> <p>*112 is a secondary emergency number that can be dialled from mobile phones in Australia. Special capabilities, including roaming, once only existed when dialling 112, however mobile phones manufactured since January 2002 also provide these capabilities when dialling Triple Zero (000). Important – if there is no mobile coverage on any network, you will not be able to reach the Emergency Call Service via a mobile phone, regardless of which number you dialled. (https://www.triplezero.gov.au/Pages/Usingotheremergencynumbers.aspx)</p>
ESOS	Educational Services for Overseas Students Act as amended from time to time
Hazard	A hazard is defined as a situation or thing that has the potential to cause harm
International Student	A person holding an Australian student visa and defined as an 'Overseas Student' in the ESOS Act. May also be referred to as a candidate.
ISANA	ISANA is the representative body for professionals in Australia and New Zealand who work in international student services, advocacy, teaching and policy development in international education
National Code	The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students
OSHC	Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC): All international students in Australia must comply with visa condition 8501: That is, maintain adequate arrangements for health insurance during their stay in Australia. (OSO Factsheet: http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/88324/Factsheet_student_OSHC-links-fixed.pdf)
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Students Management System used to process information to DoHA by registered providers
Risk	A risk is an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect on a project's objectives.

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Risk Assessment	A risk assessment is not required when legislation requires a hazard or risk to be controlled in a specific way—these requirements must be complied with. However a risk assessment may be required in certain circumstances including: Responding to incidents (whether they cause an injury or not) - need to be investigated to work out how current measures may have failed; and responding to issues that may be raised about health and safety of the workplace. https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/ISBN-Controlling-OHS-hazards-and-risks-handbook-2017-06.pdf
Risk Management Plan	A document that a project manager prepares to foresee risks , estimate impacts, and define responses to issues. It also contains a risk assessment matrix.
Safety Hazard Control Plan	A formal process for hazard identification, risk assessment and control to effectively manage workplace and safety hazards
Social Distancing	Social Distancing is a term applied to certain actions that are taken by Government, Regulatory Authorities, and Public Health Officials to stop or slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease (for example COVID-19).
Student	A student who is enrolled at Lawson College Australia and includes both prospective students and enrolled students who are 'overseas students' as defined in the National Code and hold a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, and to students of Lawson College Australia who do not hold student visas and are studying off-shore; but does not include domestic students.
Support Person	The National Code Standard 10: Complaints and appeals, clause 10.2.4 refers to ensuring the overseas student is given an opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost and be accompanied and assisted by a support person, if necessary, at any relevant meetings. Please note Agents of any kind, Lawyers or anyone who has a perceived commercial interest are not permitted to attend as a Support Person, as they are considered to have a conflict of interest. <i>Lawson College Australia is not obliged to meet or respond in any form (phone, email etc) to any request received from the agent, lawyer or similar seeking personal information which may be perceived to have a conflict of interest or any commercial interest whatsoever. Any disclosure of personal information to a third party would be governed under Lawson College Australia's Privacy Policy.</i>
Triple Zero	See Emergency
WHS	Work Health Safety. The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act) is the main WHS law in Victoria. The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (OHS Regulations) build on the OHS Act. They set out how to fulfil duties and obligations, and processes that support the OHS Act. https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations

[S=Related ESOS Standard]

Policy

1. Lawson College Australia responsibility and commitment

1.1 Lawson College Australia is committed to ensuring that:

- ♦ Policy and Procedure is in line with Information Privacy Principles <https://ovic.vic.gov.au/>
- ♦ Risk reduction measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a critical incident.
- ♦ Appropriate training and information resources are provided to staff and students.
- ♦ Appropriate actions are taken in the event of a critical incident or potential critical incident and that these actions maximize the safety of staff and students.
- ♦ A designated officer and critical incident team (see section 3 for definitions; see also *Attachment*) manages critical incidents. See *Attachment*.
- ♦ Appropriate post incident procedures are followed such as support and counseling services.
- ♦ An evaluation of the response to the critical incident is undertaken and that procedures are updated where improvements are identified. Staff and students will be encouraged to provide suggestions to assist this process.

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1.2 A Critical Incident is defined in the National Code as a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents could include, but are not limited to, events such as:

- Missing students
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Death, serious injury or any threat of these
- Natural disaster; and
- Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse.

A critical incident does not include serious academic misconduct.

1.3 Emergency (threat to life or property)

In an emergency phone Triple Zero '000' from any fixed or mobile phone

- When you dial Triple Zero 000 you will first hear the recorded message 'You have dialled emergency Triple Zero. Your call is being connected.'
- Your call is then answered by a Telstra operator who will ask whether you require police, fire or ambulance.
- Depending on whether you use a mobile, fixed line, voice over internet protocol (VoIP) service or a payphone to call 000, you may also be asked to provide details of the state and town you are calling from.
- The operator will then connect you to the emergency service organisation you have requested and will stay on the line with you until the call is answered.
- You will be connected to a person who will ask you questions including your location and the phone number you are calling from
 - Stay calm, don't shout, and talk slowly and clearly. Tell the person what the problem or emergency is and how it happened
 - Give them the address or location
 - Tell them if there are people hurt, how many there are and their estimated age
 - Ask for an interpreter if needed
 - Stay on the phone and follow emergency instructions
 - Wait for the ambulance and make sure they can see you when they arrive
 - Social Distancing protocols should be followed, as far as practicable, if required

2. Risk reduction measures

2.1 Lawson College Australia has identified the risks of not implementing an effective critical incident policy and procedure in its Risk Management Plan. Therefore, Lawson College Australia will ensure that critical incidents are minimized through:

- ♦ Dissemination of this policy and critical incident procedures to all staff and students of Lawson College Australia.
- ♦ Use ISANA Critical Incident Kit to provide information to all staff during the professional development training isana.org.au/
- ♦ Providing regular training and/or information to staff and students to ensure they are aware of safety, prevention of risk and able to respond promptly to any perceived threats to safety.
- ♦ Ensuring that staff bring safety issues to the attention of the CEO/ Delegate through the completion of a Safety Hazard Control Plan. Staff should provide the completed form to the CEO/ Delegate who will record and assess

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the risk and take action accordingly. In the case of students, concerns should be brought to any staff member who will complete the form on behalf of the student. Students may also bring their concerns to their student representative.

- ♦ Regular emergency management training and information including critical incident responses.
- ♦ Ensuring that at least one or more staff members of Lawson College have current training in First Aid.
- ♦ Provision of specific information to staff who are undertaking travel for business related purposes on what to do or who to contact should they experience a critical incident whilst interstate or overseas.

3. Designated person and critical incident team responsibilities in the event of a critical incident

- 3.1 In the event of a critical incident, a designated person and Critical Incident Team will be responsible for the prevention and management of critical incidents.
- 3.2 A designated person is any Lawson College Australia staff member who either witnesses or is informed about an actual or potential incident. The designated person is required to inform the Critical Incident Team as soon as possible of the incident. In the meantime, however, the designated person may need to assume temporary control of a critical incident site and allocate tasks to others (e.g. calling emergency services, alerting other staff, assisting with first aid, crowd control etc). If the emergency services attend the incident, they will take over control of the critical incident upon arrival and the designated officer will take on the role of ensuring that the best interests of any student/staff member/visitor affected by the incident are met.
- 3.3 The Critical Incident Team will convene as soon as possible to plan an immediate response, allocate responsibilities and determine ongoing strategies. The Critical Incident Team will be responsible for the development and implementation of a Critical Incident Action Plan to ensure that the incident is handled appropriately and timely.
- 3.4 Lawson College Australia Critical Incident Team includes CEO/Delegate and any other relevant staff as per the situation, for example, Director, Executive Dean; Managers, Student Welfare Support Officer and where required, Trainer and Assessor.
- 3.5 Lawson College Australia Contact officers and staff have access to up-to date- details of Lawson College Australia support services via the website and these same contact details are provided to students during orientation and other times as required. These are:

- a. **Emergency Services** (life in danger) - Police, Fire and Ambulance [24 hr] Phone: **000**
OR **112** can be dialed on any GSM digital **mobile phone** OR **Emergency+ app with a smartphone** (if enabled)
- b. Lawson College Australia **24/7 Contact Person** - Phone: +61 3 97912211 M: +61 438592747
- c. Police Headquarters Dandenong (24 hr) Phone: 97677444
- d. Police Assistance Line (non-emergency) – Telephone: 131 444
- e. Lifeline (24 hour crisis counseling line) Phone: 131 114
- f. Nurse-on-call: 1300 606 024
- g. Poisons Information Centre Phone: 131 126 [24 hr]
- h. State Emergency Service Phone: 132 500 [24 hr]: emergency flood, storm, tsunami, earthquake
- i. Australian Government Department of Health: 1800 020 103
<https://www.health.gov.au/about-us/contact-us>

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- j. Study Melbourne: <https://www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au/help-and-support/what-to-do-in-an-emergency>
- k. Department of Home Affairs: 1300 853 773
- l. Lawson College Australia students are advised of policy, procedure and actions surrounding critical incident at the time of orientation, as well as the designated staff who are the official point of contact for students, and the subsequent critical incident team.

3.6 The following are additional sources of information.

- Victorian Department of Health and Human Services: 1300 650 172 <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/>

4. Critical incident recording and action plan

4.1 The Critical Incident Action Plan to be developed to ensure that the critical incident is handled appropriately and timely must be documented and include:

- ♦ Details of the incident including time, date, location, nature of the incident and names and roles of persons involved.
- ♦ General control objectives for the incident as well as specific action items to be undertaken including communication and reporting. This also includes media management.
- ♦ Details of designated person or critical incident team.
- ♦ Other information required.
- ♦ Follow up action

5. Critical Incident follow up

A range of strategies will be in place to ensure that the appropriate support and monitoring is provided following a critical incident. These strategies include:

- ♦ debriefing of staff and students including provision of accurate information.
- ♦ identifying staff and students who need to access support services to assist them in dealing with the critical incidents.
- ♦ identifying any other persons who may be affected by the critical incident and providing access to support services as required
- ♦ arranging a memorial service as appropriate
- ♦ monitoring the progress of all those affected by the critical incident especially staff and students for signs of delayed stress and the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder.
- ♦ managing long term consequences such as inquests and legal proceedings.

6. Reporting

6.1 Where the incident may affect the overseas student's visa conditions or program of study, Lawson College Australia will notify DE via PRISMS as soon as practical after the incident.

6.2 Where a student dies or sustains serious injury, Lawson College Australia will liaise with the student's family and provide support as required. Lawson College Australia will also notify all other relevant and authorized parties.

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6.3 A review and evaluation of the response to the critical incident will be conducted by the CEO/ Delegate. The purpose of the review and evaluation is to assess how well the incident was handled and to identify/minimize risks for the future.

7. Evaluation

7.1 Evaluation of the response to a critical incident will be carried out and documented.

7.2 Any improvements will be documented and implemented as appropriate.

8. Records

8.1 Approved incident forms and checklists [written record of the critical incident] will be used to ensure communication and management of the incident as well as consistent and complete record keeping. These written records of the incident and remedial action taken by Lawson College Australia will be retained for at least two years after the overseas student ceased to be an accepted student under the ESOS Act. [S6.8]

8.2 Maintain and regularly review a Risk Register

9. Dissemination of information to staff

Relevant staff will be informed of this Policy and Procedure and any subsequent changes will be via an agenda item at a scheduled Quality and Compliance Committee (QACC) Executive meeting, and published minutes, and dissemination by public access of this Policy and Procedure on the Lawson College Australia website – International Student Policies and Forms (<https://lawsoncollege.edu.au/international-student-policies/>)

10. References

- [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.au\)](http://legislation.gov.au)
- [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 \(legislation.gov.au\)](http://legislation.gov.au)
- [Education Fact Sheet Title \(internationaleducation.gov.au\)](http://internationaleducation.gov.au) – Standard 6 Student Support Services
- [esosforstudents | ISANA](http://esosforstudents.org.au)

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Procedure

Responsible staff for relevant area (as per Organisational Chart) to process the procedure:

Assess – Review aspects of situation as applied to this policy and any other related policies and specific documentation to be completed (and where relevant advising students of requirements of same as required); including relevant timeframes and any reporting mechanisms.

Plan – Identify strategies and actions to be taken, including timeframe/s and relevant personnel.

Implement - Strategies and take actions in accordance with policy, associated information and documentation required, documentation where necessary

Retain documentation in accordance with policy, procedure and practices.

Report in relation to practice outcomes as related to policy and procedure.

Review – process with view for continuous improvement including reporting to relevant personnel/Quality and Compliance Committee (QACC).

Document History and Version Control Table

Version Number	Date approved	Approved by	Type of change	Extent
V 1.0	18/09/2013	GRMC	N/A	Initial
V 2.0	18/09/2015	GRMC	Minor	Editing and formatting
V 3.0	17/01/2018	CEO	Major	Reviewed and updated in relation to Standard 4 ESOS 2018
V 3.1	25/01/2019	CEO	Minor	Updated LCA logo and footnote
V 4.0	30/09/2019	QACC	Major	Updated emergency Triple Zero information and editing/ formatting
V 4.1	8/09/2020	QACC/ CEO	Minor	Added Privacy Policy reference in Scope Added support [staff] in Scope Added Note Updated information in Contact Information, and Critical Incident Team in definitions Added Social Distancing, student, and support person to definitions Added dot point about Social Distancing in 1.3 Added 3.6 (e.g. Victorian DHSS, and COVID-19 information) Added /Delegate to CEO and other High Executive mentions Update footnote 1
4.2	26/10/2022	QACC	Minor	Title changed to Policy & Procedure... Removed note Updated titles of other Policy to P&P (as applicable) Updated definitions: Support person Updates 3.6 information Added 8.2: Risk Register content Added Section 9: Dissemination of information to staff Added Section 10: References Added Section: Procedure Updated Attachment: Risk register notation Updated Footer

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4.3	13/03/2024	QACC	Minor	Updated definitions – Department of Education (removed reference to DESE and weblinks with DESE). Reference made to Department of Education through PRISMS where relevant and removed websites referencing DESE. Updated References section. Updated Footer.
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Attachment

Overview - Responsibilities

Critical Incident Team	Responsible for
Designated Officer Any Lawson College Australia staff member who is either a witness to, or first to be informed about an actual or potential critical incident. ¹	a. Alerting the Critical Incident Team b. If required, assuming temporary control of a critical incident site and assigning duties to available persons (such as calling emergency services, alerting other staff, assisting with first aid, crowd control) c. Contributing to the critical incident plan and documents
Critical Incident/Emergency/Accident Contact details	In an emergency phone triple zero '000' or '112' from a mobile if you are outside of phone network range. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An automated message will ask you to select 'fire', 'police' or 'ambulance'. You will be connected to a person who will ask you questions including your location and the phone number you are calling from Stay calm, don't shout, and talk slowly and clearly. Tell the person what the problem or emergency is and how it happened Give them the address or location Tell them if there are people hurt, how many there are and their estimated age Ask for an interpreter if needed Stay on the phone and follow emergency instructions Wait for the ambulance and make sure they can see you when they arrive As far as practicable comply with social distancing requirements
Principal Administrator The Principal Administrator/ (Delegate) is to be informed immediately of any actual or potential critical incidents and is the official point of contact for staff.	a. Calling an immediate meeting with the Designated Officer - Ms Kiran Sharma, Director (or Delegate), Lawson College Australia after being informed of the critical incident in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a clear understanding of the known facts plan an immediate response plan ongoing strategies b. Allocate individual roles and responsibilities for ongoing task notifying staff on guidelines for dealing with student enquiries by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> nominating particular staff to deal with enquiries writing a bulletin notifying those directly involved and identifying students and staff at risk managing media and publicity setting regular meetings and ongoing feedback so that staff are continually involved and working together contacting relevant agencies such as DoHA, DET and consulates
Director/Delegate The Director/Delegate is to be informed immediately of any actual or potential critical incidents and is the official point of contact for students	a. Keeping documentation of Critical Incident Team meetings and completing the Critical Incident Form b. Liaising with police, hospital and any other emergency services involved organising immediate contact for the next of kin, c. Be the point of contact for students' significant other and/or legal guardian, taking into consideration the most appropriate manner of contact and whether an interpreter is required. d. Offering support services to student or student's parents in regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> emergency accommodation airport transfers counselling – internal or external <ul style="list-style-type: none"> financial advice arranging a funeral (in the event of a death) as required, consider arranging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> formal stress management and counselling

¹ The staff members may include managers, training and assessment staff, administration staff and support staff.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ legal assistance for students ♦ condolence letters to families ♦ roster of students and staff for hospital visits ♦ liaising with the administration team in regard to matters such as refunding fees if students cannot continue their studies. <p>e. Arranging a time and place for an initial group or individual debriefing session for staff and students with counsellors. In this session opportunity should be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share the impact of the event • discuss various interpretations of the event in cultural/ethnic terms the resulting sense of vulnerability • the experience of painful emotions and the normalisation of reactions
Other key stakeholders could include (not limited to):	First Aid Officers, Student Welfare Officer, Workplace Health and Safety Officer, Accommodation Officer, Executive Dean
Compliance Manager/ Delegate	Risk Register - Review and update, as applicable the Risk Register which is maintained and accessible via dropbox – QACC – Compliance Manager/ delegate

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