

## Critical Incident Policy & Procedure

### **Purpose**

The policy ensures that critical incidents or potential critical incidents that could affect an international student's ability to undertake or complete the course in which they are enrolled. This complies with Standard 6 of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*.

### **Definitions**

**Critical incident** means a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm 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.

**Critical Incident Team** means a group of persons specified by Northwest Pty Ltd to plan an immediate response, allocate responsibilities and determine ongoing strategies. This role has been allocated to the Student Support Officer and Director of Studies; however, all staff are required to be involved in immediate response when the Critical Incident Team are not immediately available to respond.

**Designated person** means any Northwest Pty Ltd 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.

### **Policy**

1. Northwest Pty Ltd is committed to protecting staff and students in the event of a critical incident and will take appropriate actions to maximise the safety of all staff and students and any other persons involved in the critical incident.
2. Northwest Pty Ltd ensures that as far as possible risk reduction measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a critical incident.
3. A designated officer and/or critical incident team will manage critical incidents.
4. All staff will receive induction into their role which will include information about health and safety, as well as critical incidents. Training and updates to information will be provided to staff on a regular basis.
5. Northwest Pty Ltd will ensure that appropriate post-incident support is provided as required.
6. Northwest Pty Ltd response to critical incidents will always be evaluated and improvements identified and implemented as required.

## Procedures

### 1. Respond to incident

Procedure	Responsibility
<p><b>A. Immediate response (within 24 hours)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess situation and consider any risks to own safety before taking any action.</li> <li>Alert the most senior staff member available where a critical incident is occurring or is likely to occur.</li> <li>Take over temporary control of incident (where there is no threat to that person's safety).</li> <li>Contact emergency services ensuring that all details known about the incident are provided.</li> <li>Action evacuation procedures if required and provide first aid or medical assistance as needed.</li> <li>Develop and implement a Critical Incident Action Plan for responding appropriately in a timely manner.</li> <li>Liaise with any other parties involved as required (e.g. police, doctors, hospital staff, embassies or consulates and other relevant professionals).</li> <li>Contact and inform parents and family members of those involved in incident.</li> <li>Provide an officially agreed response to the media and ensure other staff involved are aware of the appropriate response to the media.</li> <li>Keep appropriate and adequate records.</li> </ul>	<p>Designated person Critical Incident Team</p>
<p><b>B. Secondary response (48 – 72 hours)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate support, including counselling for those directly or indirectly involved</li> <li>Review legal issues, including advising family of process/access to assistance as required</li> <li>Provide staff and students with factual information about the critical incident including organising a debriefing for all students and staff closely involved with the incident.</li> <li>Restore Northwest Pty Ltd to regular routine, program delivery, and community life as soon as possible.</li> </ul>	<p>Designated person Critical Incident Team</p>
<p><b>C. Ongoing follow up response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify any other persons who have been affected by the critical incident and provide access to support services as required.</li> <li>Debrief staff and students on an ongoing basis as required.</li> <li>Where the incident results in a student's deferment, suspension or</li> </ul>	<p>Designated person Critical Incident Team</p>

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>cancellation of studies, notify appropriate government agencies via PRISMS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide appropriate support in the event of a serious injury or death such as hiring interpreters, making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation, obtaining a death certificate, assisting with issues such as insurance and visa issues.</li> <li>• Monitor 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.</li> <li>• Manage long term consequences such as insurance, inquests and legal proceedings.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>D. Complete critical incident report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On finalisation of the critical incident, prepare a Critical Incident Report</li> <li>• Provide a copy of the critical incident report to the CEO</li> <li>• File copy of Critical Incident Report</li> </ul>	<p>Designated person Critical Incident Team</p>

## 2. Evaluate critical incident response

Procedure	Responsibility
<p><b>A. Evaluation of response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As soon as possible after the critical incident meet to review the implementation of procedures and the effectiveness of the response.</li> <li>• Document any changes required to procedures based on the review.</li> <li>• Implement changes identified.</li> <li>• File copy of the review findings.</li> </ul>	<p>Designated person Critical Incident Team</p>