
National Academy of Professional Studies (NAPS)

Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

Related Documents	HR015 Workplace Health and Safety Policy P002 Risk Management Policy
HE Standards Framework 2021	1.3 Orientation and Progression 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety 2.2 Diversity and Equity 3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support 6.1 Corporate Governance 6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability 6.3 Academic Governance 7.3 Information Management

Contents

1. Policy Rationale.....	2
2. Overview and Application	2
3. Definitions	2
4. Procedure.....	3
Management Plan.....	3
Critical Phase	3
Ongoing Supervision and Follow-up.....	4
Investigation Process	4
Critical Incident Reporting.....	4
5. Policy Review	5
6. Further Assistance.....	5
7. Additional Resources	5
P005 Appendix 1: Procedures on the Death of a Student	6

1. Policy Rationale

The NAPS' Critical Incident Policy works in conjunction with the NAPS Risk Management Policy and Plan as a key part of NAPS' efforts to ensure a high level of student and staff safety at all times. The policy helps to do this thorough equipping any staff potentially involved with a thorough knowledge of both the actions required and when this policy applies.

A critical incident is one that is unusual and potentially has a highly negative impact on the well-being and/or health of those involved. Such incidents usually produce a high level of emotional reaction and therefore require carefully considered management to ensure the best outcomes for everyone involved.

The distress reaction may be immediate or delayed and varies from one person to another, so what is a critical incident for one person may not be for another. Therefore, this policy documents the type of incidents which are considered "critical" according to NAPS.

Critical incidents are also items that may attract police, legal and/or media attention which can add to the impact of the incident on the well-being of the students and staff involved as well as the reputation and community of NAPS in general.

This policy is also a policy and operational component relating to NAPS evidencing compliance with Section 7 of the TEQSA Threshold Standards. These require that the higher education provider must ensure that there are safe, well-maintained, physical and electronic resources and infrastructure to enable the achievement of its higher education objectives across all its locations in Australia and overseas.

2. Overview and Application

The procedures within this policy outline the process of managing a critical incident. The policy applies to all NAPS' staff including sessional staff members who may be involved. The top priority, at all times but especially when such an incident occurs, is for staff members present to ensure all students and staff involved are safe. The most senior staff member present needs to report the incident as soon as possible to the relevant NAPS' Manager who is responsible to ensure the necessary follow-up actions are taken as per this policy.

3. Definitions

Critical Incidents include the following examples:

- death from any cause (including suicide) of a student, colleague, classmate or teacher;
- natural disasters;
- violence, threats or abuse;
- sexual abuse or assault;
- serious injury;
- robbery with violence;
- student protests;
- terrorist attacks including bomb threats;
- hostage situation;

- high-publicity violent crimes;
- Disease outbreak or other health related incident;
- involvement in a negative incident which includes the presence of mainstream media; and
- incidents as per above in which NAPS staff and/or students are involved which occur off-campus.

4. Procedure

Management Plan

These action steps outline what needs to be done in response to a critical incident. It applies to all NAPS' staff, including sessional staff, and includes those who may be present when the incident occurs as well as anyone who may be the first point of contact for the student/s.

Critical Phase

Immediately after the incident has occurred, or the point in time when the student or staff member first contacts NAPS, staff should assess the situation and take the following actions:

- ensure that the injured person(s) is safe and is receiving adequate medical supervision in a safe environment;
- ensure that all others are safe;
- determine if evacuation procedures need to be implemented;
- contact relevant authorities as appropriate (eg police, ambulance, police);
- report the incident to the relevant NAPS' Manager (eg Facilities Manager);
- if necessary, call an interpreter and have them stand by for assistance;
- once NAPS' management is confident that all people are safe and receiving appropriate medical attention, they will resume activities if and to the extent deemed by NAPS management to be appropriate;
- interview the injured person(s) as early as practicable to ascertain what happened and any ongoing problems;
- support other students/staff or arrange for counselling to occur;
- address any other immediate needs, ie. additional support, police report, report stolen goods; and
- inform the office of NAPS President and CEO and the Marketing and Communications Director of the basic details and follow-up actions taken in case there are any political, legal or media inquiries in response to the incident.

Note: where a student or staff member has been fatally injured or died from any cause, the procedures outlined in *P005 Appendix 1* must be followed in addition to the extra reporting procedures listed below.

Ongoing Supervision and Follow-up

Once the incident has been managed and necessary contact has been made with relevant personnel, it is important that follow-up of the student is undertaken by a nominated staff member.

This may include:

- keeping in contact with the student and relevant others; for example, monitor the situation via regular contact as appropriate in the circumstances;
- checking that the student/s or staff involved are receiving ongoing help with medical conditions and counselling if required; and
- ensuring the appropriate manager and other relevant people have been informed of the incident and any consequences.

Investigation Process

The nominated Manager needs to ensure that the incident is accurately recorded and managed by taking the following actions:

- collect facts about the incident (e.g. injuries to the person, witnesses' details, location). This may be in written form and supported with the use of photographs where appropriate;
- consider if any work/operating procedures or training may have exacerbated or prevented the incident;
- determine the cause of the accident/incident paying attention to contributing factors including potential environmental, mechanical and/or systems failures;
- review work procedures, training, and/or safe operating procedures; and
- document recommendations and communicate the results of the investigation to those to whom it is relevant.

Critical Incident Reporting

In order to ensure all necessary action has been taken and to prevent similar occurrences, the nominated manager should ensure the written and/or verbal reports provided to the appropriate managers are adequate and include recommended actions.

Media enquiries should be referred to the President and CEO and the Marketing and Communications Director is also to be notified.

Where possible, ask the student to approve any written reports. Whether approved or not, a copy is to be included in the student's file, on the NAPS' Critical Incident file and also sent to the parents of the student and other relevant authorities with permission. These should also be filed with the report in the NAPS Critical Incident file.

Additional Procedures for Reporting the death of an international student

Additional reporting requirements apply if the incident involves the death of an enrolled international student as per the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (*ESOS Act*).

The Act under Part 3, Division 1, Section 19; 1 (d), provides that “any termination of an accepted student’s studies (whether as a result of action by the student or the provider or otherwise) before the student’s course is completed” needs to be notified within 14 days.

The Students Services Manager (or delegate) must be advised of the death as soon as practical and also must advise the Department of Home Affairs Liaison Officer of the circumstances of death.

It is especially important to contact the State Immigration office, prior to reporting on PRISMS, so the Liaison Officer may prevent a letter being sent to the student’s most recent recorded address thus minimising the possibility of further distress for the student’s family.

Using PRISMS to report the student’s death, the Student Admissions Officer will enter the student course variation reason/code as below against the student’s Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (ECoE):

- Reason for Student Course Variation- Termination of student studies prior to completing the course.
- Termination Reason – provider decision to cease student enrolment.
- Provider decision to cease student enrolment reason: student has died, including full details in the comment field as per the death certificate and state that the Department of Home Affairs has been notified by email and provided with supporting documentation.

The Student Services Manager (or delegate) should also advise the Academic Team of the student’s death. The Academic Team will check the student’s program progression in case the student may be eligible for a Posthumous Award.

As per the Management Plan above, in the case of a student death, the procedures outlined in *P005 Appendix 1* must be followed in addition to these extra reporting procedures.

5. Policy Review

NAPS may make changes to this policy and procedures from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this policy may forward their suggestions to their supervisor or to office of the NAPS President.

6. Further Assistance

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this policy should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further advice be required staff should contact office of the President at NAPS.

7. Additional Resources

Resource: Critical Incident Management: <https://www.accesseap.com.au/about-us>

State of NSW Critical Incident Management:

http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/file/0009/348669/OOHC_Critical_Incidents_chart.pdf

P005 Appendix 1: Procedures on the Death of a Student

In the case of a critical incident that results in the death of a student, the relevant NAPS Manager should form a Taskforce comprised of relevant managers and student representatives.

The Taskforce is responsible for taking the following actions:

- assess risk and plan immediate response actions;
- liaise with emergency and other services;
- allocate individual roles and responsibilities for tasks;
- make contact with appropriate persons which may include:
 - next of kin,
 - other students (those involved, friends),
 - hospital,
 - counselling/support staff,
 - NAPS staff member responsible for media liaison,
 - teaching/academic and other relevant staff,
 - student associations,
 - Immigration Department (if relevant) or the Consulate or Sponsor,
 - accommodation provider (for overseas students); and
 - other external bodies as required.

The Taskforce will also allocate members to:

- arrange counselling of students and staff not directly involved in the incident;
- keep careful records throughout the process;
- establish what costs can be met by the NAPS;
- discuss fee reimbursement;
- investigate any insurance issues;
- arrange condolence letters to everyone involved;
- arrange thank you letters;
- offer follow up support to those involved; and
- review critical incident procedures.

For overseas students, the Task Force is also responsible for the following, unless other arrangements have been made:

- arrange a funeral or memorial service;
- obtain a copy of the death certificate and related documents;
- arrange for repatriation; and
- arrange for the student's possessions to be stored or sent to his/her family. [NAPS](#)