

C11 CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1 PURPOSE

This policy and procedure establish BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education's (The Institute) framework for preparing for, responding to and recovering from a critical incident.

This policy and procedure similarly assists the Institute's community in responding appropriately to a critical incident or event that may cause physical or emotional distress to employees, students, volunteers, community members, or officers of the Institute.

A critical incident may by its nature cause the Institute to come under public scrutiny, potentially reflecting on the Institute in a damaging way.

2 BACKGROUND

The Institute is committed to ethical and legal conduct by its members in the fulfillment of their responsibilities, whether employee, student, volunteer, community member or officer of the Institute (Members of the Institute). Planning for the management of a Critical Incident is essential to the duty of care the Institute owes to all its members.

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 Section 2.3.5 requires that:

2.3 Wellbeing and Safety

5. There is a critical-incident policy together with readily accessible procedures that cover the immediate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident and any follow up required.

and, *6.2.1.j* requires that:

1. The provider is able to demonstrate, and the corporate governing body assures itself, that the provider is operating effectively and sustainably, including:
 - j. the occurrence and nature of formal complaints, allegations of misconduct, breaches of academic or research integrity and critical incidents are monitored and action is taken to address underlying causes,

and, *7.3.3.c* requires that the Institute:

3. Information systems and records are maintained, securely and confidentially as necessary to:
 - c. document and record responses to formal complaints, allegations of misconduct, breaches of academic or research integrity and critical incidents...

3 SCOPE

The procedure applies to all members of the Institute.

4 DEFINITIONS

Crisis means any emergency or critical incident that is outside the ability of the staff of the Institute to manage, or a succession of incidents that may harm members of the Institute, its operations or its reputation.

Critical Incident means a tragic or traumatic event, threat or situation affecting members of the Institute. A critical incident may be physical, for example, fire, floods, or injury to one or more individuals. Alternatively, the incident may be harder to define, for example, a political matter that may damage the Institute's reputation. The incident is likely to damage members of the Institute, its staff, its students and the Institute's long-term prospects and/or reputation.

A critical incident has the potential to harm, cause severe stress, fear or injury to the member of the Institute going through or observing the event.

Emergency means an unexpected, sudden or serious event that requires the immediate attention of emergency services personnel.

Emergency Services means the public organisations such as police, fire and rescue services, ambulance services or state emergency services that respond to emergencies.

Members of the Institute means employees, students, volunteers, community members or officers of the Institute.

5 POLICY

5.1 Risk management: the Institute proactively manages risk through risk assessment and risk reduction activities to ensure that risk to its members through critical incidents is minimised.

5.2 The Institute's response to a critical incident:

The Institute will:

5.2.1 ensure the immediate care, security and safety of any victims of a critical incident;

5.2.2 act with sensitivity and consideration for the security and safety of members of the Institute;

5.2.3 confidentially document the critical incident according to Institute and government requirements; and

5.2.4 appropriately manage the incident(s) to ensure that the Institute's reputation is not damaged.

5.3 Student responsibility: students are responsible for their own health, safety and wellbeing.

5.4 Staff and student responsibility: All members of the Institute are responsible for the reporting of a critical incident to the *Director Student Services and Operations* in accordance with this policy.

6 PROCEDURE

6.1 Critical incident management

Critical incident management is part of the Institute's *Risk Management Framework* ensuring risk assessments have been undertaken in the likelihood of potential adverse events impacting on the Institute's operations and members of the Institute (refer also 6.1.2 below).

6.1.1 *Examples of critical incidents* include, but are not limited to:

- a. natural disasters;
- b. war;
- c. unexpected or threatened death;
- d. serious injury or illness;
- e. assaults – physical, sexual or psychological;
- f. being threatened with harm;
- g. public health alerts;
- h. mental health crises;
- i. incidents relating to alcohol, drug, or substance abuse;
- j. emergency medical evacuations;
- k. missing persons;
- l. student or staff member's arrest;
- m. suicide, or attempted suicide; or
- n. being witness to an event that causes harm to someone else.

6.1.2 *Reporting*

Further to section 5.4 above, all critical incidents must be reported to the *Director Student Services and Operations*:

- if the critical incident occurs on the Institute's premises it should be reported immediately; or
- if the incident occurs at another location, but involves members of the Institute, it should be reported as soon as possible following the incident.

6.1.3 The *Director Student Services and Operations* will:

- a. prioritise preservation of life and avoiding any further injury;
- b. liaise with and support emergency services response as required;
- c. obtain the name, contact details, and next of kin, if appropriate, of the member(s) of the institute involved in the incident;
- d. obtain the time, location and nature of the incident (e.g. threat, accident, death or injury);
- e. ensure the appropriate compliance with policy under 5.2 above;
- f. determine the impact, potential risks and immediate action required and minimise the impact to the local community and environment as appropriate;
- g. ensure that the *Executive Team* and all relevant managers are informed of the critical incident and that they are coordinated in their response to the incident;
- h. facilitate the resumption of normal business operations as soon as is practicable;
- i. ensure completion of appropriate documentation concerning the incident, including completion of the incident report; and
- j. ensure preservation of BBI-TAITE assets and operations.

6.1.4 The *Executive Team* will:

- a. contact next of kin and ensure support is provided to family and friends;
- b. ensure counselling support is provided to members of the Institute as required;
- c. liaise with relevant staff to prepare a communication plan;
- d. determine if legal assistance is required; and
- e. in the case of a death, provide follow-up condolence letters to family members.

6.2 Confidentiality and Privacy

Other than to emergency services personnel, confidential staff and student personal information will only be released with the consent of the person involved, their next of kin, or where it may be necessary to protect the health and wellbeing of others.

6.3 For incidents during a trimester

When a critical incident occurs during trimester the Institute will ensure that:

- a. relevant staff and faculty make appropriate adjustments for affected students (e.g. rescheduling assessments; withdrawal; refunds); and
- b. in the case of death, notify all relevant areas of the Institute, including Library, IT, Student Administration, etc.

7 KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

N/A

8 NOTES

Contact Officer	Director Student Services and Operations
Implementation Officer/s	Director Student Services and Operations / Executive Team
Approval Authority / Authorities	Executive Team/Governance Committee
Date Approved	12/03/2018
Date of Commencement	12/03/2018 (Operational as at approval of ET)
Date for Review	24 months after commencement
Amendment History	15/12/2020 – Extensively revised to add definitions, a section on policy, remove duplication and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of personnel in managing critical incidents.
Key Stakeholders	All staff, students, visitors, community members, contractors and officers of the Institute.