Critical Incident Management Policy

Policy Category	**Policy**/guideline/procedure/rules		
Review	Three years from the date of approval		
Policy Code	GP015		
Contacts	policy@imc.edu.au		
Version	**Approval Authority**	**Approval Date**	**Commencement Date**
2024.08	Council	19 August 2024	19 August 2024

1. Purpose

The policy aims to provide comprehensive guidelines to effectively identify, respond to, and manage critical incidents that impact any members of the Institute's community – students, staff, contractors, volunteers, and visitors. The policy supports the Institute in meeting its legislative and duty of care obligations, ensuring the highest standard of health, safety, and security for all members of the Institute's community. This policy should be read with *Critical Incident Management Procedure*

Upon activation, this policy and its procedures will ensure a coordinated, timely, and sensitive response to critical incidents, safeguarding the welfare of all involved and maintaining the Institute's operational integrity and reputation both domestically and internationally, by having:

- Responded to, or resolved, in the best possible way for all affected individuals, their families, and the Institute.

- Documented appropriately the incident, remedial actions undertaken and its impact.

- Reported to relevant officers within the Institute and relevant international and Australian government agencies and other stakeholders (as required).

- Communicated appropriately to the family(ies) affected if necessary.

- Managed to ensure that the Institute's domestic and international reputations are not damaged due to the incident.

To achieve the intended outcomes, implementing this policy will:

- Establish a clear framework for managing risks associated with critical incidents, integrating into the Institute's Risk Management Framework

and aligning with the [Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021](#) and the [ESOS National Code](#).

- Implement systematic and practical approaches for managing incidents classified as critical, which may significantly affect the Institute's operations, reputation, and/or community.

- Provide detailed processes for documentation, appropriate reporting to relevant officers within the Institute and necessary government agencies, and effective communication with affected parties and their families.

- Ensure that responses to critical incidents are managed in such a way as to prevent damage to the Institute's reputation.

- Continuously improve the Institute's response strategies and staff capabilities through regular review and evaluation of incident management practices.

2. Scope

This policy and its associated procedures apply to:

- **Students**, which include**:**

  - Any category of individual or groups of enrolled students (e.g. non-award, undergraduate, postgraduate, research, domestic and international) at the Institute when the critical incident occurs on or off campus.

  - Any category of individual or groups of enrolled students from the Institute when the critical incident occurs during an approved Institute-related activity, regardless of it being onshore or offshore. The Institute's related activities include field trips, placements, internships, and study tours.

  - All international student critical incidents, regardless of whether, at the time of the incident, the student is engaged in an approved or non-approved Institute-related activity on or off campus or an approved Institute-related activity offshore.

  A written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the Institute will be maintained for at least two years after the international student ceases to be enrolled in an Institute course of study.

- **Staff:** This policy covers all Institute staff members, including full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract workers, in the event of a critical incident occurring on campus or during any approved Institute-related

activity. This includes incidents occurring within the scope of their employment, whether onshore or offshore.

- **Contractors and Visitors:** Includes any contractors working on behalf of the Institute and visitors present on campus or participating in Institute-related activities where a critical incident occurs.

- **Volunteers:** Applies to all volunteers engaged in activities under the auspices of the Institute, whether the incident occurs on campus or during any Institute-sanctioned event or activity.

This policy seeks to ensure a consistent and effective approach to managing critical incidents that affect any member of the Institute community, safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of all involved while maintaining the operational integrity and reputation of the Institute.

3. Definitions

Incident means any event or situation that disrupts or has the potential to disrupt the normal operations or safety of the Institute, its staff, students, or other stakeholders but does not rise to the level of a critical incident. Incidents require a coordinated response to manage and mitigate their effects to prevent escalation.

Critical Incident, according to ESOS Act Standard 6.4, means a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. It may involve severe harm to individuals, substantial damage to Institute property, or significant reputational, legal, or financial repercussions. Critical incidents require immediate attention and significant resource allocation to manage and resolve.

Incident and Critical Incident Convenor (ICIC) means the person responsible for assessing the severity and impact of an incident or critical incident within the Institute. Based on their assessment, they have the authority to convene the Critical Incident Management (CIM) Team as necessary. The ICIC ensures that incidents are responded to effectively, coordinates the activation of appropriate CIM Team members, and oversees the management of the incident to ensure a coherent and coordinated response.

Critical Incident Management (CIM) Team means a designated group of staff members at the Institute tasked with the preparedness, response, and recovery from critical incidents. This team is responsible for implementing the Critical Incident Management Policy, coordinating resources, and managing the overall response to ensure the safety and continuity of Institute operations.

4. Principles

This policy is grounded in the principles set forth by the [Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021](#) and the [ESOS National Code](#), ensuring that the Institute's practices

not only comply with but also exceed the baseline requirements established for higher education institutions in Australia. Specifically, this policy:

- Aligns with the HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021: The policy adheres to the requirements for maintaining high standards of health and safety (Section 2.3), effective information management (Section 7.3), and rigorous corporate monitoring and accountability (Section 6.2). This alignment ensures that the Institute is prepared to handle critical incidents with a structured and compliant approach, addressing both the immediate actions necessary during an incident and the subsequent follow-up and review processes.

- Incorporates ESOS National Code Requirements: By integrating principles from the ESOS National Code, this policy also caters to the specific needs of international students, ensuring that their rights and safety are adequately protected during critical incidents. This is particularly crucial given the diverse and global nature of the Institute's student body, requiring tailored approaches to incident management that consider cultural sensitivities and legal obligations.

- Ensures Comprehensive Coverage: The principles outlined in this policy cover all aspects of incident response, from the immediate action required at the time of the incident to the strategies for post-incident recovery and analysis. This comprehensive approach is designed to safeguard the wellbeing of all community members—students, staff, and visitors alike—and maintain the integrity and reputation of the Institute.

5. Related Documents

- *Student Code of Conduct*
- *Staff Code of Conduct*
- *Critical Incident Management Procedure*
- *Workplace Health and Safety Policy*
- *Support for Students Policy*

6. Version Control

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2014.06	Principal	30 June 2014
2019.05	Principal	8 May 2019
2020.10	Principal	20 October 2020
2023.11	Executive	23 November 2023

The Deputy President (Management) oversees the implementation and compliance of this policy. Please contact the Deputy President's office for any enquiries or clarifications related to this policy.