Critical Incident Policy & Procedure
CRICOS

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Introduction

House of Learning Pty Ltd, trading as Builders Academy Australia (BAA) ensures that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in the event of a critical incident affecting any of its enrolled international students.

Purpose

To ensure that BAA has a documented critical incident policy together with procedures that cover the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident, required with the follow up to an incident, and records of the incident and the action to be taken.

This Policy and Procedure aligns with National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standard 6

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all staff and international students at BAA.

Responsibilities

National Quality Assurance and Compliance Manager

Definitions

A critical incident is defined by the National Code as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'.
International student means international students or intending international students on a student visa under the Migration Act 1958.

Policy Statement

In the event of a critical incident, BAA recognises that appropriate procedures must be in place to ensure the provision of all necessary support services. This document outlines the BAA policy, support mechanisms and procedures for managing a critical incident. This policy will ensure that BAA has:

- An effective, evidence-based approach to responding to critical incidents as they occur;
- Makes available appropriate support and counselling services available to those affected; and
- Makes available appropriate training and information resources to all relevant staff.

Definition

A critical incident is defined by the National Code as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'. **Every critical incident is unique and will need to be dealt with differently, according to the needs of the people affected.**

Critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- A fatality, being near a fatality or an incident that is likely to affect a number of staff member and/or a student;
- Missing student;
- Serious traffic accidents;
- Murder or suicide involving students/staff and their family members or close friends (or being a witness to);

- Physical or sexual assault;
- Injury or death of a colleague, carer or intimate friend;
- Fire, explosion, bomb threat;
- Chemical, radiation or bio-hazard spillage;
- Hold-up or attempted robbery;
- Threats of violence to staff/students;
- Major theft or vandalism;
- Threat of HIV infection;
- Storms/natural disasters;
- Acute illness (physical or mental); and/or
- Security incident.

Home Country

- Missing relatives especially parents or siblings
- Natural disaster
- Political change
- Acts of war or other conflict
- Religious persecution

Risk reduction measures

BAA will ensure that critical incidents are minimized through:

- Dissemination of this policy and critical incident procedures to all staff and students of BAA;
- Providing 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 brings safety issues to the attention of the Senior Management Team or WHS Manager by completing a hazard incident form. The WHS Manager will record and assess 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 welfare support coordinator;
- Regular emergency management training and information including critical incident responses;
- Ensuring that at least 2 staff members of the BAA have current training in First Aid and at least 2 staff members who are designated as Fire Wardens; or

Critical Incident Team

When a critical incident occurs, the Senior Management Team and WHS Manager will call a meeting with the appropriate staff to form a Critical Incident Team. The team will comprise of members of the Management Team and any relevant external body.
In the circumstance that a critical incident occurs with a student on a BAA excursion, the BAA Critical Incident Team will work with the Critical Incident Team Coordinator.

The Critical Incident Team is responsible for:

- Assessing risks and response actions;
- Liaison with emergency and other services;
- Contact with students' relatives and other appropriate contacts;
- Counselling and managing students and/or staff not directly involved in the incident; and
- Referring and managing students/staff directly involved in the incident to relevant professionals where needed.

The Critical Incident Management Team will meet annually to review any incidents that may have occurred throughout the year. Where no incidents have occurred under this policy in the preceding twelve (12) months, the Critical Incident Team should refer to the Emergency Evacuation procedures and any drills conducted.

Media Management (if appropriate)

A media management process may be required to be included in the Critical Incident Management Plan to ensure the most positive and supportive response from the media. All media releases in relation to critical incidents will be provided by the CEO.

Reporting and Recording of Incident and Action Taken

As soon as is practical the following steps need to be taken and managed:

- Details of all aspects of the incident and its management will be recorded in the critical incident log;
- A Critical Incident Register will be maintained by the WHS staff member. The Log will identify the following:
  - The staff and/or student/s involved in the incident;
  - The nature of the incident;
  - The date/s of the incident;
  - Members of the critical incident team present; and
  - The outcome of the incident.

The register will also identify any policy changes that may need to be made in response to the incident.

Action Plan

The Critical Incident Team will manage various aspects arising from an incident, including communication strategies. These may include but are not limited to:

- Creating and disseminating a plan and its procedures;
- A review of the plan; and
- Staff development and training.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Under the Privacy Act 1988, individuals are entitled to the protection of their personal and private information. Where a critical incident raises the issue of confidentiality BAA is committed to maintaining this right to privacy in line with legal requirements. However, BAA may exercise its discretion and disclose information as necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of a staff member/student or of another person. In particular, BAA will for example breach confidentiality where a student threatens suicide or to harm another student, staff member or community member.

Student and Employee Information

BAA will endeavour to keep all student and employee information as up to date as possible, including an Emergency Contact Name and Number in the event of a critical incident.

On-campus Incidents

Where the Critical Incident Team believes that an incident requires the attendance of emergency services including the fire brigade, ambulance or police, the Critical Response Coordinator will organise this. The first on call or on scene will contact the CEO immediately when the incident involves death, serious injury or a threat to life or property.

Off-campus Incidents

If the critical incident involves a student or staff member and the critical incident is off-campus, the person receiving the information must immediately contact the CEO who will communicate to other staff/members as appropriate.

The Immediate Response

Where there is risk to life or property:

- An incident or potential incident should be reported to the Emergency Services (Fire, Policy, Ambulance) and Security services immediately;
- If necessary, evacuation procedures should be put in place before contacting Emergency Services; and
- If the incident does not appear to require the immediate despatch of Emergency services, the CEO should be notified immediately and given the full details of the situation including the exact location of the incident, the type of incident and details of any person or persons who may be injured, in distress or at risk.

On arrival at the scene of a critical incident, the CEO will be responsible for its assessment. If it is assessed as a critical incident, the CEO will also be responsible for the assessment and coordination of responses to the incident, although other staff members may be co-opted as necessary to deal with specific aspects. It is the responsibility of the staff member arriving on the scene to contact the CEO or, where this is not possible, to delegate this responsibility to allow the staff member to remain present at the incident.

Reporting

a) Where the incident may affect the student's visa conditions or program of study, BAA will notify Department of Education as soon as practical after the incident.
b) Where a student dies or sustains serious injury, BAA will liaise with the student's family and provide support as required. BAA will also notify all other relevant and authorised parties.
c) A review and evaluation of the response to the critical incident will be conducted by CEO. The purpose of the review and evaluation is to assess how well the incident was handled and to identify/minimize risks for the future.

Procedure to Guide the Coordinating Team

1. The staff member receiving the news contacts the CEO.
2. The CEO or their nominee urgently deals with an emergency situation then calls a meeting with the staff (Critical Incident Team) involved to make decisions as to how to proceed. The staff most likely to be present will be:
   - CEO;
   - National Quality Assurance and Compliance Manager;
   - National Sales Manager;
   - Training Operations Manager;
   - Student Welfare Coordinator; and
   - Student Support Services Officer- Team Leader.
3. At the initial meeting, the group is required to:
   - Identify all persons affected by the critical incident (both directly and indirectly);
   - Create a clear understanding of the known facts; and

- Plan an immediate response:
  - Initiate pastoral care:
    - Personal contact is to be made with individuals including victims and other persons affected by the incident.
  - Provision of a quiet area:
    - A quiet area is to be established for the use of victims and/or their families. This area shall be protected from intrusion by anyone not immediately affected by the incident;
    - Brief staff and delegate a staff member to deal with telephone/counter enquiries; and
    - Confirm access to emergency funds if necessary.
  - Plan ongoing management strategies:
    - Monitor the need for counselling;
    - Initiate and maintain contact with those affected by the incident;
    - Provide those affected by the incident with educational material covering common responses to trauma and strategies for coping with these effects;
    - Assess the need for, and organise debriefing sessions for all those involved in the incident; and
    - A written bulletin to staff if the matter is complex.
  - Allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks.

One member of the team will be delegated the task of taking minutes of all meetings to record all actions and decisions taken. These minutes and any related documents must be provided to the CEO at the earliest opportunity to assist with enquiries from police and emergency services, legal authorities, insurance companies etc.

Stress management support will be provided subsequent to any critical incident as follows:

1. Debriefing for all staff and students affected by the critical incident (formally or informally) must be provided as soon as possible after the event on an individual or group basis.
2. Further debriefing will be provided one or more days after the incident on a group basis, however where required, individual sessions may be required. These sessions must be planned prior to close of Day 1.
3. Follow up 2-6 weeks later. This will occur mostly on a group basis however if required on an individual basis, this will also be provided. This should be planned prior to the end of Week 1 of the critical incident.
4. Ongoing counselling will be provided as required on a group or individual basis.
5. Recovery time for staff and students involved will be provided and will be guided by professionals.
6. Where it is deemed necessary by the CEO (who will be guided by professional opinion), support will be provided on the anniversary of the event on an individual or group basis.

Counselling

- Counselling will be made available for staff and/or students and will be a priority for incidents where trauma may be experienced;
- BAA will arrange for a suitably qualified counselling service to address staff and students and invite staff and students to attend a further individual counselling session with them if required at the organisation's expense; and
- Crisis Leave or a suspension of studies will be considered where necessary and where required, PRISMS updated to reflect changes to enrolment.

Legal Issues

After the emergency response, the CEO must assess whether legal assistance may be required and seek legal assistance where necessary.

Insurance

Where damage to building or grounds has occurred or where BAA may be liable for personal or property damage, the relevant insurance bodies should be informed as soon as possible. Insurers would normally organise repairs where damage is covered under a policy. BAA is covered by the following insurance policy:

Third Party Liability (public and product liability) current policies are maintained at BAA.

In the event of students being affected by a critical incident, an attempt should be made to notify the OSHC provider to facilitate handling of the student's claim.

Evaluation

The Critical Incident Management Team will meet within one (1) month after the critical incident to evaluate the implementation of procedures and responses. In the interest of continuous improvement, change may need to be made to the policy as a result of critical incident evaluation.

Specialist Service Contact Details

Emergency Services

Police, Fire & Ambulance:..... 000
Police Headquarters (24-hour): 131 444
Lifeline (www.lifelinewa.org.au)..... 131 114
Department of Health (http://www.health.gov.au/):

- Department of Human Services 1300 650 172

The Health Services Directory lists medical services, emergency medical transport, 24-hour counselling services, crisis assistance and psychiatric or drug related emergencies.

Safe Work Australia

- Victoria.....1800 136 089 / (03) 9641 1444

Related Documents

- Critical Incident Register; and
- Student Support Policy and Procedure.

Document Control			
Version	**Date**	**Author**	**Change Description**
1.0	01.06.2018	BAA	Creation of policy
2.0	12.02.2020	BAA	Policy review and update
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