

POLICY C20.2

CRITICAL INCIDENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The Scentia Group ('the Group'), consisting of the Australasian College of Health and Wellness Pty Ltd (ACHW), the Australian Institute of Management Education and Training Pty Ltd (AIM) operating as AIM Business School (ABS), and AIM VET, a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), provides higher education, vocational education, and short courses to students, online and face-to-face. AIM Tailored Learning Solutions (TLS) programs are conducted externally in client business premises. ACHW utilises third party clinics for the delivery of the practical component of its courses. In so doing, all organisations in the Group, and their Third-Party Partners (TPP) approach critical incident management in a structured and regularly reviewed manner, to ensure the safety of staff and students.

1.2 Purpose

The Critical Incident Policy establishes the principles under which critical incidents, crises, and other emergency events are managed across all organisations in the Scentia Group and at TPPs.

1.3 Scope

This policy and its procedure apply to all students and staff of the Group (Scentia, ACHW, ABS and AIM VET) and TPPs, including Campus Managers, Head of Schools, Head of Academic Delivery VET, Head of Tailored Learning Solutions (TLS) Operations and the Critical Incident Management Team (Chief Executive Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Head of People and Culture, and Director of Education).

This policy and its procedure apply only to incidents considered to be critical

Where injuries and illness are sustained during or as a result of a critical incident, the Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Policy and Procedure also applies.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

This policy does not apply to incidents which are not considered critical.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility to ensure critical incidents are managed according to this policy and its procedure.
2. The Critical Incident Management Team (CMT) is responsible to oversee critical incident management and for the actions attributed to them in the Critical Incident Procedure.
3. Head of Schools and Head of Academic Delivery VET are responsible for managing critical incidents relating to the students of each respective area. The Head of School, ACHW will manage incidents that occur at external clinic spaces.
4. Campus Managers are responsible for managing critical incidents that occur on Scentia premises.
5. The Head of TLS Operations is responsible for managing critical incidents that occur on the business premises of TLS clients.
6. Third-Party Partners are responsible to ensure their critical incident policies and procedures are in line with this policy and its procedure and to report all critical incidents to the relevant Head of School.
7. The Critical Incident Management Team is responsible to oversee the implementation of recommendations following a critical incident and manage the recovery from a critical incident/crisis in accordance with the Crisis Recovery Plan.
8. Staff and students are responsible to comply with this policy and its procedure.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Critical Incidents

1. A critical incident is a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), and causes extreme stress, fear or injury and hence results in psychological and/or physical trauma that may impact on staff, visitors, and students, including the ability of students to continue with or complete their studies. It may also result in significant disruption to operations. A critical incident sits outside the normal range of experience of the individuals and witnesses affected.
2. Where injuries or illness are sustained during a critical incident, the Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Policy and Procedure and the Critical Incident Policy and Procedure apply - see Critical Incident Management Procedure.

3. Critical incidents are an adverse incident, or series of events that has caused, or has the potential to cause, seriously damage to an organisation's people, operations, or reputation. A critical incident is a traumatic event or threat of such which causes extreme stress, fear, or injury. Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:
 - serious injury, multiple injuries or death of students, staff, visitors and others either on Scentia premises, at the premises of a TPP, External Clinic, or client, online, or out in the community but involving one or more of the Scentia community - students, staff, others.
 - fire, flood, gas leak
 - acts of terrorism
 - natural disasters such as earthquake
 - a biological disaster such as a pandemic
 - missing students or staff
 - chemical hazards released into the environment
 - an armed offender on campus
 - other criminal activity, such as armed robbery
 - major disruption to IT technology that impacts on business continuation and student learning
 - suicide or attempted suicide
 - verbal or physical abuse
 - interruption to utilities (e.g., electricity, water) for an extended period
4. Non-life-threatening events, such as missing students, and severe verbal and psychological aggression may still qualify as a critical incident.
5. A critical incident may also occur in a clinic or during online studies where the event may directly impact a student. Examples include an accident in a clinic or a cyber-attack or abuse online.

3.2 Principles

1. The Scentia Group establishes services and processes to ensure:
 - a. threats and potential crisis events are regularly identified and evaluated in order to strengthen the Group's preparedness for any such events;
 - b. risk management plans are in place and regularly reviewed to ensure early risk identification and mitigation;

- c. appropriate services are in place to support students and staff through any critical incidents or emergencies;
 - d. appropriate risk management plans are in place for managing a critical incident, crisis, or emergency;
 - e. health and safety risks are well managed; and
 - f. resources are made available for recovery from a critical incident, crisis or emergency, supporting the Group's affected communities to resume normal business as soon as possible, including resources and services to address and support both psychological and/or physical trauma.
2. The Scentia Group deems any crisis or emergency situation as serious. The level of response required to effectively deal with such events is relative and depends largely on the magnitude of an event or incident - whether it has already happened or is at a high risk of occurring.
3. Critical incidents may occur affecting one individual student, staff member or visitor, small groups, or large groups. Regardless of the number of individuals affected, care is taken to address each affected party's needs and concerns in the event of a critical incident.
4. The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) establishes and regularly reviews the Crisis Recovery Plan in accordance with this Policy, the Critical Incident Management Framework - see clause 3.3 - and the Critical Incident Management Procedure.
5. Each staff member nominated to manage a critical incident, crisis, or emergency must do so according to this Policy, the Critical Incident Management Procedure, directions from the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT), and directions from external emergency services (where applicable).
6. The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will consider the actions required after the Critical incident, in accordance with the Crisis Recovery Plan.

3.3 Critical Incident Management Framework

Prevention	Preparedness	Response	Recovery
Availability of welfare and support services for general concerns with the primary aims of avoiding a critical incident and providing timely support in the event of a critical incident.	<p>Risk Register and Mitigation Plan ensures that strategies are in place to ensure that the Scentia Group is well prepared to respond in the event of a critical incident.</p> <p>Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Policy and Procedure.</p> <p>Critical Incident Policy and Procedure.</p> <p>Training and induction programs.</p>	<p>The Group's Critical Incident Management Procedure and the Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Procedure are thorough and systematic to ensure reliability in the midst of a crisis.</p> <p>Preparedness strategies support responses.</p>	<p>Recovery from a critical incident will take time. It will continue to have an impact not only on those directly involved but also on the broader community for a significant length of time. The Group's Crisis Recovery Plan will include strategies to ensure support is in place to guarantee recovery.</p>

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Crisis** - a time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger; a time when difficult decisions must be made; any event or period that will lead, or may lead, to an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, or all of society.
- **Critical Incident** - an adverse incident, or series of events that has caused, or has the potential to cause, serious damage to an organisation's people, operations, or reputation; a traumatic event or threat of such which causes extreme stress, fear, or injury.
- **Emergency** - a sudden, unexpected event that requires an immediate response from internal or external emergency services.
- **Incident** - an individual occurrence or event that is out of the ordinary.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- [All relevant national and/or state legislative instruments that stipulate requirements with which organisations are obligated to comply related to Emergency Management, Crisis Management, Critical Incident, Workplace Health and Safety.](#)
- Crisis Recovery Plan
- Critical Incident Management Procedure
- Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Policy and Procedure
- Infectious Disease and Infection Prevention and Control Policy and Procedure

6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Status	Reviewed on July 2021
Approval Authority	Scentia Corporate Board, with endorsement by ACHW and AIM Corporate Boards
Date of Approval	21/10/2021
Effective Date	21/10/2021
Implementation Owner	Director of Education
Maintenance Owner	Senior Policy and Compliance Officer
Review Due	October 2024
Content Enquiries	Janene Barrett - Director of Education Email: jbarrett@achw.edu.au

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
C20.0	10 July 2017	Head of Compliance / Director ACHW	Initial document review after purchase of MHMHE
C20.1	10 March 2020	Academic Board	General review
C20.2	21 October 2021	Director of Education	Policy and procedure separated. Students and staff included, so it becomes a Scentia corporate policy for all in the Scentia Group.