PIONEER COLLEGE
RTO: 45763 CRICOS: 03956A

Critical Incident

Policy and Associated Procedures

July 2026

Pioneer Education Institute Pty Ltd t/a Pioneer College

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1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This policy and associated procedures outline Pioneer College's (hereafter referred to as 'Pioneer') approach to managing critical incidents.

1.1.1 This policy and associated procedures meet the requirements of Standard 4.3 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs and compliance with other requirements in the Compliance Requirements, as well as Standard 6 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

1.1.2 This policy applies to all staff, contractors, students and visitors in compliance with ESOS Framework. Incidents covered in this procedure include, but are not limited to, incidents which occur at the premises and/or work-based training locations, either during or after hours.

1.1.3 This policy is designed to ensure that Pioneer meets all duty of care requirements as an ESOS education provider, and provides appropriate response to the documentation, reporting and action of critical incidents in a prompt and effective manner.

1.1.4 The CEO/PEO is responsible for co-ordinating the critical incident response and management of the procedure.

2. Related Documents

Incident Report Form

Incident Register

Risk Register

Health and Safety Policy and Associated Procedures

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Privacy Policy and Associated Procedures

3. Related Legislation

3.1 *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000*, specifically the *National Code 2018*

3.2 *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (NVR) Act 2011*, specifically the *2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)*

This policy and associated procedures will contribute to Pioneer complying with other requirements such as included in the:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)*
- *ELICOS Standards 2018*

- *Public Health Act 2016 (WA)*
- *Mental Health Act 2014 (WA)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)*
- *Privacy Act 1988*

4. Definitions

Critical Incident	A traumatic event or situation that causes or has the potential to cause significant harm to life, health, safety, security or workplace operations. Can cause extreme stress, fear or injury to the person witnessing the event.
	
	Examples of critical incidents include, but are not limited to:
	
	• Natural disasters
	• Serious injury, illness or death
	• Fire, bomb-threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
	• Security threats
	• Physical or sexual assault
	• Severe verbal aggression or threat
	• Student or staff witnessing a serious accident or violent act
	• Pandemics
	• Drug or alcohol abuse
	• Damaging media reputation
	• Violent behaviour
	• Missing persons
	• Severe accidents
	• Traumatic events affecting students, such as:
	  ○ Assault
	  ○ Mental health crisis
	  ○ Drug or alcohol overdose

Standard Incident	An event that disrupts normal operations but does not cause, and is unlikely to cause, serious harm to people, property or the organisation's ability to operate. This incident is manageable through regular safety procedures, and can be resolved internally without long-term impact. Examples of standard incidents include, but are not limited to: • Minor student misbehaviour during class • Minor first aid incidents such as a small cut or bruise • Power outage lasting a couple hours • A small, contained water leak affecting a classroom • Minor equipment malfunction

5. Policy Statements

5.1 Pioneer is committed to the health and safety of staff, contractors, students and visitors. This includes having measures in place to ensure safety in the event of a critical incident.

5.2 At the time of the critical incident, a Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) will be established to manage the critical incident. The make-up of the team will depend on staff availability at the time of the incident, but will consist of trained senior management, a CIRT Leader and a Designated Officer responding to the incident firsthand. Responsibilities are outlined further in Section 8.

5.3 Staff will be trained in the management of critical incidents and students will also receive information about critical incidents management. This will include how to seek assistance for and report a critical incident.

5.4 Overseas students will be provided with information about assistance available and will be made aware of requirements in the event of an incident as part of orientation processes. This assistance is also available to all via Student Support Services and staff.

5.5 All staff will receive induction into their role which will include information about health and safety, as well as critical incidents. Training and updates to information will be provided to staff on a regular basis.

5.6 Post-incident support will be provided to all persons involved in the critical incident.

5.7 Pioneer's response to critical incidents will be evaluated following each critical incident. Any improvements identified will be implemented as required.

5.8 All records of critical incidents will be filed.

5.9 This policy is not to be confused with standard incident procedures that are contained within Pioneer or whilst on work-based placement. Refer to Appendix C of this document to determine the level of incident.

6. Procedures

6.1 Prevention and Preparedness

6.1.1 Pioneer conducts regular risk assessments to identify potential critical incident scenarios.

6.1.2 Pioneer provides staff with training on emergency procedures.

6.1.3 Pioneer maintains emergency maps, plans and first aid resources.

6.1.4 Pioneer ensures all staff are aware of their roles in a critical incident response.

6.1.5 Pioneer appoints a Critical Incident Response Team Leader bi-annually, that forms part of the Critical Incident Response Team during emergencies. This person is trained in the safety protocols.

6.2 Respond to a Critical Incident

6.2.1 Immediately call the emergency services on 000 in the event of death or an immediate threat to life of a person or to property. The Pioneer staff member who was first made aware of the incident responds as Designated Officer and immediately informs senior management.

6.2.2 Action emergency management procedures most suited to the incident at hand. All individuals are to be cleared from any dangerous area without delay and remain cautious of hazards.

6.2.3 Where first aid is required, a trained member of staff should be notified to assist as soon as possible.

6.2.4 Establish the CIRT who will meet immediately following the incident to assess the facts of the situation, who has been affected and discuss the priorities and actions to be taken. An outline of these responsibilities is determined in Section 8.8 and Section 8.9 of this document.

6.2.5 Assess required actions which may include but are not limited to:

6.2.5.1 Alerting emergency contacts.

6.2.5.2 Designating roles to each member of the CIRT to respond.

6.2.5.3 Liaising with external agencies, including emergency services.

6.2.5.4 Issuing a media release advising of the situation.

6.2.5.5 Informing all staff and students of the critical incident situation.

6.2.5.6 Regularly updating all staff and students of the critical incident situation.

6.2.5.7 Organising emergency counselling and support for those affected.

6.2.5.8 Providing details of support services offered, and monitoring the welfare of those individuals affected.

6.2.5.9 Seeking legal advice.

6.2.5.10 Assisting students with insurance claims.

6.2.6 Document all actions in a critical incident action plan.

6.2.7 Implement the critical incident action plan.

6.2.8 Adjust the critical incident action plan as required and make updates on the Critical Incident Register.

6.3 Specific Critical Incident Protocols

6.3.1 The CIRT, CIRT Leader and Designated Officer must always follow the general critical incident response procedures outlined and refer to the relevant sections for additional information.

6.3.2 <u>Death of a student or staff member</u>:

6.3.2.1 Contact the emergency services immediately (000).

6.3.2.2 Notify the CEO and senior staff without delay.

6.3.2.3 Follow privacy and cultural sensitivity protocols.

6.3.2.4 Provide immediate support to affected students and staff, including counselling.

6.3.2.5 Where necessary inform staff, students, parents/guardians, agents, and the Department of Education and Australian Department of Home Affairs. Pioneer must use utmost sensitivity and consideration when notifying emergency contacts.

6.3.2.6 Commence an investigation to record real-time or factual data on the incident.

6.3.2.7 Where applicable, ensure the site of the incident is not disturbed in relation to Police matter or where investigation is required by state safety authority.

6.3.2.8 Monitor and ensure wellbeing of staff and students during, and following the incident.

6.3.2.9 Assist in the arranging of memorial proceedings if appropriate.

6.3.2.10 Follow communication protocols to manage media, reports and debriefing with stakeholders.

6.3.2.11 The CIRT co-ordinates with relevant staff to ensure that administrative matters in relation to those involved are managed. This includes, but is not limited to:

6.3.2.11.1 Ceasing communications to the deceased student or staff.

6.3.2.11.2 Assessment of fee or pay related matters and refunds.

6.3.2.11.3 Recording details in the managing system.

6.3.2.11.4 Withdrawing the student or staff from all relevant systems.

6.3.3 Missing student:

6.3.3.1 Initiate welfare checks, including direct contact attempts and checking attendance records. If the student cannot be located within a reasonable timeframe, through multiple contact attempts and/or if there is reason to doubt their safety, they will be considered missing.

6.3.3.2 Document all attempts made to contact and locate the student.

6.3.3.3 Gather relevant information about the student and inform the local police.

6.3.3.4 Notify the relevant bodies and stakeholders. For international students, notify the Department of Home Affairs in line with PRISMS reporting requirements.

6.3.3.5 Notify relevant internal staff to monitor the situation and provide assistance.

6.3.4 Serious injury or illness:

6.3.4.1 Follow general emergency procedures as outlined in Section 6.2 and Appendix B.

6.3.5 Environmental Threat, Threat of Violence or Major Property Damage (fire, flood, structural failure):

6.3.5.1 Follow evacuation or lockdown procedures. These are detailed in the Health and Safety Policy and Associated Procedures.

6.3.5.2 If uncertain, refer to Appendix B and follow general emergency procedures as outlined in Section 6.2 of this document.

6.4 Communication Protocols

6.4.1 All relevant staff will be informed of the incident that occurred via internal communication systems. During the incident they will receive urgent updates. Post incident the designated senior staff member will prepare a factual, approved statement for the public/ media if required.

6.4.2 The CIRT Leader will stay in communication with emergency services as required.

6.4.3 In accordance with the ESOS Act, Pioneer College is required to notify the Department of Education and Australian Department of Home Affairs as soon as practical after the incident and in the event of a student's death or other circumstances affecting the student's attendance. In this instance notification will be made initially by Phone, followed by reporting via PRISMS.

6.4.4 The affected students, parents/ guardians and agents must remain informed.

6.4.5 An Incident Report Form is to be completed by the Designated Officer or the CIRT Leader involved in the incident. This is to contain as much information as possible, such as:

6.4.5.1 The time, date and location of incident

6.4.5.2 The type of incident and description of what occurred

6.4.5.3 Actions occurring immediately after the incident

6.4.5.4 What followed the incident

6.4.5.5. Who was involved in the incident

6.4.5.6 Post-incident review and recommendations

6.4.6 Pioneer may need to report critical incidents for insurance related purposes. In these instances, the CEO and relevant senior management are to liaise with providers.

6.4.7 The CEO and senior management co-ordinate communication with media where and if necessary. Pioneer staff do not communicate with media concerning the events of the critical incident unless prior approval has been given.

6.4.8 The Student Support Officer assists in providing counselling services and/or debriefing sessions for affected students and staff, and facilitates referrals to external providers as required.

6.5 Evaluate Critical Incidents

6.5.1 The CIRT formed for the specific critical incident must meet as soon as practicable after the incident to complete the following actions:

6.5.1.1 Analyse the incident debrief and review the actions taken and perceived effectiveness of the response.

6.5.1.2 Identify any recommendations for improvement.

6.5.1.3 Action recommendations for improvement as per Continuous Improvement Procedures.

6.5.2 Review and update relevant policies and associated procedures. Identify any training or supplement resources that need to be acquired or updated to minimise the likelihood of reoccurrence.

6.6 Record Keeping

6.6.1 Pioneer records all details of the incident in the Incident Report Form, which then gets logged on the Critical Incident Register.

6.6.2 Pioneer retains copies of all reports, witness statements and correspondences in accordance with record-keeping requirements.

6.6.3 Pioneer retains records according to record management procedures.

7. Policy Review

7.1 Policy review is undertaken by the CEO with input from relevant staff.

7.2 Policy reviews are identified by an annual review cycle, or through audit and continuous improvement activities. An earlier review may occur if legislative or regulatory changes occur, or if a significant incident or near miss occurs.

7.3 The CEO actions the changes and updates the policies and associated procedures manual accordingly.

7.4 The CEO communicates amendments to policies and associated procedures to all relevant staff via email and/ or staff meetings.

7.5 Changes will be recorded in the updated version control and Document History.

8. Responsibilities

8.1 The CEO/PEO is responsible for, but not limited to:

8.1.1 Approving and endorsing the Critical Incident Policy and Associated Procedures.

8.1.2 Ensuring adequate resources are available for prevention, response and recovery.

8.1.3 Acting as the primary spokesperson for any external communications, unless delegated.

8.1.4 Ensuring legal and regulatory reporting obligations are met.

8.1.5 Supporting compliance in post-incident investigations and policy reviews.

8.2 The Compliance Team is responsible for, but not limited to:

8.2.1 Assisting in monitoring legislative, regulatory and standards requirements relating to critical incident management.

8.2.2 Maintaining the Critical Incident Register and ensuring records are complete and accurate.

8.2.3 Leading post-incident reviews to identify systemic improvements.

8.2.4 Ensuring incident reporting processes align with obligations.

8.2.5 Co-ordinating annual drills and training with stakeholders, and document results.

8.2.6 Escalating complex or high-risk matters immediately to the higher management.

8.3 The Academic Manager/ Training Co-ordinator, through administration by the PEO, is responsible for, but not limited to:

8.3.1 Ensuring trainers and assessors are familiar with emergency and critical incident procedures.

8.3.2 Overseeing student safety during classes and learning activities.

8.3.3 Co-ordinating academic continuity planning in the event of a prolonged disruption.

8.3.4 Communicating with trainers and assessors during an incident to ensure students are accounted for.

8.3.5 Assisting with a critical incident response.

8.4 The Student Support Officer is responsible for, but not limited to:

8.4.1 Providing immediate welfare support to students during and after an incident.

8.4.2 Notifying relevant authorities, such as the Department of Home Affairs, where required.

8.4.3 Communicating with families, student agents, and other relevant stakeholders in a timely, sensitive and culturally appropriate manner.

8.4.4 Assisting in arranging counselling, and other essential services for affected students and staff if required.

8.5 The Trainers and Assessors are responsible for, but not limited to:

8.5.1 Taking immediate action to ensure student safety in line with Pioneer procedures and duty of care responsibilities.

8.5.2 Reporting all incidents immediately to the Academic Manager/ Training Co-ordinator or Compliance Officer via the use of the Incident Report Form.

8.5.3 Participating in emergency drills and incident debriefs.

8.5.4 Keeping accurate records to assist in accounting for all students during an incident.

8.5.5 Providing reassurance and support to students in the initial stages of an incident.

8.6 The Administrative staff and Student Services are responsible for, but not limited to:

8.6.1 Maintaining up to date emergency contact details.

8.6.2 Supporting internal and external communications during a critical incident.

8.6.3 Assisting in maintaining and updating the Critical Incident Register.

8.6.4 Providing administrative support to help manage the incident.

8.6.5 Following communication protocols following the incident.

8.7 All Staff at Pioneer are responsible for, but not limited to:

8.7.1 Calling emergency services as required in the event of a critical incident and notifying the management team.

8.7.2 Following emergency and critical incident procedures as trained and outlined in this document.

8.7.3 Reporting any incident, hazard or threat immediately.

8.7.4 Participating in drills, debriefings and training.

8.7.5 Providing assistance to colleagues, contractors, students and visitors as appropriate, without putting themselves at risk.

8.8 The Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)

8.8.1 In the event of a critical incident, the most senior staff members available will form a CIRT and will inform the CIRT Leader.

8.8.2 The CIRT is responsible for managing Pioneer's response to any critical incident in a timely manner to ensure safety, compliance and effective communication. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

8.8.2.1 Assessing the severity and scope of the incident, and controlling any further risk as much as practicable.

8.8.2.2 Implementing the Critical Incident Policy and Associated Procedures, alongside with the Health and Safety Policy and Associated Procedures.

8.8.2.3 Allocating roles and responsibilities to team members.

8.8.2.4 Maintaining direct contact with the CIRT Leader, Designated Officer, CEO, Compliance personnel, and all other relevant staff involved.

8.8.2.5 Ensuring first aid and medical assistance is provided where required.

8.8.2.6 Managing the safety and welfare of all stakeholders. Including maintaining sensitive information.

8.8.2.7 Participating in a formal debrief following the incident and identifying improvements to be made.

8.8.3 The CIRT monitor and review the critical incident responses, strategies and support offered during, immediately after and post-incident reporting.

8.9 The CIRT Leader and Designated Officer

8.9.1 The CIRT Leader oversees the CIRT's co-ordination, ensuring all response roles are allocated, and manages the post-incident debrief. Responsibilities include:

8.9.1.1 Assuming overall leadership control and decision making over the incident response.

8.9.1.2 Determining the appropriate level of response and directing the CIRT. This includes delegating specific tasks such as first aid, student support, facility safety checks, evacuation management and any other necessary decisions.

8.9.1.3 Communicating directly with the Designated Officer on-site if available, to co-ordinate liaison with emergency services.

8.9.1.4 Overseeing the collection of evidence and documentation for post-incident reporting.

8.9.1.5 Leading post-incident debrief and overseeing the implementation of corrective actions.

8.9.1.6 Maintaining current knowledge of emergency management best practice and Pioneer policies and procedures.

8.9.2 The appointment of the CIRT Leader is confirmed bi-annually and recorded in the Critical Incident Register. In the absence of the appointed CIRT Leader, the Designated Officer may perform the role.

8.9.3 The Designated Officer acts as the single point of contact during the incident, making immediate safety decisions and liaising with emergency services.

8.9.4 The Designated Officer is determined as any staff member who first was made aware of, and responds to the incident, provided they have received training and can respond. Responsibilities include:

8.9.4.1 Assuming temporary control over the critical incident and assigning duties to nearby staff and students as required.

8.9.4.2 Alerting the CIRT Leader, CIRT, CEO or nearest senior staff member at the first available opportunity.

8.9.4.3 Providing a brief to and forming part of the CIRT.

8.9.4.4 Completing the Incident Report Form.

8.9.5 If the original staff member is not capable of responding, they must alert the CIRT, CIRT Leader, CEO or nearest senior staff member who will transfer operational control over the situation.

Any complaints or breaches in relation to this document should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer in person or by email to: ceo@pioneercollege.edu.au

Appendices:

Appendix A – Emergency Contact Numbers

Service/ Role	Contact Number	Additional Information
Emergency Services (police, fire, ambulance)	000	• Available 24/7
Perth Police	131 444	• Available 24/7 • Best for non-urgent situations and assistance
Poisons Information Centre	13 11 26	• Available 24/7 • Information about suspected and known poisonings in relation to swallowed poison, skin exposure, eye exposure, inhalation exposure, bites and stings
Pioneer CEO: Abdul Shakoor Chaudhry	0433 500 276	• Available during operational hours and after-hours emergencies
Interpreter Service (TIS National)	131 450	• Available 24/7 • Can assist in immediate interpretation over the phone (support for international students)
The Australian Department of Home Affairs	13 18 81	• Available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm • Service centres are closed on public holidays

Appendix B – Quick Incident Response Flowchart

Step 1:	**Identify and Assess the Situation:** • Is it life-threatening? → Call 000 immediately. • If not life-threatening → Proceed to Step 2.

Step 2:	**Notify the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) Leader:**
	• First trained member of staff becomes Designated Officer. They take on the leadership role until CIRT Leader becomes available or until the CIRT can assign an appropriate leader. If unsure, call CEO (in previous appendix A).
	• Communicate to relevant staff:
	  ○ Location
	  ○ Nature of incident
	  ○ Number of people affected
	  ○ Immediate risks

Step 3:	**Contain and Manage Immediate Risk:** Follow the relevant emergency procedures: • Evacuation – Use stairs and move to assembly area. • Lockdown – Secure rooms, stay inside. • First Aid – Provide immediate medical assistance if safe. Stay alert of any hazards in the area.

Step 4:	**Activate the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT):**
	• CIRT Leader assumes command.
	• Assign tasks:
	  ○ Emergency services communication
	  ○ Student and staff support
	  ○ Site safety and security
	  ○ Communications
	  ○ First aid assistance

Step 5:	**Communication and Documentation:** • Internal: Notify all senior management. • External: Notify all relevant bodies as required. • Complete Incident Report Form.
Step 6:	**Post-Incident Management:** • Debrief with all stakeholders involved in the incident. • Offer counselling/ wellbeing services if requested or deemed necessary. • Review incident handling procedures and update. • File report in Critical Incident Register.

Appendix C – Incident Levels Table

Incident Level	Description	Examples
Level 1: Minor (Standard Incident)	Non-permanent injury, low impact risk to safety, minimal operational disruption	• Minor first aid (e.g small cut) that can be managed by trained staff. • Internet outage lasting a couple hours
Level 2: Moderate	Some risk to safety or wellbeing, moderate disruption to operations	• Near Miss • Injury that needs medical attention but not hospitalization, such as a sprain
Level 3: Crisis (Critical Incident)	Serious risk to safety and wellbeing, major disruption to operations, event triggering regulatory reporting.	• Missing student • Sustained injury requiring emergency aid • Hazard affecting campus
Level 4: Extreme (Major Critical Incident)	Life-threatening, significant disruption and destruction, multiple individuals effected, event attracting media and regulatory attention	• Death on campus • Major fire or flood • Acts of violence

Document History:

Version No.	Issue date	Nature of Amendment	Approved By
1.0	1 Jul 2025	*As per implementation of the Revised 2025 Standards for RTOs, all related documentation is reset to version 1.0 to reflect alignment with the updated regulatory framework.* Creation of Document.	CEO
1.1	11 Aug 2025	Document edited.	CEO
1.2	19 Aug 2025	Revisions made based off feedback.	CEO
1.3	16 Jul 2026	Review made. Minor updates on cover page. Additional items added to responsibilities section.	CEO

Document Code	CRI-PP001-160726
File Location	https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/s35dv9ddwfrrzgnom3ltg/ADZplj4w2Lv6kMNkExcDkN4?rlkey=65ra355s1ilhxfmuyt20pngiu&st=sxsgh2oh&dl=0