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Policy

This policy/procedure supports ‘Standard 6 – Student Support Services’ of the ‘National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2018’ which states:

“The registered provider must have a documented critical incident policy together with procedures that cover the action to be taken in the event of an incident, required follow-up to the incident, and records of the incident and action taken.” (ESOS 6.4)

This procedure ensures that any critical incident that occurs is documented, reported and action taken by the Acumen Education (RTO) where required.

This policy supports all the aspects of the student centric approach. It provides guidelines right from the marketing procedures to issuance of certificates during this time.

Scope

To articulate the Institute’s Practices that will apply to students and Staff in compliance with the ESOS legislation. The critical incidents covered in this procedure may occur at the teaching locations or after hours.

Definitions

Critical Incident	Is a traumatic event, which is likely to cause extreme physical and/or emotional distress involving Acumen Education, its staff and/or students.
Death	(Including death of a dependent residing in Australia)Accidental, Suicide, Result of an injury or terminal illness, or Murder.
Serious Illness	Illness which causes the deterioration of the student /staff member’s health over time.
Serious Injury	Illness which prevents or severely affects the student’s ability to continue with or complete the course.
Traumatic Event:	A traumatic event is not limited to, but could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> missing students; any fatality or serious injury; a serious traffic collision; murder or suicide; physical / sexual assault or domestic violence; severe verbal or psychological aggression; fire; explosion or bomb threat; a hold up or attempted robbery; serious threats of violence, and storms or natural disasters; Drug or alcohol abuse.

This policy must be implemented in Conjunction with acumen education policies and procedures manual as it affects every facet of the operation.

Several aspects of operations have been changed to ensure the continuity of the business and also upholding the student centric approach that acumen follows as its core values. The facets of operations that have been changed are as follows

Monitoring the COVID 19 situation and informing the stake holders

Acumen education is closely monitoring the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The safety, health and wellbeing of our students and staff is the priority for Acumen Education. Acumen Education is closely following the advice of the government and relevant health authorities in relation to COVID-19.

Government websites

- [Department of Health](#)
- [Victorian Department of Health and Human Services](#)
- [Smart traveler](#)
- [The Department of Education](#) (resources and fact sheets relating to universities and vocational education facilities)

The stake holders must be advised on the changing scenario on a regular basis to keep them updated of the decisions that acumen education makes based on the requirements.

Marketing

Acumen education is currently enrolling students and it will adequately inform the students in line with the Standard 2 of the ESOS act. Acumen education will provide additional information in relation to the following aspects.

Temporary changes to delivery modes - Blended delivery

Acumen education has made temporary changes to delivery modes. Acumen education will monitor all marketing and advertising activities to ensure they remain current and accurate in line with the changes.

The education agents will be kept up to date with changes to our operations and marketing material to ensure marketing on our behalf is current and accurate.

Acumen education must inform the change of delivery modes during a student's enrolment as soon as possible. Acumen education will also remind students of their rights and provide details of any applicable refunds if acumen ceases to deliver any part of the training product in which the student is enrolled.

Acumen education will retain a record of all changes made to advertising and marketing material to support temporary changes to delivery modes to demonstrate compliance.

Regulatory requirements

Acumen education will provide clear and accurate information to prospective students before enrolment. This information allows prospective students to make informed decisions with regard to the proposed delivery mode and the suitable VET course for them.

Marketing of the course must indicate any parts of the training or assessment which students would be unable to complete via distance delivery, including where work placement is required. In designing or reviewing marketing materials, acumen education will review the training and assessment strategies to ensure consistency.

Marketing information must also clearly describe any resources or services that a student must provide themselves

- Acumen education will identify any support an individual student needs through pre-enrolment or pre-training checks. When delivering by online, Acumen understands that the student needs may differ compared to students learning in a face-to-face environment. Acumen education will make sure that the students have the following:
 - any underpinning skills or knowledge requirements for the qualification
 - adequate numeracy and literacy skills
 - adequate digital literacy skills
 - the required resources to learn by distance
 - an understanding of any parts of the training and assessment they are unable to complete via distance delivery
 - an understanding of how Acumen will provide work placement or conduct assessment in a real or simulated environment.

Student support and progression

Acumen education understands that delivering the qualification using blended delivery requires a different set of support and progression requirements to ensure students are able to progress at the rate required to develop the required skills and knowledge.

Acumen education will ensure the support provided meets the needs of individual students to maintain student satisfaction and to encourage successful completion. Acumen education will also ensure that students are aware of how they can seek the required support – whether that is through the trainer directly or through helpdesk style support by publishing information on its website, releasing newsletters from time to time, sending emails to students so they can be proactive in accessing the support.

Digital literacy

Digital literacy for online delivery is beyond the fact whether a student can use a computer or not. Acumen education will take into consideration the types of tasks a student will be required to complete throughout their course and whether or not the student has the required knowledge to complete those tasks.

Acumen education also considers the impact digital literacy skills will have on our support systems and identifies any additional support that should be provided upfront to equip students with the necessary skills. Training will be provided as part of the enrolment process on how to use any technological resources like the video conferencing tools for example ZOOM to provide students with the required technical knowledge and capability to make their experience more enjoyable as online delivery commences.

Student support

Acumen education will identify any support needs and provide access to services that student need in addition to the existing services

Acumen will also facilitate multiple methods that students can use to contact their trainer and assessor, to discuss the requirements. This could include telephone, email or the LMS messaging system to enable questions to be answered.

Engagement

As with a face-to-face delivery mode, the trainer and assessor will be the key contact with the students. Proactively contacting students, giving prompt feedback on work submitted and encouraging real-time interaction can encourage positive communication and maintain student motivation in their studies.

Acumen education will set up virtual classrooms by using video conferencing to conduct synchronous online learning where the students and trainer participate at the same time but in different locations to

allow increased collaboration between peers and enhance engagement. Students will also be allowed opportunities to ask questions during and after the class by using the instant chat service in Zoom.

Student involvement is very effective in a group learning environment and helps with ensuring that a class as a whole has achieved a similar level of knowledge. Acumen will not restrict its training to online, but a blended delivery will be used where practical training and assessment will still be conducted face to face but by ensuring compliance with the restrictions and legislations in place.

Monitoring progress

Students should continue to be monitored for course progress to track knowledge and skills development and assist to maintain motivation.

Acumen education will ensure that students are regularly logging in, and undertaking their learning, in order to progress through their course. Acumen will run reports in the Student management system to identify any students who may not be progressing suitably and contact them for support.

Acumen education will monitor the course progress policy in the same lines of face to face delivery. Acumen will ensure that its international students' progress through their course so that they complete the course within the nominated course duration by attending a minimum of 20 scheduled course contact hours per week either online for theory based training and face-to face for practical based training & assessment by also ensuring compliance with the social distancing norms and reducing class sizes. In order to do meet this requirement, Acumen will maintain regular contact with students by telephone and email and take measures to apply intervention strategies wherever needed as in case of face to face delivery.

Training and assessment

Training environment

Acumen education will utilize blended learning where a combination of both online learning and face-to-face learning will take place which is explained as under. The amount of each component in a course will vary depending on the practical nature of each unit. Acumen education will ensure that any methods used to deliver using online mode achieve the same quality outcomes for students that would otherwise be achieved and will employ delivery and assessment practices to produce job-ready graduates that align to training package requirements.

Acumen education will consider the particular requirements of the online mode of delivery to ensure learning resources, facilities and equipment are sufficient and accessible.

In order to prepare for blended delivery, Acumen will utilize a variety of resources that are engaging for the student. Training content will be delivered in a variety of ways like online for theoretical aspects and

face-to-face for practical aspects to encourage students to absorb the knowledge and to take time to be able to practice skills. This will also ensure acumen is able to support different learning styles of students.

A variety of presentation types will be utilised for online delivery. Such methods are well suited to present fundamental and theoretical knowledge by using current technology for visual displays (visual), explaining the content verbally or in writing, as well as by distributing notes, or referring to additional sources / reading materials.

Acumen Education will use synchronous online learning where the students and trainer participate at the same time but in different locations. Acumen will currently delivery only the duration of its supervised theory training using the online mode where the trainer logs in live with their students and delivers the training. All trainers will be required to make the class as interactive as possible to ensure adequate participation. Acumen will structure the learning to include activities, online discussions between students, additional reading that engage students with their peers. Students will be encouraged to complete knowledge assessment tasks and other 'check points' to ensure they are developing competencies and are prepared to take part in skills demonstration/observation-based assessments.

Acumen will organize training for practical component in face to face mode by reducing the class size to 10 students per class (for ensuring social distancing) in order to make sure students develop real skills and are provided opportunity for practice before undertaking assessment.

Assessments

In determining competency of a student, Acumen will ensure that assessments address all requirements of a unit of competency. The assessment requirements for all qualifications will remain same whether assessment is conducted face-to-face or via blended delivery modes.

As the qualifications offered by Acumen are primarily skills based, which require students to demonstrate competency in a real or simulated environment, the practical component of demonstration of skills that cannot be conducted online will be scheduled for the student to attend the college in person (face to face) to undertake the assessment. Acumen will employ adequate measures to ensure social distancing and appropriate sanitization is ensured.

Acumen will make sure the integrity of the entire assessment process is upheld and that there is no compromise made to the principles of assessment and rules of evidence. Acumen will ensure all performance evidence requirements are demonstrated in the context of any assessment condition stated in the training package before a competency decision is determined. The training and assessment strategy will be constantly updated based on the requirements to provide clarity to Trainers & assessors in conducting training and assessment and to ensure the student receives an enriching learning experience.

Mandatory work placement

Mandatory work placement is a form of assessment in some qualifications and units of competency and requires a student to complete a certain amount of time on the job before competency is determined.

Acumen Education requires the students to undertake mandatory work placements as a part of its Commercial Cookery & Hospitality Management qualifications. Wherever students are not able to place themselves on their own, Acumen will make arrangements to organize work based training in Acumen's training kitchen. Acumen will assess work placement using log books that are confirmed by a workplace supervisor and by viewing student participation in activities remotely wherever practicable to do so. Acumen will also maintain regular contact with all the workplace supervisors to monitor student progress and maintain authenticity of assessment.

Support for trainers and assessors

Acumen Education will ensure that all the trainers & assessors are provided with adequate in house training on using the online delivery medium – Video conferencing tools like Zoom & Moodle. Acumen will also ensure that the trainers and assessors are provided with sufficient professional development in the delivery mode/s by making webinars organized by professional development organizations like ITECA & VELG accessible to them and by making it mandatory to complete the online trainings before commencing the online delivery.

Responsibilities

CEO
Operations Manager
Student Support Officer
Course coordinators

Strategic Management:

- Operations Manager, under the leadership of the CEO, manages responses, the continuity of business operations and contingencies, and the recovery and review phases.

Operational Management:

- Course Coordinators, under the leadership of the Operations Manager and CEO, manage the incident scene until the arrival of Emergency Services in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Procedures.

Policy Base

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code).
- ASQA Update April 17 2020: Distance learning Information for VET providers on how to stay compliant when adopting distance learning options During COVID 19

This policy also supports clause 10.2, 10.4 of standard 10 and clause 11.3 of standard 11 under ESOS framework