

Critical incident policy and procedures

This policy applies to all staff, students and visitors who have been exposed to a critical incident either on Job Training Institute campus or off campus (students and staff) including staff on business related travel interstate or overseas. Where a staff member has witnessed an event that may be considered a critical incident, this policy and procedures should be followed. Where a staff member is aware of an event which may either indicate or escalate to a critical incident, the policy and procedures should be followed

a. Purpose

In accordance with the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standard 6.8 states:

'The registered provider must have and implement a documented policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm. The registered provider must maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the registered provider for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.'

This policy details the procedure for dealing with a critical incident including: reporting, approach, action, support, media, counselling services, training, evaluation and follow-up, review and return to normality.

b. Definition

What is a critical incident?

The National Code defines a critical incident as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury except serious academic misconduct.'

A critical incident would include any of the following:

- Death, Serious injury any threat of these
- Missing student
- Natural disaster in Australia and student's home country
- Acts of terrorism
- Fire, bomb threat, explosion
- Issues of domestic violence, physical, sexual or other abuse
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Severe verbal aggression
- Psychological aggression
- Serious injury or any threat of such
- Other non-life-threatening events

c. Student Orientation Program information section

The Student Orientation Program starts with an induction presentation on the first day of class; this induction includes the presentation of PowerPoint slides which include;

- take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus and advise overseas students and staff on actions they can take to enhance their personal security and safety
- information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including critical incidents
- provide overseas students with or refer them to (including electronically) general information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia.
- information regarding the Critical Incident Policy and associated procedures covering actions to be followed in the event of a critical incident.

All current and new staff are provided with an induction which includes information regarding the Critical Incident Policy and Procedure and associated procedures covering actions to be followed in the event of a critical incident.

d. Procedure: Actions to be taken when critical incident occurs

1. Designated Officer:

Is any Staff Member who is either a direct witness or the first to be informed of the incident or potential incident;

- a) Is to assume temporary control over the Critical Incident and to assign duties and responsibilities to Staff and Students as required;
- b) Is to alert the CEO or most Senior Staff Member available at the first available opportunity;
- c) Is to provide a brief to and form part of the Critical Incident Response Team;
- d) Is to complete the Critical Incident Report Form.

If a Critical Incident has or is occurring the Designated Officer should act to:

- secure the safety of staff and students and themselves;
- then contact the emergency services (if fire, police or ambulance is required);
- then contact the CEO or General Manager.

2. Critical Incident Response Team:

When an incident occurs, the CEO/General manager will form a Critical Incident Response Team – CIRT if required.

- a) The CEO or appointee shall be the designated Critical Incident Team leader
- b) The CIRT is to take over control of the Critical Incident from the Designated Officer, after a handover brief, and

- c) The Designated Officer will form part of the CIRT

The Critical Incident Team may include any or all the following members of staff:

- a) Campus Managers
- b) Administration staff (if Domestic students)
- c) Student Support Officer
- d) HR manager & HR assistant (if staff)
- e) Course/Training managers
- f) CEO
- g) General manager
- h) Marketing Manager
- i) Compliance Manager
- j) Any other staff member appointed by the CEO or by the General Manager.

3. The CIRT (if formed) or General Manager is responsible for:

- Implementation of this procedure;
- Identifying the cause to the Critical Incident circumstance, assessing and controlling any further risk;
- Implementing, monitoring and maintaining risk control measures;
- Regularly monitoring the effectiveness of the Critical Incident risk control measures and rectify any deficiencies in the procedures;
- Consulting with Staff and Students on Critical Incident practices;
- Liaison with Emergency Response Authorities;
- Liaison with Department of Education(DOE), Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and other relevant agencies;
- Ensuring the well-being of Staff and Students following the Critical Incident;
- Arranging Counselling or Trauma Services following the Critical Incident.

4. At the time of occurrence and within 24 hours

- a) Identify the cause of the Critical Incident;
- b) If practical, remove or minimise the cause for a potential further Critical Incident;
- c) A member of the Critical Incident Team will contact emergency services (fire, police, ambulance) and relevant external bodies if necessary;
- d) Ensure the Safety and Well-being of Staff and Students;
- e) Ensure injured and/or traumatised Staff and Students are provided with appropriate Emergency Care;
- f) The Critical Incident Team will determine the arrangements for informing staff, students and stakeholders of the incident;
- g) Ensure support for Staff and Students in the event an incident is still continuing;
- h) Keep Staff, Students, Student's family, Agents and where necessary DOE/DHA informed;
- i) Manage Media Reports (refer to Appendix A);
- j) Designated Officer is to Complete the *Critical Incident Report Form*;

- k) Commence an investigation to record real-time or factual data on the Critical Incident;
- l) The Critical Incident Team will meet and assess the incident with regard to first response actions and risk to the safety of all staff, students and others;
- m) If an associated risk is still active they will action a strategy to implement further measures which may include identifying emergency response requirements and further action to ensure staff, students and others are removed from harm's way;
- n) Media response will be dealt with by the CEO, as such; staff is not to provide any comments to media in regard a critical incident (refer to Appendix A- Media Hints for further information);
- o) JTI is committed to respecting an individual's right to privacy and ensuring that Personal Information is protected. This policy ensures that JTI meets its legal and ethical requirements in regard to the collection storage and disclosure of the personal information it holds in regard to individuals;
- p) If trauma was experienced by individuals, a session will be organised with JTI Student Counsellor;
- q) Arrange Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services;

5. Following

- a) Ensure Staff and Students are provided ongoing access to Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services;
- b) Monitor Staff and Students attitudes and behaviour for any signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD);
- c) Monitor Health and Well-being of any Staff and Students hospitalised;
- d) Keep Staff, Students, Parents, Agents and where necessary DOE / DHA informed;
- e) Assist in the arrangement of memorial proceedings if appropriate;
- f) Conduct a CIRT debrief and provide the report to Staff and Students where necessary;
- g) Manage Media Reports.

6. Post

- a) Ensure Staff and Students are provided ongoing access to Counselling, Trauma or Religious Services;
- b) JTI maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken for at least two years
- c) Analyse the findings of the CIRT Incident debrief and where necessary implement risk Control Measures to minimise the likelihood of reoccurrence.

7. Staff training

JTI committed to, delivering critical incident awareness training and information to all staff. WHS officer will ensure the training and information will be made accessible to the staff including face-to-face training and published materials.

8.

Example of Detailed Actions

In the unfortunate situation that a student dies and JTI has been advised by Police of the incident:

1. The Police in consultation with the CEO/General Manager would contact the student's parents or next of kin and advise of the situation – check if an interpreter be required;
2. The Police may require an official identification of the deceased and so this may involve the use of a staff member who has known the student;
3. The Police may also interview staff as part of investigations;
4. Media response will be dealt with by the CEO
5. Decide on what assistance JTI may provide to family, i.e. arranging funeral, death notices, attendance from family members, crisis support referral to counseling services, refund student fees, legal assistance, accommodation and student personal belongings;
6. Contacting the Department Home Affairs with details if it is an International student
7. The incident would need to be recorded in the students file and in the Critical Incident Report including: time/date of death, how incident occurred and location and noting who was involved;
8. The regulatory authorities would be notified as soon as practicable after the incident, this may include updating PRISMS;
9. Design a formal bulletin to staff and other students;
10. Send a condolence letter to family;
11. A formal debriefing session with staff and students and have our counsellor in attendance.

Reporting of the critical incident

- When the risk has passed, the first response staff member will complete the Critical Incident Report;
- When the risk has passed, the CEO/General Manager will convene a meeting with the Critical Incident Team and finalise the Critical Incident Report;
- The ISC/GM will notify DHA as soon as possible after the incident, this may include reporting via PRISMS;
- The Critical Incident Team will review the incident and evaluate the response and actions for closeout and lessons learned;
- If changes are required to policies, procedures, these will be made via documenting on the critical incident report form and actioning a corrective action.

In accordance with the ESOS Act, JTI is required to notify DOE and DHA as soon as practical after the incident and in the event of a student's death or other circumstance affecting the student's attendance. In this instance notification will be made initially by Phone followed by reporting via PRISMS.



Privacy and confidentiality

JTI will not disclosure student’s personal information without their formal approval as outlined in the Privacy Act. The only exception to this rule is when the information may reduce or prevent a serious or imminent threat to the student’s life, health or safety.

Details of the Critical Incident Response Team

Name	Position	Work Phone	Home Phone	Mobile Phone

Emergency numbers:

Name	
*Police	000
*Fire	000
*Ambulance	000
Lifeline	131114
Alcohol and drugs	1800 888 236
Rape helpline	1800 424 017

**Note: if you are out of network range, Dial 112 on mobile for emergency services*

Attachments

Appendix A: Checklist for Follow Up, Review and Evaluation

Appendix B: Staff Training: Things To Remember

Appendix C: Sample Letters

Appendix D: Media Hints

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Appendix A: Checklist for Follow Up, Review and Evaluation

How well were the following actions undertaken by the Critical Incident Team?

1 = poorly; 5 = very well, most appropriately. Please add comments to clarify your choice.

Question	1	2	3	4	5
Decision maker clear					
Follow up clear					
Availability of mobile phones					
Notification of and liaison with Agent if applicable					
Arrangements for visits to/from Family					
Liaison with Police, Doctors, Hospital Staff					
Hiring Independent Interpreters					
Death Notices					
Funeral/Memorial Service Arrangements					
Refund of student's fees to pay repatriation or associated expenses					
Copy of Death Certificate					
Consideration of personal items and affairs (household and academic)					
Insurance Matters, OHSC Coverage, Ambulance Cover					
Formal Stress Management interventions required for students and/or staff (release from classes, leave, rescheduled assessment or exams)					
Liaison with Academic Staff					
Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required					
Liaison with Department of Immigration and Border Protection if studies will be interrupted					
Fees issue to be resolved for student unable to continue with their studies					
Legal Issues: helping students get access to legal assistance if required.					
Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required					
Follow up condolence or other letters to Family					
Financial Assistance for families of affected person(s) if residing in Australia					
Organising students/staff for hospital visits					

Appendix B: Staff Training: Things To Remember

1. **In the event of any critical incident, the first thing to do is calm the affected party/parties down and offer hope.**

Communicate simply, take control and give clear and practical directions in order to reduce the anxiety and connect the logic of the affected party/parties

2. **You are not superhuman.**

Managing a critical incident can be a very long time, especially if you are regarded as the focal link with international students at your institution. While you are busy providing care or support to those directly affected by the incident, your own health and emotional well-being may be at risk. Self-care should NOT be forgotten in your management strategy.

3. **Take time out each day to telephone or e-mail another colleague**

This will give you not only a chance to debrief, but also to compare notes with sympathetic colleagues who have had similar experiences and a real understanding of what you are feeling. You are helping others while you help yourself.

4. **Update the resources as necessary**

Insert as many local telephone numbers and contacts, and as much information as you can so that you can refer to the resources thereby allowing you to take effective and immediate action when necessary.

WHO ARE YOU?

As an **INSTITUTE** staff member, you are a person who interacts with International Students in a professional capacity.

You are most likely working in one or a range of the roles as listed below:

- General Manager
- Academic Staff
- Accounts Manager
- CEO
- Administration Staff
- Marketing Officer
- Admissions Manager
- Student Support Officer
- Administration officer
- Student Support Officer
- Administration Manager

You may be one of the first people notified in the event of a Critical Incident.

Ultimately, you are a concerned, caring, informed, capable, 'significant other' in the life of the international student. His or her own family structure will be unavailable, so assume that you will be helpful and a positive influence, in spite of your 'outsider' role. You, as an individual, will be

more readily accepted than you as the Trainer or You as the Counsellor, or You as the Administrations staff.

Optimise your own personal traits. Remember that it is more than likely that the international student has sought you out because of **who** you are, not **what** you are. So, follow your instincts and act accordingly.

Preparing yourself

How does one prepare for dealing with a critical incident in a cross-cultural setting?

The attitude you assume is of the utmost significance:

- Expect the unexpected. Not everything occurs between 9am and 5pm.
 - Do not be easily upset or disturbed by even the most extreme situations.
 - Convey empathy and respect for the emotions of those involved.
 - Worry and fear should not be conveyed to the person.
 - Provide a sense of stability and strength.
 - Be able to alleviate tension and anxiety.
 - LISTEN - to what is said.
 - LISTEN - to what is not said.
 - Create a personal equilibrium between your own values and those of a different value system, but keep the values of the client foremost in your mind.
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- There will be times when you are unavailable. Don't be consumed by guilt. As long as policy and procedures are in place, there will be someone else who can step in and fulfill the required role.
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- Network with ethnic groups in the local community. Keep a list of useful contacts who may be able to assist in matters not directly related to the Institute: religious customs, family support, interpreters, embassy or consulate contacts.
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- It is not always important to remain within the specific religious affiliation to receive help in an emergency situation. Helping, coping, counselling skills are not religiously oriented...sensitivity is common to all members of the clergy. Keep this in mind when seeking assistance.
-
- Learn as much as you can from foreign nationals about how they would deal with specific scenarios - Ask questions:

“How should the body of a Muslim car accident victim be handled when the Coroner demands an autopsy and religious custom prohibits?”

“How does one act at a Chinese Buddhist funeral service? What is the proper way to express condolences?”

“How is mental illness regarded in your country?”

“What is the attitude toward rape in your country?”

The idea is to gain knowledge in advance, whenever possible.

Keep in contact with support networks like ISANA. Whether by telephone or e-mail, there will always be someone available to use as a sounding board.

Preparing Others

Many staff respond that they are not qualified to handle international students in crisis.

Eradicate this 'us and them' attitude by engendering team- work among staff with regard to

assisting international students. Let them know that they can be of invaluable assistance in a crisis by offering short-term training and workshops.

Establish and maintain your own network of 'contacts'. Try to include as wide a variety of types and levels of staff as possible.

Keep in regular contact whether formally or informally, as these contacts will be your most reliable allies at a moment's notice.

Conduct training regarding the Critical Incidents Policy for International Students. It is important for staff to be aware of the existence of such a policy.

Conduct a resource workshop to locate all relevant community resources in your immediate local area: Funeral Directors, Police and Medical Authorities, Religious Leaders, Ethnic Group Leaders, Media Representatives, Insurance Representatives, local Embassy or Consular representatives.

Follow up with a debriefing and feedback session, inviting Counselors to educate participants about Stress Management, Post Traumatic Stress and general counselling principles when dealing international students.

Conduct general Cross-Cultural Awareness training at regular intervals.



Appendix C: Sample Letters

LETTER TO PARENTS

(Sample letter in the event of a tragedy)

Dear Parents,

The institute has experienced *(the sudden death, accidental injury)* of one of our students. We are deeply saddened by the death/events.

(Brief details of the incident, and in the event of a death, perhaps some positive remembrances of the person lost)

We have support structures in place to help your child cope with this tragedy. *(Elaborate)*

It is possible that your child may have some feelings that he/she may like to discuss with you.

You can help your child by taking time to listen and encouraging them to express their feelings.

If you would like advice or assistance you may contact the following people at the institute:

CEO
Compliance Manager
Admissions Manager
Student Support Officer

Yours sincerely,

APPENDIX D: Media Hints

In many cases, the institution would prefer not to issue a press release upon the death of an international student. However, in anticipation of some requests for comment from the media, it is advisable to have a press release drafted by Media staff just in case.

Listed below are some helpful hints, which can be used and applied within the role of the Coordinating Team:

1. “No Comment” = Not a good idea.
2. A good press release should answer the following questions:
What? How? When? Where? Why?
3. Add a joint statement from the CEO and the Critical Incident Team which will signify unity and dissuade the press from looking for an ‘alternative angle’ on the story. The statement should include an expression of surprise and sadness at the tragedy, as well as compassion for the family of the victim.
4. A comment should be included explaining Institute’s policy on responding to this kind of situation. In addition, if the situation warrants, it would be appropriate to comment on what measures will be put in place to ensure that any future events of this nature are avoided.
5. A telephone contact for further information is always left at the bottom of a press release. The Coordinating Team should determine who will be responsible for media inquiries, and all staff should be alerted to the procedure for directing media inquiries to this person.

Appendix E: Sample media release

A male student from Botswana, 31, has died at in metropolitan Melbourne CBD.

The CEO,, said the incident had saddened **Institute** staff, its student body, and the international student community.

“We are all dispirited at the loss of a very promising young man. Our profound condolences go to his family” said.

A memorial service staged at the Institute yesterday was attended by more than people, including academic staff, International Student Support staff, family, friends, and classmates

NOTE: *The release is short and to the point. It depicts the Institute as a caring institution, a position reinforced by the fact that the memorial service was held on the Institute’s own grounds.*

Note that the release was issued after the memorial service, to avoid the likelihood of media coverage at the service itself. The cause of death has been revealed, because of the young age of the deceased.

Should media investigate further, it is suggested that the CEO respond with a statement saying simply, “We are sure you will understand that we are not prepared to discuss any of the personal issues which may have been associated with this young man’s death. It has always been our policy to respect the privacy of our students and their families.”

Managing the media

Each critical incident is unique and the dynamics of each situation will have to be assessed when it occurs. It is important that a structured approach to media management is developed and is included in the management plan to ensure the most positive and supportive response from the media.

Take the media calls

The CEO or nominated person should handle the initial media calls. Be sure to return media calls as soon as possible.

It is important that the department has an input in media coverage so that the story is balanced. Therefore avoid answering questions with "no comment". Respond to questions accurately, however it may be necessary to explain to the media that you are unable to answer their questions at this time because i) of the sensitive nature of the issue or ii) you do not have the information available. It may be necessary to check with the police, ambulance or fire brigade etc, before making a statement.

Response time is important

Officers likely to be contacted by the media need to be alerted immediately and kept informed as more details come to light. Inform reception as soon as possible that the incident has occurred, even if the details are unclear. Media liaison officers will need to be informed of the incident. They will be able to assist by handling media inquiries. The media liaison officer will liaise with the CEO regarding the situation.

Channel all media inquiries through one person

The CEO will liaise directly with the media as more details are known.

Relate to journalists in a positive and friendly way

Enlist the support of the media to report accurate information and avoid being defensive. Journalists are professionals too. They have been assigned the job of reporting the story. They feel the public have a right to know and they will report the story with or without the Institute's co-operation. In a major disaster, the media is an essential means of communicating information, e.g. providing hot-line phone numbers, etc.

Working with the media representatives as professionals and providing them with accurate information about the incident means staying in control. Cooperation can make the difference between inaccurate reporting resulting in a story that reflects negatively on the institute or the department and one which shows our caring role and our ability to respond effectively in a crisis.

Emphasis should be placed- in media comment- on the support available to students and staff.

Determine what the official response will be

Media liaison officers and/or the Marketing Department may be able to provide advice to staff about other developments or broader issues that may need to be considered when framing the response. They may also be able to offer advice about the most effective methods of responding to newspaper, radio and television interviews.

EXPRESS CONCERN. RESTRICT ANSWERS TO FACTS. ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE.

It is appropriate, for example, to:

State the facts about what has occurred and what is being done.

For example: when and where it occurred, how many people were involved or hurt, how much damage has been done, etc.

Describe the assistance being provided for students and staff who may have been traumatised.

Explain that the whole Institute has been deeply shocked, that all available resources and support services have been gathered and what steps are being taken to rectify the situation and get things back to normal as soon as possible.

It is imperative to avoid making comments which imply blame or fault for any part of the incident, as there could be significant legal implications.

Official inquiries – e.g. by the police - are likely to follow serious incidents. Media comments on the public record may have a bearing on proceedings at such inquiries.

Appendix F: Police Involvement

While critical incidents are not only cases of sudden unexpected death, the police and others must be contacted.

The police are required to investigate all cases of sudden unexpected death. Police actions include:

- Reporting such death to the Coroner
- Notifying next of kin
- Obtaining official identification of the deceased (this must be done by someone who has known the deceased for some time)
- Conducting investigations on behalf of the Coroner - for example, interviewing witnesses and others who may have been involved, collecting clothing and other items for use in evidence, delivering specimens for analysis.

Coronial Investigations

Every death reported to the Coroner must be investigated. The body of the deceased will be taken to the morgue where it may be viewed by the relatives but not touched. Once the coronial inquiries are complete (and this may take some time), the body will be released to funeral directors to await instruction from the next of kin. At this stage the body may be touched.

Post Mortems (autopsies)

Most reported deaths require a post mortem examination to determine the medical cause of death. This usually involves an internal and external examination of the body, and of tissue, organ and blood specimens taken from the body. Cultural and religious objections to a post mortem may be discussed with the coroner or a court social worker. However, these objections very rarely influence the coroner's decision to conduct an autopsy.

Inquests

An inquest is a public hearing before a coroner (and occasionally a jury) to decide the circumstances of death. Once initial investigations are completed, the Coroner may (as in 90% of cases) dispense with an inquest. However, the Coroner may order an inquest or, in certain circumstances (such as murder), an inquest may be legally required.

Appendix G: Preparing for funerals

This information is taken from materials published by the Australian Funeral Directors Association. A variety of reading material is available. Inquiries may be directed to:
Australian Funeral Directors Association
PO Box 291
Kew East VIC 3102
(03) 9859 9966

Arranging a funeral

When faced with having to make funeral arrangements, most people have no prior experience in organising such an event, and little idea of what to do.

Initial interviews with the funeral director can be at a location nominated by you. While some people may have a fairly clear knowledge of the arrangements they want to make, others may want to consider a myriad of alternatives before making any decisions. The funeral director is there to guide and advice on the many matters which need to be considered.

Decisions to make will include:

- Time and location of the funeral
- Type of service
- Burial/cremation (reflection of the religious or ethnic attitudes and family traditions)
- Type of coffin
- Viewing arrangements
- Choice of participants
- Floral arrangements, motor vehicles and other relevant matters

The funeral director

The funeral director will take responsibility for arranging, with the family concerned, the time and place for an appropriate funeral service by coordinating and liaising with clergy members, doctors, hospitals and cemetery or crematorium officials.

The funeral director will lodge notices in the press, arrange floral tributes, provide a hearse and other vehicles, a funeral chapel and any other facilities and personnel required to carry out the wishes of the family being served.

All official forms must be completed and taken to the appropriate people at the right time. The funeral director, for example, registers the death with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

The funeral director ensures that human dignity both of the deceased and the survivors is preserved, and performs tasks in a sensitive and understanding manner.

Kindness, helpfulness, understanding and the empathetic handling of funeral arrangements are the vital psychological components of the funeral director's role.

When someone dies

When death occurs, the first practical consideration in most cases will be the need for a doctor's attendance. In Australia today, relatively few people die at home and in most cases the medical necessities and formalities will be taken care of by the relevant hospital or other authorities.

The deceased's doctor or the hospital authorities will explain what steps, if any, are required to establish the cause of death and complete the necessary death certificate. Meanwhile, the family may begin making their desired funeral arrangements, which can be completed when the death certificate has been signed.

The funeral ceremony

All reputable funeral directors are able to provide a broad range of services to suit the precise requirements of the bereaved family.

Funerals can be as different as the people they are for, with their main purpose being to help the bereaved in the first stages of grief.

The order, style and content of service can all be varied to suit the family's needs. A personal tribute from a family member or close friend, or perhaps including appropriate cultural traditions, may make the service more meaningful.

Special circumstances

Deaths from Suicide and AIDS may sometimes present special problems because of old religious discrimination and/or social stigma. Nevertheless, the need for people to mourn and the rituals of the funeral are still essential for friends and family.

When there is no body (e.g.: drowning accidents, abduction) it is still important to acknowledge the life of the deceased and help the family and friends to accept that death has occurred. A special memorial service to allow everyone to say goodbye and be able to get on with their grieving is essential. The use of photos, significant objects associated with the deceased's life, and perhaps candles are a great help to use in place of the body.

Grieving

Grief is not a single response, but a complicated series of feelings, emotions and even physical manifestations of a person's reaction to the bereavement.

Grieving is an intensely personal process. Each death is unique and everyone affected will respond differently. Most survivors however, will pass through similar stages of grief from initial shock, numbness, and often denial and anger to realisation, acceptance and finally re-adjustment.

The intensity of grief experienced will be affected by a number of factors, including the degree of attachment to the deceased and the duration and quality of relationship with them. The greater the attachment, the longer it is likely to take to resolve grief.

However it is not the passage of time itself which brings resolution, but the working through of stages of grief. A meaningful funeral service can play a significant part in the crucial early stages of grieving.