



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Health and Safety Policy

**Action, Investigation and Reporting in the
Event of an Accident, Incident, Near Miss or
Occupational Ill Health**

UHSP/23/AIR/11

This document sets out in more detail the arrangements for compliance with University Health and Safety Policy at College/Corporate Service level and it gives guidance on how these requirements may be met. This document forms a part of the University Health and Safety Policy. It has been considered by the Joint Safety and Health Committee and approved by Strategic Planning and Resources Committee.

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February 2013 amendment

Addition of **Correspondence regarding an accident/incident** (see page 4)

June 2013 revision

The introduction of the term **Significant Accident or Incident** (see page 1 for the definition and the action to be taken if such an accident should occur)

Action, Investigation and Reporting in the Event of an Accident, Incident, Near Miss or Occupational Ill Health

UHSP/23/AIR/11

INTRODUCTION

Scope

This Policy and the accompanying guidance addresses:

- arrangements to be in place to deal with an accident, incident, near miss or case of illness or ill health should it occur;
- subsequent investigation;
- reporting procedure.

The Policy is aimed at University staff who have management, supervisory or health and safety responsibilities or duties.

Responsibilities

The majority of accidents and incidents that occur are quite minor and the investigation and remedial action taken will be dealt with at local level by local management with a report being sent to the Health and Safety Unit. Some more serious accidents and incidents can also be dealt with at a local level, with assistance, if necessary, from the Health and Safety Unit.

However, should a **Significant Accident or Incident** occur then a joint investigation will be undertaken led by the Health and Safety Unit and involving the respective College/Corporate Service, Insurance Office Legal Services, External Relations and senior management, as appropriate.

Definitions

Accident: an unplanned, uncontrolled event or action which results in a person being injured. Included in the term accidents are 'acts of non consensual violence done to a person at work', e.g. an assault on a Security Officer carrying out their duty.

Incident: an unplanned, uncontrolled event which results in damage to the University infrastructure or damage to University or College/Corporate Service equipment.

Near Miss: an unplanned, uncontrolled event which, under different circumstances, could have been an Accident or an Incident.

Occupational Ill Health: a case of ill health that is, or is thought to be, caused or aggravated by a University work activity or environment.

Significant Accident or Incident: an Accident or Incident which may need to be reported to enforcing or regulatory authorities or may be of interest to external stakeholders or attract external attention. Examples include:

- Fatalities
- Injuries including amputation and severe internal injuries, burns and scalds
- Serious eye injuries

- Certain other injuries resulting in fractures or serious lacerations, bruising etc. (This would not usually include the injuries suffered when carrying out low risk activities e.g. slipping, tripping, falling, lifting and carrying)
- Loss of consciousness due to exposure to a hazardous substance
- Multiple casualties
- Serious incidents involving machinery, falls from height, explosion, electric shock, fire, vehicles, optical radiation
- Evacuation of the workplace due to contamination or pollution from a hazardous substance or oxygen deficiency
- Release of a biological agent that causes severe human infection or illness
- Failure of pressure vessels
- Collapse of a scaffold
- Significant exposure to asbestos
- Incidents contributing to serious ill health
- Major fire.

Note:

It is possible for an event to be an Accident and an Incident, e.g. an explosion where a person is injured and equipment damaged.

POLICY

Heads of College/Corporate Services must make arrangements to ensure that, within their areas of responsibility:

- appropriate arrangements are in place to deal with any Accident, Incident, Near Miss or case of Occupational Ill Health that may occur;
- any Significant Accident or Incident is reported immediately to the Assistant Director Workplace Wellbeing.
- all other Accidents, Incidents, Near Misses and cases of Occupational Ill Health are investigated as appropriate and reported to the Assistant Director Workplace Wellbeing. The report form in the Appendix should be used (individual Colleges/Corporate Services can adapt the form for their particular activities as long as it contains the same information);
- any person reporting a case of suspected Occupational Ill Health either through self-report, GP sickness certificate or accident reporting is referred to the University's Occupational Health Service for further assessment or advice;
- staff and students are made aware of these arrangements through appropriate training or communications.

Individual must:

- report any Accidents, Incidents, Near Misses or cases of occupational Ill Health as set out in the guidance below.

The Assistant Director Workplace Wellbeing must make arrangements to ensure that:

- all Accidents, Incidents or cases of Occupational Ill Health reported to the Health and Safety Unit are recorded and investigated as appropriate;
- in the event of a Significant Accident or Incident being reported the Director leads the investigation in conjunction with the respective College/Corporate Service and notifies and takes advice as appropriate from the Insurance Office , Legal Services, External Relations and senior management:

- as required by legislation, Accidents and cases of Occupational Ill Health are reported to the appropriate enforcing authority and that where appointed, Trade Union Safety Representatives are informed of such matters.

GUIDANCE

1 Appropriate arrangements to deal with an Accident or Incident

Arrangements need to be made where a serious foreseeable incident could occur. This includes:

- means of summoning help, particularly out of hours, from a remote location for a lone worker;
- first aid provision;
- reporting arrangements.

Other specific policies contain further requirements and guidance. Examples include:

- chemical spillages, see Health and Safety Policy, *Hazardous Substances Policy*, Schedule 8 <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/documents/public/hsu/hsupolicy/hs15/hs8emer.pdf>
- incidents involving radiation, see Health and Safety Guidance, *Use of Ionising Radiation* <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/documents/staff/HSU/19UIR.pdf>
- spillages of biological material, see Health and Safety Guidance, *Guidance on the Management of Biological Risks* <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/documents/public/hsu/hsupolicy/12mbs.pdf>
- fires, see Health and Safety Policy, *Fire Safety* <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/documents/public/hsu/hsupolicy/4fs.pdf>

2. Accident and Incident Investigation

The primary aim of an investigation is to establish the cause of the Accident or Incident. This is necessary to:

- identify the appropriate action to prevent a recurrence;
- report details if necessary to the enforcing authority;
- report details to the University's insurers.

An investigation is not undertaken to apportion blame. This approach is unlikely to succeed in determining the cause since vital information may not be forthcoming.

Immediate action may be required to prevent further Accidents before starting an investigation, e.g. stop an activity or withdraw equipment. The site may need making safe.

Following a serious accident or incident (e.g. a fatality, multiple injuries, major fire etc.) the site should be secured and no one allowed to enter or interfere with it. The police, enforcing authorities and other University staff may have to examine the area.

Investigation

Most Accidents and Incidents should be investigated by the College/Corporate Service responsible for organising the work or activity. Usually this should be done by the line manager assisted if necessary by the local Health and Safety Co-ordinator. The University Health and Safety Unit can help and advise.

In the event of a Significant Accident or Incident then the Health and Safety Unit will lead the investigation and involve the respective College/Corporate Service, Insurance Office Legal Services, External Relations and senior management, as appropriate.

Further guidance can be found in:

Guide to Accident and Incident Investigation published by the University.

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/documents/public/hsu/information/accident/accidentinvestigationguide.pdf>

and

Investigating Accidents and Incidents published by the Health and Safety Executive.

<http://books.hse.gov.uk/hse/public/saleproduct.jsf?catalogueCode=9780717628278>

3. Reporting Procedure

All Accidents, Incidents, Near Misses, and confirmed or suspected cases of disease or Occupational Ill Health should be reported to the **University Health and Safety Unit** as soon as possible by sending a completed accident/incident report form (see Appendix) to the Assistant Director Workplace Wellbeing. (A copy should also be sent to the University Insurance Officer and one retained in the respective College/Corporate Service.)

Usually a manager, supervisor, health and safety co-ordinator or other responsible person will complete and submit the accident/incident report form. However, some Accidents and Incidents may occur where there is no such person readily available (e.g. in the campus grounds). The individual concerned should then make a report if possible. If contacted, members of the Security Staff will attend and make a report.

If a first aider gives treatment then the first aider will fill in a treatment form, in accordance with the University's first aid arrangements.

In addition, for Significant Accidents or Incidents the Health and Safety Unit should be notified by telephone. (Out of working hours this can be done via the Security Office).

4. Correspondence regarding an accident/incident

If correspondence is received regarding an accident/incident, this should be forwarded immediately to the Insurance Office in the University's Finance Department and a simple acknowledgement sent: *'Thank you for your letter/email of []. I confirm that this has been passed to the University's Insurance Office for attention. Please send any future correspondence regarding this matter to the Insurance Office, Finance Department, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT.'*

APPENDIX

Accident/Incident Report Form

The Policy requires either

- the form in this Appendix to be used; or
- Colleges/Corporate Services can adapt the form for their particular activities as long as it contains the same subject headings in the same order as the form in the Appendix).

Guidance on completing the form is given on the reverse of the form.

MS WORD Version of the form at

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/documents/public/hsu/hsupolicy/23AIRPF.doc>

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Send one copy to the Director of the Health & Safety Unit
Send one copy to the Insurance Officer, Finance Office
Retain one copy in the College/Corporate Service/ Department

		College/School/Department etc. reporting accident/incident	
Location where the accident/incident occurred		Date	
		Time	
Description of Accident/Incident			
Investigation and action/measures taken to prevent a recurrence		Investigation complete? Y/N	
		If no, indicate when investigation should be completed	
In the event of an injury			
Name of person involved	Status: staff/ug/pg/contractor/ visitor/other (state):	Staff/Student number	
College/School/Dept they work in	Job	Telephone number	
Time loss	Back to work/study? Y/N If no, indicated expected time off	Time loss others	
Nature of injury	Immediate treatment: First aid/hospital/ own GP/home/none other (state):	Further treatment: First aid/hospital/ own GP/home/none other (state):	
Names of witnesses		Telephone number	
Form completed by	Position	Telephone number	
Signed	Head of College/School/ Manager/ Supervisor H&S Co-ordinator other (state):	Telephone number	
Print name			
<i>For Health & Safety Unit use only</i>	Accident No	Classification	RIDDOR number

For guidance on completing form see overleaf

Notes on the completion of the Accident/Incident form

As much of the form should be completed as soon as possible after the event and copies sent to the Director of the University's Health and Safety Unit and to the University's Insurance Office. Additionally one should be kept in the respective College/Corporate Service for reference.

If all the information is not immediately available (e.g. the investigation is still on going) it may be necessary to re submit a completed form at a later date.

The form should be signed off by a person in a senior management position. However in order not to slow down the reporting procedure a supervisor, health and safety co-ordinator or other person in a responsible position can sign off the form.

The following should be reported:

- All accidents resulting in personal injury or time loss
- Incidents whether damage occurs or not
- Near misses where injury or damage could have occurred
- Ill health that may be due to, or made worse by, the University's activities

Location where the accident/incident occurred

The location should be given as accurately as possible. This is particularly important in the case of falls. Room numbers should be given if appropriate. A sketch can be attached.

Description of Accident/Incident

A full description of the events causing the accident/incident should be given.

Action/measures taken to prevent a recurrence

In most cases some action will be appropriate, e.g. a request for rectification of an unsafe condition, alteration of a procedure, reminding people of safety requirements, undertaking further investigations etc.

Time loss

In even the most trivial accident or incident there will be some time loss, both to the injured person and others who become involved. The following should be indicated:

- the time loss (to date) of the injured person;
- any other time loss associated with the accident or incident, e.g. taking the person to hospital, administering first aid, clearing up debris, making safe, investigating, report writing etc.

Correspondence regarding an accident/incident

If you receive correspondence regarding an accident/incident, this should be forwarded immediately to the Insurance Office in the University's Finance Department and a simple acknowledgement sent:

'Thank you for your letter/email of []. I confirm that this has been passed to the University's Insurance Office for attention. Please send any future correspondence regarding this matter to the Insurance Office, Finance Department, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT.'

Form revised February 2013