



Reporting and investigation of accidents, incidents, near misses and cases of work-related ill health

Guidance for Heads of School/ Service

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Introduction

This guidance is for Heads of School/ Service and explains your role as part of the management process of implementing the Standard. You will have key staff in your school / service who are nominated to log and/ or investigate accidents and incidents, and they will need particular support; in addition all staff in your school/ service should be aware of how to report a work, study or research-related accident, incident or near miss both on and offsite.

Definitions

- **An Incident** - anything untoward such as threatening behaviour, physical violence, work related road traffic accident, leaks, odours, unauthorised access to restricted areas, failure of equipment etc and should also be reported. These may have underlying implications that impact on safety, health and the environment.
- **An Accident** - any unplanned event that resulted in injury or ill health of people, or damage or loss to property, plant, materials or the environment. i.e. an incident *with* injury or loss
- **Near miss** - any event, which under slightly different circumstances, may have resulted in injury or ill health of people, or damage or loss to property, plant, materials or the environment. i.e. an incident *without* injury or loss.
- **Work-related ill health** - A work-related disease or condition listed in RIDDOR that has been confirmed by a medical practitioner (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome, occupational dermatitis or any illness or disease caused by occupational exposure to a biological agent).
- **Accidents, incidents, near misses and cases of work-related ill health** – these are known jointly in this document as ‘accidents/ incidents etc.’ This protocol covers all University activities (work, study, research etc.) and University premises.

Roles and actions

The health and safety responsibilities of staff, students or visiting personnel are set out in the University Health and Safety Policy (which can be found at www.leeds.ac.uk/safety). For the management of accidents, incidents, near misses and work-related ill health the role-holders listed below are proposed to carry out additional specific actions.

Staff and students

- Report all incidents, accidents, near misses and work-related ill health to the nominated person in your area.
- Find out local processes for how, to whom and when to report to (particularly if not on site – e.g. fieldwork)
- Immediately contact the Health and Safety Manager in all cases of fatality or serious injury (e.g. broken arm)
- Report any breach of security at a health and safety restricted location on Sentinel and to FD Security Services.

Line managers or academic tutors

- Include local processes for how and to whom to report accidents/ incidents etc, in inductions (particularly if your staff/ students will be going off site – e.g. fieldwork)
- Review risk assessments (and particularly control measures) after any accident, incident, near miss or work-related ill health, and update if necessary.

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Head of School/ Service

- Check people are aware of your local system for reporting/ recording accidents/ incidents, retaining records, reviewing risk assessments after accidents/ incidents and communicating information on serious incidents
- Put 'information on accidents/ incidents etc' on the agenda for School Health and Safety Committee
- Nominate people to record accidents/ incidents etc on Sentinel and be involved in the investigation process
- Be involved in serious accident/ incident investigations
- Check that any significant findings arising from investigations are followed up.
- Do not respond to any legal enquiry/ potential claim, but instead immediately refer them onto the University Insurance Officer.

Health and Safety Manager

- Monitor accident/ incident etc reports and report to Head of School/ Service
- Review risk assessments (and particularly control measures) after any accident, incident, near miss or work-related ill health, and update if necessary.

Health and Safety Manager, Health and Safety Officer and Health and Safety Coordinator

- Work together with the Head of School/ Service to decide on the level of investigation required for each accident/ incident etc.
- Lead/ support investigations where necessary
- Review risk assessments (and particularly control measures) after any accident, incident, near miss or work-related ill health, and update if necessary.
- Prioritise any actions from the investigation and monitor their implementation and share information on these.
- Complete training in accident investigation.
- Keep trade union reps and Heads of School/ Service consulted and involved of progress in investigations.
- Keep local copies of investigation documentation in a secure location.
- Contact the University Communications team if there is a serious accident or incident etc.

Nominated people to report accidents/ incidents etc

- Accurately and promptly record accidents/ incidents on Sentinel in line with training.
- Contact the Head of School/ Service and Health and Safety Manager as soon as possible if there is a serious accident/ incident etc.
- Escalate information on incidents if necessary.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Seek advice from the Health and Safety Manager if any questions.
- Complete training.

Health and Safety Services/ Occupational Health Service

- Report RIDDOR incidents to the enforcing authorities

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Guidance

- **Reporting accidents, incidents, near misses and cases of work related ill health**
- As Head of School/ Service you need to assure yourself that all your staff and students know that they need to report accidents, incidents, near misses and work-related ill health – and how to do this. This should be part of every staff member and student’s induction.
- Reporting has two elements:
 - *Reporting the accident* – staff or students report accidents/incidents etc to the nominated local person (who you as Head of School will have nominated) in their area who has access to the University’s online accident, incident, near miss and work-related ill health reporting system (Sentinel). ***If is it a serious incident/ accident the local contact also needs to call their Health and Safety Manager and Head of School/ Service as soon as possible.***
 - *Recording the accident* – the nominated person will then enter the information on Sentinel which will automatically save the report. In situations where there is no computer access (e.g. fieldwork off campus or grounds/ gardens staff) a paper record should be kept locally and reported to the University via Sentinel as soon as possible.
- **Nominating and training people to record accidents, incidents, near misses and cases of work-related ill health**
- As Head of School/ Service you need to nominate people across your area to record accidents, incidents and near misses and cases of work-related ill health using the online system. You should discuss with your Health and Safety Manager how many you need (they would be often be Health and Safety Coordinators and First Aiders) and then confirm names with Health and Safety Services.
- Training is given in the form of a PowerPoint presentation on how to report these, sent through by Health and Safety Services who sets them up on the system. This is supplemented by ongoing coaching as necessary from the Health and Safety Manager.
- **Investigating accidents, incidents, near misses and cases of work-related ill health**
- When an accident, incident, near miss or case of work-related ill health is recorded on the online system, the Health and Safety Coordinator/Officer and Health and Safety Manager will automatically receive an electronic trigger which they will review to decide on the level of investigation (if any) required. This may range from a simple couple of questions to a detailed investigation to find out what has gone wrong, and how to prevent it happening again, depending on the severity of the event.
- Sometimes the investigation will highlight that there are actions which need to be carried out; for these situations, you should ensure there is a system in place within your school/ service to support the Health and Safety Coordinator/ Officer or Manager to prioritise the actions, and monitor that they are carried out. . Examples of actions could include, changes to the local arrangements, training, revision of risk assessments, relocation of machines, repairs or reports to other parts of the University to action things outside of your control e.g, Estates. Any changes that affect people should be shared with them.
- **Significant findings from an accident, incident or near miss investigation**
- If there are any significant findings from the investigation, you should ensure that there is a system in place to communicate these findings to your staff. This should include checking that your staff know if they need to review the risk assessment and control measures to prevent the accident, incident or near miss from happening again.
- Sometimes the investigation may highlight that there is a problem which could impact on other people in similar situations across the University, and therefore a change to a University health and safety protocol may be required. If you or your staff think this is the case, please notify your Health and Safety Manager who will notify the Head of Health and Safety as soon as possible.

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- **Local inductions**
- You should assure yourself that your staff know that local inductions for new starters include how (and to whom) to report accidents, incidents and near misses. If your staff use the SDDU induction checklist (at www.sddu.leeds.ac.uk) as a basis, the health and safety information there includes accident/ incident reporting already.
- If you have people who carry out work, study or research away from the campus, you should check that they know how to report accidents, incidents and near misses, and that the details of these will be transferred onto the University's online accident / incident reporting system Sentinel as soon as possible.
- **Training for accident investigators**
- All Health and Safety Managers and Officers are trained in accident investigation and will lead the investigation for serious accidents/ incidents or near misses, or for those which are reportable to the enforcing authorities. Health and Safety Managers will provide training and support for staff involved in accident investigation.
- People reporting accidents etc (e.g. Health and Safety Coordinators) receive ongoing training briefings and coaching from Health and Safety Managers, and should know if they have any concerns about the seriousness of an event to contact the Health and Safety Manager immediately for investigation.
- **Consulting and involving staff and safety reps**
- If there is a serious incident or accident, trade union safety reps will automatically be triggered to receive information and would have the opportunity to be involved in the accident investigation process.
- 'Accident data' should be a standing item on the agenda of your School Health and Safety Committee, and the progress of any investigations updated here.
- **Records of the accident investigation**
- Health and Safety Managers and Coordinators should keep any paper records (supplementary documents) relating to the accident investigation locally and securely. On Sentinel (the online system) there is a special section for logging information about the location of documents from the accident investigation and recording actions taken (e.g. shelving broken, job logged with Estates for fixing), and this should be updated.
- **Reporting RIDDOR accidents and incidents**
- The staff you have nominated to report accidents should know that if a significant injury (e.g. broken arm) incident (e.g. fire or collapse of structure) or work-related ill health (e.g. RSI diagnosed by a GP) occurs (or something that they think sounds serious), they should call their Health and Safety Manager immediately for advice and support.
- Health and Safety Services will contact the relevant authorities to report accidents or incidents in line with the enforcement agencies' requirements (RIDDOR – Reporting of Injury Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).
- **Involving the University Communications Team**
- If there is a serious accident or incident the University Communications Team will be involved to manage press interest. You can discuss this with your Health and Safety Manager at the time.

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- **Legal enquiries or potential claims**
- If you (or any of your staff) receive any formal letters of complaint regarding an accident, incident or near miss or potential claims please do not respond to them individually, but direct them immediately to the University Insurance Officer (<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/insurance/index.htm>) and let your Health and Safety Manager know.
- **Breaching security of a restricted location**
- If security at a restriction location in your area is breached (e.g. through a burglary) your local area manager should know to log an incident report on Sentinel and inform Security.
- A restricted location will be signed as 'Restricted location' and is an area controlled for reasons of health and safety – e.g. Radiation and laser laboratories, biological and chemical laboratories, plant rooms, workshops etc – see the protocol on 'Authorisation to access restricted locations' at the health and safety website (www.leeds.ac.uk/safety) for more information.

If you have any further questions or need advice, guidance or support please contact your Health and Safety Manager.

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