
Policy Statement
The University of Dundee recognises that many accidents are preventable and so the University’s health and safety arrangements are reviewed and updated regularly to reduce the risks of accidents. However, when accidents happen it is essential that they are all reported and investigated promptly so that actions to prevent a recurrence can be implemented. Accident reporting and investigation is not for allocating blame, and the University has a no blame culture to promote accident reporting.

The University of Dundee recognizes the importance of “near miss” reporting as a vital part of its H&S management system and encourages all staff to report near misses- no matter how trivial.

Definition
An incident for Health and Safety purposes is any unplanned event where:
1. someone suffers an injury or ill health;
2. someone would have suffered an injury or ill health if the circumstances had been slightly different (often called a ‘near miss’ or ‘near hit’ or dangerous occurrence).

Arrangements
All staff and post-graduate students must report incidents using the form at https://secure.dundee.ac.uk/safety/dundeeonly/accident-reporting/. Paper copies are available for staff who do not have access to a pc.

Serious incidents must be reported immediately by telephone to Safety Services (x84104).

Staff and students working in Clinical Areas under the jurisdiction of the NHS should report incidents using the NHS incident reporting system.

The College/School/Directorate must investigate every incident in sufficient detail so that the cause can be identified allowing corrective actions to be implemented. When a
detailed investigation is carried out a copy of the investigation report must be sent to Safety Services.

Serious incidents will be investigated by Safety Services, and may be investigated by the Enforcing Authority (usually the Health and Safety Executive) and the University insurers. Full co-operation of the College/School/Directorate is expected in any investigation, and in the case of investigation by an Enforcing Authority any obstruction may give rise to enforcement action

**Supplementary documentation**
Incident Investigation Form (below)
Guidance Note on Incident Reporting and Investigation

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The primary aim of an investigation is to establish the cause of the incident. Knowing the cause of an incident will identify the appropriate action to prevent a recurrence. An investigation is not undertaken to apportion blame for the incident. This approach is unlikely to succeed in determining the cause of the incident since vital information may not be forthcoming. As much information as possible into the cause of the incident should be gathered for the following reasons:
1. to prevent a similar incident happening;
2. to report to the Enforcing Authority (usually the Health and Safety Executive) and to the University's Insurers.

Immediate action may be required to prevent further incidents before starting the investigation, eg stop an activity or withdraw equipment. Following a serious incident the area where the event occurred should be secured, and no-one allowed to enter or interfere with it. The Police, Health and Safety Executive and other University staff may have to examine the area.

If possible, take a photograph before the area is disturbed.

Consider the severity or potential severity of the incident when deciding upon the depth of the investigation. A full and detailed investigation is required for serious accidents: a less detailed one for minor accidents. The investigation must gather sufficient information to identify causes and measures to help prevent a recurrence. Only when this is achieved will the investigation be completed.
Use the following checklist list and form below as a guide to structuring investigations and reports:

1. Obtain basic facts
   - Has anything been altered since the accident/incident?
   - Names of injured/ill employees/witnesses/people first on the scene.
   - Extent of injury/ill health/damage/disruption.
   - The task that was being undertaken at the time of the accident/incident.
   - The time, place and layout of area (building, room).
   - The environmental conditions (lighting, ventilation, slippery, obstructions, weather conditions if outside).
   - Record conditions eg take photographs or make sketches.

2. Obtain witness statements
   - Name, contact details and occupation of witness.
   - What did they observe and what did they do?

3. Establish circumstances
   - What was being done at the time and what happened?
   - What was the accepted method for carrying out the task? Was it being followed? Was it adequate?
   - Was the individual competent to carry out the task? (qualifications, experience)
   - What instruction and training was given? (records available)
   - Were they aware of risk assessment for task? (how they could be harmed and the measures they should take to prevent harm)
   - Had the individuals been told to carry out the task, or were they acting on their own initiative?
   - Has something similar happened previously?

4. Immediate response to accident/incident
   - Was prompt and appropriate action taken? (eg fire fighting, first aid, spillage procedure, make area safe, restrict access, isolate electricity, warning notices, referral to Occupational Health)
5. Identify preventative measures
   - Review the risk assessment for the task (copy available).
   - What safety precautions were in place and what safety precautions should have been in place?
   - What instruction and training was given and what instruction and training should have been given?

6. Identify underlying causes
   - Was supervision and training adequate?
   - Was equipment suitable for task?
   - Was equipment maintained and tested adequately?
   - What pressures/constraints, if any, were being applied?
   - Was communication adequate between relevant parties?

7. Actions to prevent a recurrence
   - Could the outcome have been more serious?
   - What needs to be done to prevent similar accident/incident?
   - Were the safety precautions adequate but not implemented; why not?

Actions to prevent recurrence may include:
   - Better guarding or barriers.
   - Better test and maintenance schedules.
   - Revised work method.
   - Provision and use of personal protective equipment.
   - Improved supervision, training, inspection, instruction and information.
   - Better communication.
   - Review similar activities elsewhere.
Incident Investigation Form

1. Full details of incident, including photographs

2. Conclusions regarding cause of Incident

3. Recommendations to prevent similar Incident happening

Signature: ___________________________ Date completed: ___________________________

Attach additional sheets if required, and photographs