



Manchester Metropolitan University

Policy for the Reporting and Investigation of Accidents and
Incidents

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1 Introduction

Health and Safety Executive figures show that an average of 250 employees and self-employed people are killed each year as a result of incidents in the workplace. A further 150,000 sustain major injuries that mean they are absent from work for more than three days. In excess of 2.3 million cases of ill health are caused or made worse by work.

Serious incidents in higher education are relatively uncommon but when they do occur the university has a responsibility to ensure that there are systemic measures in place for safeguarding staff, students, property, university resources and reputation. This includes responsibility to learn from these accidents and incidents in order to minimise the risk of them happening again.

It is important that the universities actively support the reporting of incidents and learning from incidents as it continues to build on its safety culture. Incident and accident reporting is a fundamental tool of risk management and health and safety the aim of which is to collect information about adverse incidents, including near misses, ill health and hazards, which will help to facilitate wider organisational learning. If incidents are not properly managed, they may result in a loss of staff and student confidence in the organisation and a loss of assets.

The Vice chancellor and senior executives of the university are committed to health and safety and actively encourage the reporting of accidents, incidents and near misses. The university wants to ensure that it actively learns from accidents and incidents and prevents any further similar incidents and improves business performance by reducing unnecessary losses. The university sees that it is unacceptable to prioritise other objectives at the expense of safety.

1.1 Purpose

All incidents accidents should be reported by university staff regardless of type or source and should be reported using the accident reporting form available on the health and safety web page or via the paper hard copies available in department's areas. The accident should be reported whether actual harm has resulted and should be reported as soon as possible after the accident or incident.

Certain incidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive with statutory time limits as a requirement of the Reporting in Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). Guidance can be found in Appendix A

It is essential that the University records and investigates all work related incidents to

- Identify the causes
- Take appropriate measures to prevent re-occurrence
- Monitor statistics to identify trends

- Comply with relevant statutory requirements
- Obtain legal advice

Accidents and Incidents will be managed and investigated based on severity in order to improve safety for staff, student's visitors and contractors

The university is committed to an open and non-punitive policy when it comes to the reporting of incidents and accidents. This does not mean people are not accountable it is essential as a higher education establishment that our actions are explained and that responsibility is excepted

1.2.1 Scope

The incident reporting and investigation policy address all aspects of the reporting of accidents and incidents relating to staff, students and the public and the investigation of those accidents and incidents. The policy applies to all university staff.

1.2.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply

Relevant Person: This can vary depending upon the Departmental arrangements but could include the line manager/ academic tutor/ head of department/ lecturer.

Incident: There are many definitions and interpretations of the term 'incident'. All of the following can be classed as types of incidents:

- Accident: An incident which causes injury (whether medical attention is required or not).
- Near Miss: An Incident where no injury or damage occurred but, under different circumstances, could easily have resulted in injury or damage
- Damage: An incident resulting in damage to property or equipment
- Violence and aggressions
 - non-physical assault of university staff (including verbal abuse, attempted assaults and harassment
 - incident involving physical assault of university staff
- Ill health: Physical ill (e.g. repetitive strain injury, carpal tunnel syndrome) that is caused or made worse by activities at work or a specified disease (e.g. dermatitis, asthma) as defined in RIDDOR

- Security Incident
- Fire Incident

Work Related: Includes not only those work related incidents which occur to employees but also to incidents which occur to others (e.g. visitors, contractors members of the public etc) as a result of the Universities activities. For further information regarding whether or not groups of persons to which an incident occurs should be reported and recorded using the university incident reporting form.

1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

1.3.1 Duties within the Organisation

Executive

Executive are the most senior managerial groups within the university and consider and approve health, safety and welfare policies, and for the purposes of this policy promotes the reporting and investigation of incidents and open and non punitive approach of the university.

1.3.2 Vice Chancellor as the most senior officer of the University is responsible to the Board of Governors for securing compliance with legislative provision for safety and for achieving the objectives of the University Health and Safety Policy and that Health and Safety matters are taken seriously and are strategically important.

1.3.3 The Human Resources Director is directly responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the development, implementation and monitoring of the University Health and Safety Policies. The Human Resources Director acts as the 'Health and Safety Director' and has a key role in helping establish a positive health and safety culture. The duties relating to this are to

- Act as executive level champion for incident and accident reporting ensuring participation and co-operation of the registrar, directors, deans and senior staff
- Establish and maintain an effective central team for the provision of incident and accident advice and investigation support and guidance to managers
- To help fulfil these duties the Human Resources Director is supported by the Head of Employee Relations

1.3.4 Senior Staff including Pro-Vice Chancellors/Deans of Faculty/Registrar/Directors/

Are responsible for the health and safety of staff, students and visitors in a specified location/area. As such they have the primary responsibility for ensuring this policy is fully implemented in their area In particular they should

- That accident and incident reporting is encouraged and supported in an open and non punitive
- Systems are in place for the reporting of accidents and incidents and the monitoring of actions at the site health and safety panels

1.3.5 The Board of Governors and Estate Advisory Group

The Board of Governors Estate and Services Advisory Group is responsible to the Board of Governors for monitoring the health, safety and welfare off all staff, students and others while on university premises or undertaking activities under the control of the university. The Estates and Services Advisory Group receive progress reports by the University Health and Safety Committee

1.3.6 Health and Safety Committee

The University Health and Safety Committee ensures the development, implementation and monitoring of health, safety and welfare policies and procedures within the University. It keeps under review the measures taken to ensure the health and safety of all persons when on the University premises, and of its staff and students engaged on activities required by their work or study for the university.

1.3.7 Local Health and Safety Panels

Many other groups/committees have a role in the management of incidents. This section will need to include the role of other corporate/organisation-wide committees, e.g. the training and education group, or health and safety committee, or more locally based groups, which are responsible for ensuring the lessons learnt organisationally are introduced into the service areas/departments.

1.3.8 Heads of Departments, Head of Campus Administration, Head of Technical Services play a vital role in the local implementation of this policy and its supporting procedures and practices. Their duties in this are to:

- Ensure the policy is communicated to staff
- Support & encourage staff in the reporting of accidents and near misses

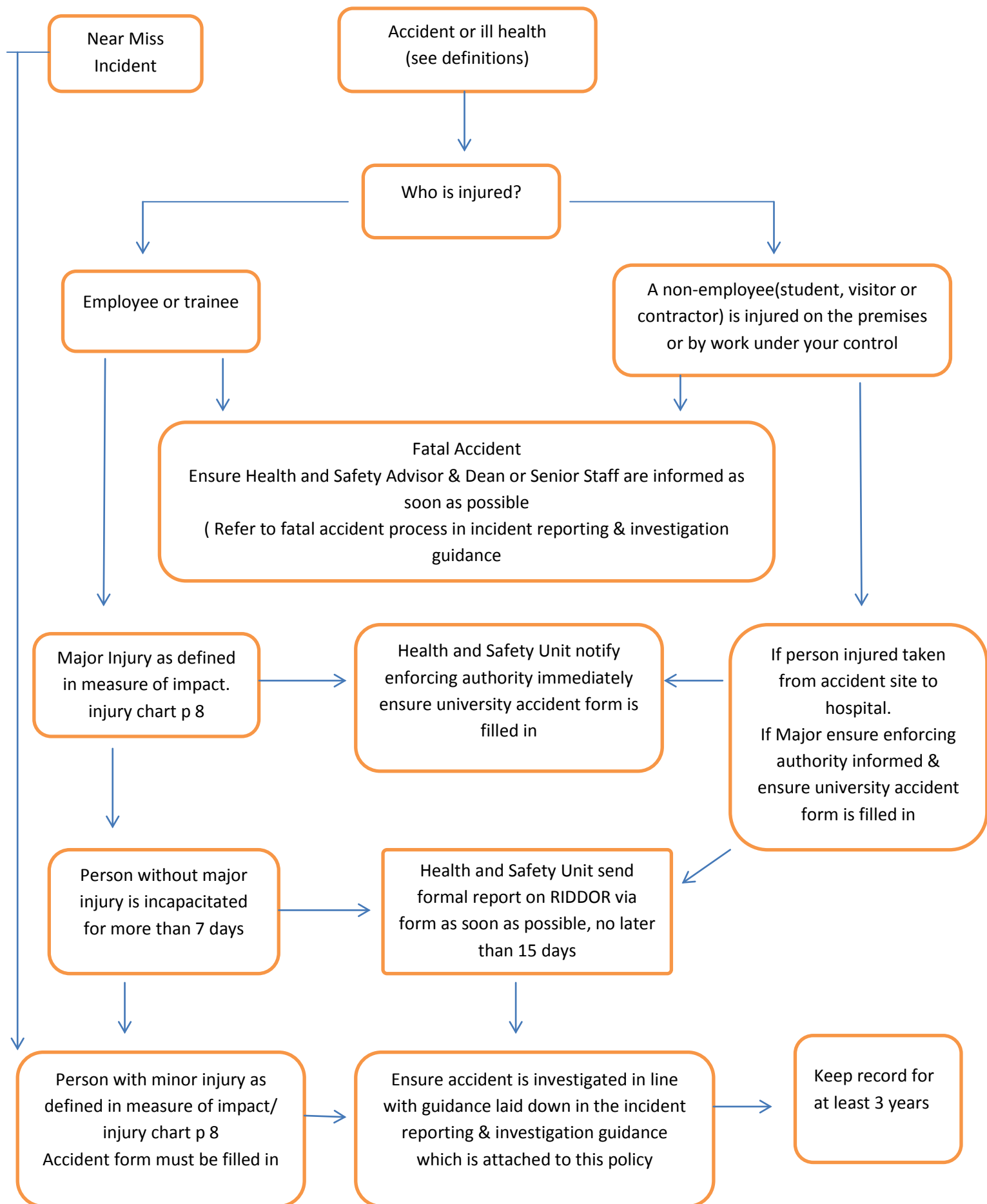
1.3.9 Health and Safety Advisor

Roles and responsibilities of the risk manager and how their involvement with the incident should be documented.

1.3.10 All Staff

Document the responsibly of all staff to report incidents in a timely manner. A cross reference may be required to the organisation's document for supporting staff for those staff that may require support following a traumatic incident.

1.4 Reporting of Accident (further information about the reporting of accidents and incidents is contained within the incident reporting and investigation guidance)



Measures of Impact/ Injury

Descriptor	Insignificant = 1	Minor = 2	Moderate = 3	Major = 4	Catastrophic = 5
Injury (physical)	Incident leading to a minor injury not requiring first aid	Minor injury requiring first aid. Short term harm < 3 days absence	Semi-permanent injury > 3 days staff absence	Major injury/ long term incapacity or disability (e.g. loss of limb) long term sickness > 4 weeks	Incident leading to death or involving a number of people seriously injured.
Level of Investigation	Low level undertaken by relevant team leader/ manager	Low level undertaken by relevant team leader/ manager	Medium level undertaken by relevant team leader/ manager and another team leader/manager	High level undertaken by relevant team leader/ manager/ the immediate manager, TU representative and support from the Health and Safety Unit	High level the Director of HR will appoint and investigation team consisting of a member of the directorate or executive supported by a senior manager and the health and safety advisor and TU representative

1.5 6 References

This section should contain the details of any reference materials reviewed in the development of the procedural document.

Listed below are some useful sources of reference material:

- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 SI 1996/1513
- Health and Safety Executive. (2008). Consulting employees on health and safety: A brief guide to the law. HSE. Available at: www.hse.gov.uk
- Health and Safety Executive. 'What is RIDDOR?' HSE website. HSE. Available at: www.hse.gov.uk
- Health and Safety Executive (2003). Work Related Death P16. Protocol and Guidance. HSE. Available at: www.hse.gov.uk
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE). (2008). Involving your workforce in health and safety: Good practice for all workplaces. HSE. Available at: www.hse.gov.uk