

Incident and Injury Investigation Procedure

Reviews and Revisions

Action	Date	Reason	Reviewer
Revision	16/05/2016	To reflect new operating requirements	Lesley Salkeld
Revision	20/02/2017	IR1 Update and RIDDOR reporting procedure	Emrys Pritchard
Revision	24/07/17	Update to procedures	Emrys Pritchard
Revision	22/02/18	Updated injury incident procedure - mapped	John Hall
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Introduction

This Procedure has been developed to detail the standards to be applied following an accident or incident at Northumbria University or involving a member of staff or student away from the University on official business or as part of their studies.

The purpose of accident/incident investigation is to identify the cause of all work related accidents injuries, near misses, ill health conditions and violence at work incidents in order to prevent and reduce the likelihood of recurrences.

Incidents are also recorded to allow the University to identify any common trends and to measure performance.

Staff are required to report all work related accidents or incidents to their manager or supervisor who will then investigate the circumstances leading to the accident or incident.

The intention is to support effective learning from incidents so that the University as a whole can make necessary arrangements to prevent reoccurrence and thereby minimise human, environment and economic loss.

This Procedure will apply in Northumbria University properties whether managed directly or indirectly by a third party. The Assistant Director - Health and Safety shall ensure the following suitable systems are in place:

- The reporting of accidents and incidents on University premises
- All incidents are investigated to a consistent standard and appropriate level
- Provide details of major incidents or dangerous occurrences at the University
- Report details of any HSE interventions on site to the University Executive
- Provide details of all incidents which involve defects relating to the infrastructure of a University owned or managed building
- Lessons are learnt effectively and appropriately to prevent a repeat of similar incidents
- Where findings are significant, learning points are shared across the University
- Risk assessments, training and procedures are reviewed as a result of the findings of any investigation
- The true costs of incidents to the University are recognised

Definitions

Accident/Incident

An unplanned event that has occurred resulting in injury or ill health.

Violence at work

Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. This includes verbal and physical abuse.

Near Miss

An event, a situation, or unsafe action not causing injury or harm, but may have caused physical contact, injury, or damage.

Work Related Ill Health

Any work related ill health condition that a member of staff claims to be, or appears to be suffering from. Examples include hand/arm vibration, work related upper limb disorders, occupational asthma and dermatitis.

Specified Injuries

All specified injuries must be reported to the Assistant Director of Health & Safety immediately or at the latest within 24 hours of the incident occurring. Examples of specified injuries are:

Fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes

Amputations

Any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight

Any crush injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs

Serious burns (including scalding) which:

- covers more than 10% of the body
- causes significant damage to the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs
- Any scalding requiring hospital treatment
- Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia

Any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space which:

- leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness
- requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours

Fatality/Crisis

A fatality or major crisis/media attention must be reported to the Assistant Director of Health and Safety immediately.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

RIDDOR is the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences. These regulations require employers, the self-employed and those in control of premises to report to the HSE specific workplace incidents.

Dangerous Occurrences

An unplanned and undesired occurrence, or a release, which has occurred and may or may not cause damage to property, equipment or the environment. Example: Equipment failure or significant release of a hazardous substance.

All dangerous occurrences must be reported to the Health & Safety Central Team immediately or at the latest within 24 hours of the incident occurring. Examples of dangerous occurrences are:

- Collapse, overturning or failure of any load bearing part of lifting equipment or machinery
- Fire or explosion
- Collapse or failure of part of scaffold or access equipment
- Dangerous contact with underground cables, gas pipes or overhead electric lines
- Dangerous failure or malfunction of any plant, machinery or equipment
- Failure in explosion during demolition
- Electrical fault in equipment or plant causing electric shock
- Dangerous collapse of a structure or excavation
- Dangerous release of hazardous substances including dusts, fumes, chemical and biological agents

When to report an incident?

The responsible person must notify the enforcing authority without delay, the incident must be reported within 10 days.

For accidents resulting in the over-seven-day incapacitation of a worker, you must notify the enforcing authority within 15 days of the incident, using the appropriate HSE online form.

Cases of occupational disease, including those associated with exposure to carcinogens, mutagens or biological agents, must be reported as soon as the responsible person receives a diagnosis, using the appropriate online form.

Over-seven-day injuries to workers: This is where an employee, or self-employed person, is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than seven consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident).

You must keep a record of any accident, occupational disease or dangerous occurrence which requires reporting under RIDDOR and any other occupational accident causing injuries that result in a worker being away from work or incapacitated for more than three consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident but including any weekends or other rest days). You do not have to report over-three-day injuries, unless the incapacitation period goes on to exceed seven days.

Accident / Incident Reporting Procedure

Scope

This Procedure applies to all parts of the University and contractors working on its behalf; it deals with the investigation and subsequent management of incidents. It outlines the investigation process to be applied to incidents that have caused injuries, diseases, dangerous occurrences, property or environmental damage, or any other indicator that would suggest a failure of the management systems within the University.

Any fatality, major injury or reportable dangerous occurrences, arising out of or in connection with work must be immediately notified to the Health and Safety Central Team by telephoning 0191 243 7512 or if out of hours contact the Assistant Director Health & Safety 07817 832654.

Injuries to members of the public or students, arising out of or in connection with work activities that result in the person being immediately taken from the scene to hospital must be reported within 24 hours to the Health & Safety Central Team on 0191 243 7512.

During normal operating hours immediate support and advice will be provided by the Health & Safety Central Team, who, if necessary, will notify the Health & Safety Executive as required by RIDDOR 2013.

In the case of a fatality occurring outside normal working hours the Campus Services Security Team will immediately contact the Health & Safety Assistant Director.

The initial responder who is attending a request for incident support or first aid assistance must ensure an Incident Report Form (IR1) is completed. Part A of the IR1 form should be completed with the injured person present at the scene of the incident or as soon as possible. The completed IR1 form must be passed to the Health and Safety Central Team within 24 hours of the incident, this can be done electronically via CRHealthandSafety@northumbria.ac.uk

Part A: Record of Incident First Notification (First Responder)

The initial priority when there has been an incident is to ensure that the situation is brought immediately under control to ensure that the incident will not escalate or will not happen again.

Part A of the IR1 form is to establish as much detail on the type of incident, location, time etc. and to record as accurately as possible, a summary of the incident details including the health and wellbeing of the injured person and seriousness of injury(s) sustained.

Once the situation is under control there are three principle aspects of the initial investigation:

- Establishing the circumstance of the incident
- Determining the causes of the incident
- Identifying appropriate actions to prevent reoccurrence

Gathering the facts: Incident Investigator

It is important to gather information about the circumstances of the incident quickly, particularly where evidence may be disturbed (such as equipment being moved) or where evidence needs to be gathered from those involved or have witnessed the incident.

It is important to ensure the area is safe before commencement of the investigation, although from an investigation perspective it may be useful to leave the area as it is found and make it safe until the investigation can begin. Obtaining photographs can be fundamental to any incident investigation.

Initial evidence can be gathered from the following sources:

- People: the person involved and witnesses
- Articles or equipment: tools, substances, plant and machinery
- Positions and relationships: of equipment, people, points of impact etc.
- Documentation: training records, risk assessments, procedures and permit to work

Articles or equipment may need to be collected and quarantined for examination. Photographs or sketches are useful in recording accurately where an incident took place. Measurements are also helpful, particularly where access may have been restricted.

Part B: Accident and Incident Investigation (Central Health and Safety Team)

Having been notified of an incident and been given the preliminary Part A notification, a decision will be made on the depth and scope of the investigation.

Investigation Guidance

The aim of the investigation is to determine the immediate and underlying causes to enable any weaknesses in health and safety system processes, procedures or controls to be identified and addressed.

The investigation should commence as soon as possible after the accident or incident to ensure that vital information and evidence is captured as accurately as possible. This may take the form of witness statements, (refer to appendix 3 example of a witness statement) photographs, video/CCTV footage, documents, etc. The gathering of such documents is a priority as they may be requested later by other third parties as disclosure documents. The level of investigation will depend on the actual or potential severity of the incident.

Level of Investigation and Notification (Appendix 1)

Non Serious / Minor Incidents – Level 3 Investigation

If the incident was non-serious or resulted in a minor injury there will be no need to secure the scene of the incident. However, if defective equipment was involved in causing the injury, the equipment must be withdrawn until it can be demonstrated the equipment is safe and fit for purpose. The IR1 form must be fully completed and should accurately identify the underlying causes of the incident. Copies of relevant documentation such as risk assessments and work instructions should be reviewed ensuring appropriate amendments are made and communicated across the University where necessary. Once the investigation is complete, the detail should be sent through to the Central Health and Safety Team as soon as possible or within 72 hours. Once the investigation has been reviewed by the Central Health and Safety Team, the incident record along with copies of relevant documents will be signed off and filed for future reference.

Serious - Level 2 Investigation

This level of investigation is in addition to Level 1 and will require detailed evaluation of the circumstances surrounding the incident and will often require an interview of the injured party and witnesses. In addition, certain documentation relevant to the accident/incident should be collated:

- Pre and post risk assessments for the work
- Safe systems of work
- Health and safety communications such as toolbox talks, safety awareness campaigns
- Training records
- Witness statements
- Photographs of the scene and equipment involved
- Relevant maintenance certificates, test certificates
- Review of historical records for past trends or similar events

Major Incidents/Fatality – Level 1 Investigation

The following actions for this level of investigation are listed below (list not exhaustive):

Make safe the area and other than for the treatment of any casualties, do not disturb the scene or remove/dismantle any equipment. Should any enforcing authorities become involved for any reason the Assistant Director of Health and Safety is to be informed immediately.

Security to secure the site and prevent entry by unauthorised persons, obtain the names of any witnesses to the incident and provide all information to the investigation team. The Assistant Director of Health and Safety will lead a detailed investigation into the circumstances of the incident and at the conclusion of the investigation, will produce an extensive report.

Unless requested by the enforcing authorities, no copies of incident reports are to be shared without the approval and consent of the Assistant Director of Health and Safety.

Once the relevant information has been gathered, the person in charge of the event/line manager is to complete Part B of the IR1 form and to pass all of the documentation to the Central Health and Safety Team

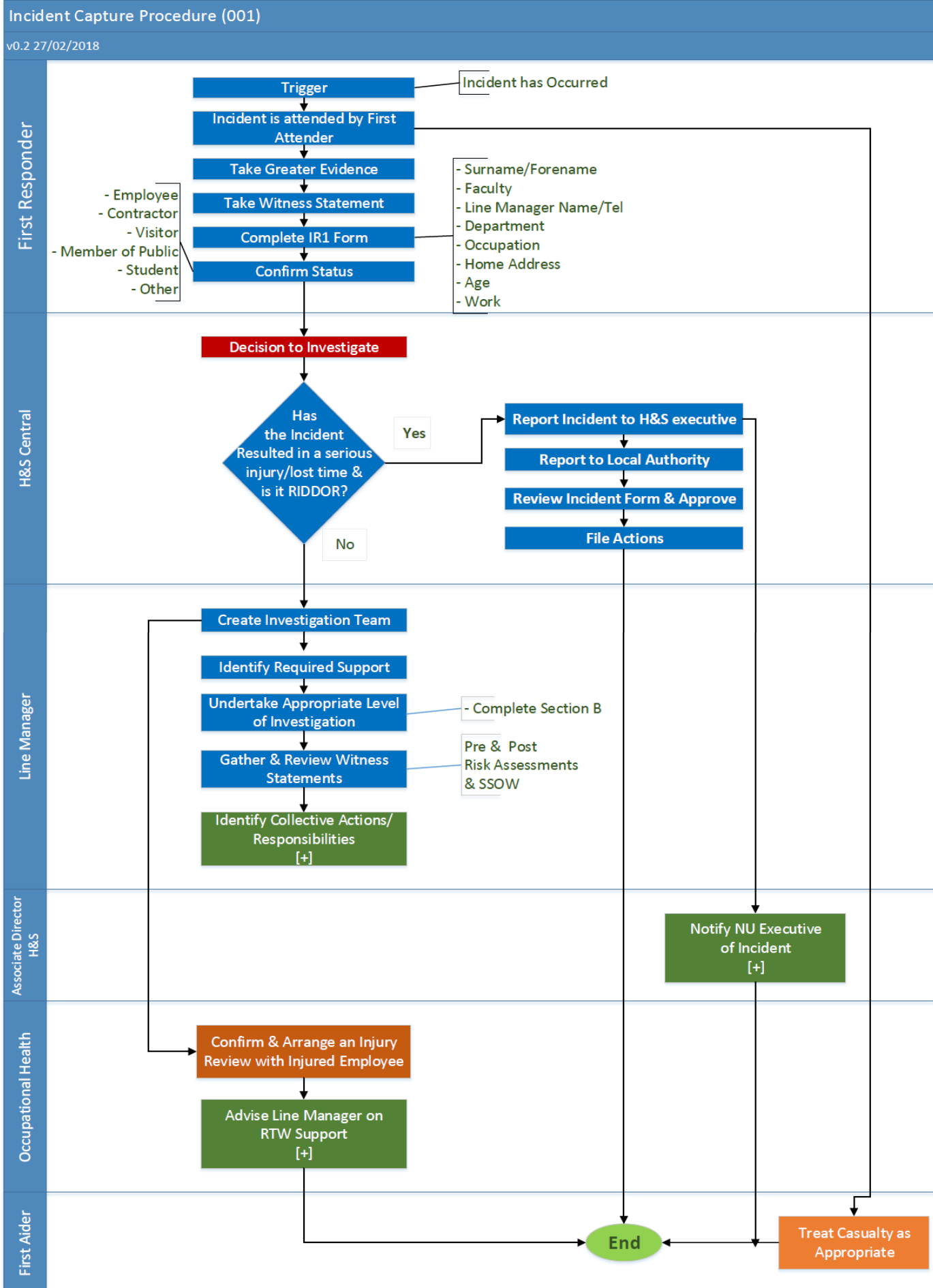
Identifying the Underlying Root Cause

It is essential to identify the underlying root causes of any incident so that action can be taken to prevent any similar recurrence. Simply dealing with the immediate causes of an incident may provide a short-term fix but in time, the underlying causes that were not addressed will allow conditions to develop where further incidents are likely, possibly with more serious consequences.

Only when the investigation is completed are the unsafe acts, conditions or violations considered. Investigations that conclude that human error was an influencing cause and that he/she should take more care is unacceptable. To underpin 'human error' there will be a number of underlying causes that created the environment in which human errors were a factor such as inadequate training and supervision, poor equipment design, lack of management, poor attitude to health and safety and the environment or any adverse conditions.

Assistance in identifying underlying causes can be found at Appendices 4a, 4b and 4c. It will be necessary to consider all three to ensure a thorough evaluation is undertaken to establish the true underlying root cause. Perform a 'Why-Why-Why analysis' to help identify contributing factors and root causes.

Incident and Injuries Procedure Mapped



Training

Line Managers are to ensure that all staff members are aware of the incident reporting procedure.

Contractors and Visitors

Contractors and visitors are to ensure they adhere to the NU incident reporting procedure.

Part C: Monitor and Review

The Central Health and Safety Team will review all incident reports, ensure the quality and effectiveness of all reports, and validate that actions are being assigned and closed within the proposed timescales.

Appendix 1.

[Investigation Severity Matrix](#)

Appendix 2.

[Investigation quick reference guide](#)

Appendix 3.

[Witness Statement Template](#)

Appendix 4.

[App4a Physical factor reference guide](#)

[App4b Human factor reference guide](#)

[App4c Organisational reference guide](#)

Appendix 5.

[APP5 UNN Risk Matrix Guide 2017_200317.docx](#)

Appendix 6.

[Link to 5 Why's guidance and template](#)

Appendix 7.

[App 7a Incident and Injury Investigation Form Part A](#)

[App 7b Incident and Injury Investigation Form Part B](#)