

Health and Safety - OHS Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure:

- a. Ensures Victoria University gathers accurate and timely data on incidents, hazards and dangerous occurrences which have caused injury or illness to any person, or had the potential to cause injury or illness to any person on any University site and in relation to activities under the control and management of the University.
- b. Provides instruction on communication regarding OHS incidents at the University.
- c. Provides practical instruction on when and how the investigation of incidents will be conducted.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies across the University and to all University employees.

Section 3 - Definitions

(3) Hazard: Something that has a potential to cause harm.

(4) Risk

(5) Incident: An incident is an event that results in or has the potential to result in harm or damage. This Procedure is to be followed in response to all injuries, near misses and exposure to hazards which pose a threat to persons, the environment or property of any type including plant and equipment.

(6) WorkSafe Notifiable Incident: An incident that has resulted in or had the potential to result in serious injury to a person/s. Refer to [HSW-G-057 Incident Reporting and Notification Guide](#).

Section 4 - Policy/Regulation

(7) [Health and Safety Policy](#)

Section 5 - Procedures

Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
Everyone at VU	<p>Take care to avoid injury or illness and to maintain safe work environments.</p> <p>Take immediate steps to minimise further injury or illness to others once a hazard has been identified or incident has taken place.</p> <p>Notify verbally the appropriate manager of an area where a hazard or incident has been experienced or witnessed. Notify in writing, using the VU OHS Incident Reporting System provided, of any hazard with potential to, or incident which has, caused injury, illness or damage to the work environment. Implement changes as instructed to improve health and safety at VU.</p>
Executives and Leaders	<p>Encourage the reporting of OHS hazards and incidents to reduce the potential for hazards to lead to injury.</p> <p>Include OHS Incident Investigation reports on OHS Consultative Committee agendas.</p> <p>Endorse and monitor the recommendations from OHS Incident Investigation reports and ensure recommendations are allocated reasonable resources for implementation.</p>
Managers and Supervisors	<p>Respond immediately after the incident occurs.</p> <p>Communicate with the HSW Team, senior leaders and any other stakeholders as soon as possible after a serious incident occurs.</p> <p>Investigate all serious incidents, i.e lost time injuries.</p> <p>Notify WorkSafe of any Notifiable Incidents .Ensure incident sites are preserved for investigation where possible. Participate in incident investigations including contribute to reports on incidents within their direct group.</p> <p>Ensure Health and Safety Representatives are made available for consultation on incident investigation recommendations.</p> <p>Implement actions recommended in the investigation report in order to prevent the potential for recurrence.</p>
Teachers, Academic Staff and Researchers	<p>Provide immediate response after the incident occurs where it involves students or staff with which they are directly involved at the time.</p> <p>Report incident to Managers, the HSW Team and any other stakeholders to ensure timely response and management of the incident.</p> <p>Participate in OHS Incident Investigations and provide any information and support requested, to the investigation.</p> <p>Implement actions recommended in the investigation report as required.</p>
HSW Team	<p>Provide advice on incident management, WorkSafe notifications and incident investigations.</p> <p>Provide advice and gather evidence, conduct interviews and consult on recommended actions during incident response and investigation.</p> <p>Assist with the preparation and circulation of incident reports taking into account the content of the reports and privacy and other legal limitations.</p> <p>Ensure wider distribution of any information which may impact on other parts of VU business and issue alerts.</p> <p>Provide statistical data and executive reports on incidents and incident investigations to OHS Consultative Committees and the Senior Leadership Team.</p> <p>Monitor the implementation of actions recommended in investigation reports as required.</p>

Part B - Procedures

(8) Incident reporting and investigation are essential to achieve a healthy and safe work, learning and research environment for all staff, students, contractors and visitors at Victoria University. Comprehensive incident recording, investigation and reporting are fundamental to ensuring that adequate preventive action is taken following an incident.

(9) All health and safety incidents must be reported both verbally to an appropriate manager and through the online Hazard/ Incident Reporting System as soon as possible. When the incident is considered serious, the notification is required immediately in person or by telephone to the appropriate manager, the HSW Team, and the Executive Dean or the organisational unit Executive followed by a written report in the Incident Reporting System.

(10) Once entered into the portal, the workplace manager will receive notification about the report.

Incident or Hazard Response

(11) All employees must take immediate action(s) to minimise safety risks to persons, plant, equipment or the

environment. This may include but is not limited to:

- a. Obtaining first aid treatment or other assistance for any injuries;
- b. Stopping work or other activities that are associated with the incident or hazard; and
- c. Assessing the site and making it safe as far as practical or limiting exposure by withdrawing from the site.

(12) Where any incident has caused serious injury to a person or posed a serious threat, the site must be preserved without disturbance as far as possible, to enable a thorough investigation to be carried out.

Internal Communication

(13) All health and safety incidents must be reported both verbally to an appropriate manager and through the online Hazard/ Incident Reporting System as soon as possible. When the incident is considered serious, the notification is required immediately in person or by telephone to the appropriate manager, the HSW Team, and the Executive Dean or the organisational unit executive followed by a written report in the Incident Reporting System.

(14) An incident / hazard report can be made by any person involved in the incident or witnessing the incident or hazard, or by a third party if requested by any person involved in the incident or who witnessed the incident or hazard. The person making the report on the Hazard/ Incident Reporting System is required to be an employee of the University so students and others should request an employee complete the online report on their behalf.

(15) Managers, Executive Deans and Executives are required to inform a member of the HSW team as well as relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team of all serious incidents particularly those that may require notification to WorkSafe, and/or an affected third party employer or business partner.

External communication including WorkSafe notifiable Incidents

(16) Where the incident is required to be notified to WorkSafe contact must be made immediately with a member of the HSW Team for advice and support before telephoning WorkSafe on 132 360. WorkSafe will require their specific incident notification form to be completed (using the reference number provided when telephoned through) and lodged within 48 hours, incidents which must be notified to WorkSafe are defined with the [HSW-G-057 Incident Reporting and Notification Guide](#).

(17) In the event of a serious incident or injury a senior manager will be required to contact any third parties who may include the parents or guardians of students, family of staff members, employers of apprentices or other stakeholders who may be impacted by the incident.

Investigations

(18) The Manager will make an initial assessment of the severity of the hazard or incident using the severity rating provided on the [HSW-G-009 Health and Safety Risk Severity Guide](#).

(19) The HSW Team have the authority to reassess the severity of an incident or hazard at any time. Both the manager and HSW Team member will take into account the actual or potential impact on individuals and the organisation of the incident or hazard.

(20) Major or high risk investigations and/or where the consequence is moderate or worse, will be led by a member of the HSW Team in accordance with the HSW Team Investigation guidance and report form. Investigations should commence within 1 business day of the incident or occurrence and be completed as soon as possible following the process provided on the guidance and report form.

(21) If the incident is classified as notifiable to WorkSafe then the investigation will be led by a member of the HSW Team.

(22) An insignificant or minor consequence incident, hazard or near miss will be investigated by the manager and a report entered into the OHS Hazard/Incident Reporting System within 7 days. Assistance can be sought from the HSW Team.

(23) It is important for all investigation teams to look for underlying causes and not simply immediate causes. Corrective actions should be considered, documented and implemented.

Status and Details

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Risk" - Risk is the likelihood of something happening that can prevent an organisation from achieving its goals and objectives. The ISO31000 defines risk as 'the effect of uncertainty on objectives'.