

Information Sheet: Safety Issue Reporting and Investigation

Purpose

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide information and guidance on the reporting and investigation of health and safety issues and should be read in conjunction with the [Reporting and Investigation Procedure](#).

Q1 Should I report all health and safety issues in the workplace?

Yes. It is important that all health and safety issues and incidents are reported the University's [online reporting system](#) as this enables the circumstances to be reviewed/investigated and corrective actions to be identified that will resolve the issue and prevent recurrence. Encourage staff, students, titleholders, volunteers or contractors to report health and safety issues.

Q2 What makes something a safety issue or incident?

A safety issue is any unsafe condition and/or unsafe act which could cause harm or place someone at risk of injury/illness. Instances of an unsafe condition include visible wires, faulty equipment, hazardous materials, insufficient protective measures for hazardous machinery, and an unsafe working environment.

Examples of an unsafe act involve a disregard for controls detailed in a risk assessment, neglecting to clean up a spill, and not informing others of a hazardous situation that may cause injury or illness due to inadequate information, instruction, or training.

An incident is an occurrence arising out of, or in the course of, work that could or does result in injury or ill health and includes a near miss. A near miss is an incident where no injury or ill health occurs but has the potential to do so.

Q3 Who should I notify in the event of an incident or safety issue?

Notify your immediate supervisor or person in control of the activity/area if it relates to an activity you are undertaking or is in your area of work. If your supervisor/manager or person in control of the area is not available and the safety issue is urgent, you should contact the [HSW Team](#).

You or your supervisor should then report the issue the University's [online reporting system](#).

Q4 What should I do if the safety issue or incident is an immediate threat to health or safety?

Everyone is to be instructed to cease the activity until the manager/supervisor or person in control of the activity/area has had the opportunity to review the situation and provide further direction.

Q5 How do I report an incident/safety issue?

You can lodge a report of the incident/safety issue through the University's [online reporting system](#) which is accessible online or via the app.

Q6 What should I do if someone is injured due to an incident/safety issue?

The first step is to ensure the person involved receives appropriate medical attention, and to ensure the area is safe for others. If the incident/issue is in your area of work, this should occur in consultation with the manager/supervisor or person in control of the activity/area.

Q7 What can I expect after I have reported an incident/safety issue?

After you have reported an incident/safety issue, a member of the [HSW Team](#) will contact you to obtain all the information needed to review the issue. They will consult with others as required to investigate the matter and identify any corrective actions required to resolve the issue and prevent a recurrence. Any assigned corrective actions will be monitored by the HSW Team to completion.

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Q8 What should I do if there is a serious incident in my area after hours?

If a serious incident or an incident that you suspect may have serious consequences has occurred after hours (i.e. between 7 pm and 7 am, weekends and public holidays):

1. take any immediate action required to make the area safe
2. report the incident to Security (who will contact the [HSW Team](#))
3. do not disturb the incident site
4. enter the details of the incident into the University's [online reporting system](#).

Q9 Who is responsible for internal HSW investigations?

Internal HSW investigations are conducted by the [HSW Team](#) in consultation with (where relevant), the manager/supervisor or person(s) in control of the area/activity, and the health and safety representatives (HSRs).

Q10 When does SafeWork SA get involved?

SafeWork SA are the state workplace health and safety regulator, and they may become involved in the investigation of a safety issue or incident. This may arise from the [HSW Team](#) reporting a notifiable incident to SafeWork SA, or in response to a complaint made directly to SafeWork SA (see page 5 of the [Reporting and Investigation Procedure](#) for the definition of a notifiable incident). A member of the [HSW Team](#) will arrange to accompany the SafeWork SA inspector to provide assistance to the manager/supervisor/person in control of the area/activity.

Q11 In the event of SafeWork SA being involved, what can a Safework SA inspector do on site?

A Safework SA inspector has the right to:

- seek and remove documents or other items
- restrict access or close areas
- seize, restrict access or lock out equipment
- interview individuals
- issue Improvement and/or Prohibition Notices.

Q12 What should I do if I have an unannounced visit from SafeWork SA or they contact me to ask questions?

Comply with the inspector, allow them to enter the premises, answer their questions and follow their instructions. Notify your manager/supervisor and contact the [HSW Team](#) who will attend on site or liaise with the inspector. It is an offence under the [Work Health and Safety \(WHS\) Act 2012 \(SA\)](#) to hinder the investigations of a SafeWork SA inspector in any way. They will provide proof of identity when attending on site.

Q13 What type of questions will SafeWork SA ask?

The inspector may ask questions in relation to:

- how the internal review/investigation of the matter is being conducted, what (if any) conclusions were drawn, and what corrective actions are being pursued
- the hazards associated with the task/activity, how they were risk assessed, and what controls were implemented
- the level of instruction and training required for the task/activity
- the maintenance of associated equipment.

Written evidence is likely to be requested.

Q14 Where do I obtain further information on safety reporting and investigation?

Refer to the [Reporting and Investigation Procedure](#) for detailed information on the reporting and investigation of safety issues.

For further information or advice, contact the [HSW Team](#).

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