

University of Cambridge

Guidance Notes for Completing University Accident/Incident Online Reports

Please note, paper forms are no longer accepted. Instead please use the AssessNET reporting software

For Departmental Safety Officers (DSOs) and Departmental Administrators (DAs)

General Points

The Safety Office (SO) has a list of all DSOs, DAs and relevant others listed as '**Registered Users**' on AssessNET – the University's online accident/incident reporting software.

If you are new in post/moving to or from another department, please inform the SO. If you are already a 'Registered User', we will make the relevant changes to your existing setting. If you are a new user, we will provide you with an email to activate your login account into the MAIN SYSTEM so you can report, assess, investigate and complete incidents reported to your Department. Completed incident reports will be electronically 'signed off' by the Accident/Incident Manager in the SO.

When the DSO is on leave or away for any reason, departments must have systems in place to ensure accident reports are completed by someone who has been formally designated to do so, e.g. a DA or Head of Department. This is why AssessNET has been configured to have at least two people named for each Department and why it is also important to keep these contacts up to date.

When an accident/incident occurs, the DSO/DA will receive AssessNET email alerts when a report has been submitted via the Portal. This will prompt you to login into the main system and carry out tasks. Your tasks will include checking all the information is correct, answering the short section of ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS and adding your name as the record owner once all sections within the form are complete.

Sometimes the Involved/Injured Person (IP) is based in a different University department from the one where the accident occurred e.g. an Estates Division (ED) maintenance person could be working in department X. Similarly, the IP may be a contractor or could work for another organisation, but was attending a University premises when the accident/incident occurred. It is therefore important to make it clear which department, organisation, contractor, agency etc. the IP works for, as well as the location of the incident. If the incident occurred on a **site**, rather than in a specific department, then let the SO know the site and explain why you are reporting the incident.

Follow-up / Investigations / Preventing Recurrence

Departments should investigate accidents and incidents in the department where the incident occurred. This is normally carried out by the person responsible for the IP and/or the DSO. If the incident occurred in a different place to the IP's normal place of work, the home and host departments may need to discuss and agree actions for follow up where necessary. Please note:

- The degree of effort and/or time expended on this should be in proportion to the magnitude of the event or the potential for harm
- As a result of an investigation, certain actions may need to be taken by the home and/or host department
- After an accident/incident has occurred, risk assessments and associated standard operating procedures should be reviewed and if necessary revised
- Periodic review of accident reports (e.g. rolling yearly or biennial periods) at safety and/or management committees should identify departmental trends, e.g. any issues regarding risk assessment, training needs, IP supervision, awareness and comprehension
- Checks need to be made to ensure that effective control measures are in place to prevent recurrence. For example, the review may show that new or refresher training is required, or that equipment needs to be maintained, or that local risk assessments were not followed if the IP was not located in their normal place of work etc.

All others who wish to report incidents

Non-registered users (called 'Portal Users') can report an incident via the AssessNET PORTAL. It can be accessed by one of two means. The SO website (accessible to anyone with a University account, formerly known as 'Raven') has a link to [the PORTAL](https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and-) (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and->

[incidents/report-accident/incident](#)) Alternatively, the Portal User can use a 2D barcode featured on departmental incident reporting posters and leaflets. A smartphone can then be used to reach the PORTAL incident reporting webpage.

PERSON REPORTING THE INCIDENT

Anyone involved with an incident or accident (e.g. injured/involved party (IP), witness, first aider) can initiate the report by submitting a report through the PORTAL.

Check that all the information provided is clear, with technical/chemical words spelt in full. Doing so will improve understanding and reduce delays in assessing the incident.

If the person reporting the incident does not have the details of the IP, for example, a first aider assisting a member of the public, there is the ability to select 'Details Unavailable'. However, if the event is assessed by the SO to be reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) a full home address, including the age of the IP will be required for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) report.

Please always provide accurate and sufficient information about the incident in a clear and succinct format so that the DSO/DA/SO can understand what has occurred.

THE INVOLVED/INJURED PERSON (IP)

The IP can be anyone on University premises or elsewhere who is affected, eg student, member of staff, visiting academic, contractor, agency staff or member of the public.

Number of days IP absent or unable to do their normal work (i.e. not just duration of absence from work) should be recorded by selecting from the drop down menu in AssessNET. If weekends or holidays fall within the period, it will be necessary to make an estimation as to whether, if it had been a work day, the IP would have been able to do their normal work, even if the IP would not normally work at such times. If you are unsure, report the full duration that the IP was not at work.

RIDDOR is the law that requires employers to report and keep records of serious injuries, work-related deaths, diseases and dangerous occurrences. The SO reports these to the HSE, not Departments.

From 6 April 2012, the period of incapacitation for reporting to HSE increased to '**more than 7 consecutive days**'.

Records – How long should records be kept?

All related information such as photographs, statements, and correspondence should be kept securely within the department for **at least three years** and should also be updated as attachments within the online report. Personal injury claims can be brought for up to six years after the accident (Limitations Act) so some insurance companies advise keeping these records for **at least seven years**.

There are certain accidents/incidents that result in illness developing many years later, e.g. asbestos exposure. Such records must be kept for **at least 40 years**, in line with Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) requirements for keeping individual health surveillance records.

Records relating to children should be kept until they reach their 21st birthday as they are able to bring a claim up to three years after reaching the age of 18.

SPECIAL CASES

Release of GM material

Certain accidents and incidents involving the release of genetically modified (GM) material must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Before doing so, please inform your Departmental Biological Safety Officer (DBSO) who should seek advice from the School Safety Officer and/or the University SO. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the registered GM Centre (normally the department) to report such incidents to the HSE. In rare cases, release of GM material may need to be reported to other authorities, such as Defra.

Accidents involving ionising radiation or laser/optical radiation

In addition to the normal reporting requirements outlined in this guidance, any release or exposure (other than those identified and assessed as part of normal work) must be reported directly to the Radiation

Protection Adviser (RPA) as soon as possible by phone or email. Similarly any suspected laser or other optical overexposures must be reported directly to the Laser Protection Adviser (LPA) as soon as possible.

Further information

There is further information and training material on the Safety Office website:

- For Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) see: <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and-incidents/frequently-asked-questions>
- Accident/Incident Information leaflets 1 and 2: '*Reporting Categories*' (HSD117E) and '*How to Report Them*' (HSD118E): <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and-incidents/publications>
- Training manuals: '*AssessNet Training Manual for Registered Users (DSOs and DAs)*' (HSD092E) and '*Portal Users Step-by-Step Guide For Using AssessNet*' (HSD093E). See: <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and-incidents/publications>