

Accident Investigation Guidance

Why investigate accidents?

- To identify the cause;
- To identify any failures in existing systems and procedures;
- To obtain information required for notification to Insurers;
- To prepare for litigation and assist in any potential defence;
- To obtain information required to implement corrective actions and prevent any re-occurrence.

When does the investigation process begin?

- As soon as the incident occurs, early investigation is critical because:
 - Evidence can be time critical;
 - Witnesses could leave;
 - Witnesses change their minds;
 - Witnesses forget;
 - Documents or equipment could be lost or destroyed.

What does the investigation involve?

- Gathering evidence from the injured person and any witnesses;
- Carrying out an immediate site inspection and taking photographs of the area;
- Checking and retaining any relevant CCTV footage;
- Completing reports;
- Gathering documents.

Important points to the investigation:

- Ensure information is accurate and confine accident reporting to the facts;
- Conclude how and why accident happened – immediate and root causes noted;
- Recommend action to prevent reoccurrence (only if necessary, relevant and realistic);

Accident Investigation Documentation

Pre-action Protocol Disclosure Documents

Please note the documents list is not exhaustive as each claim will be different. It should therefore be used as a guide only. The Insurance Office will assist in identifying which documents are required for disclosure.

- Accident book entry
- First aider report
- Surgery record
- Foreman/supervisor accident report
- Safety representative accident report
- RIDDOR report to HSE
- Other communication between defendant and HSE
- Minutes of Health & Safety Committee meetings where accident/matter considered
- Report to DSS
- Documents listed above relative to any previous accident/matter of this nature
- Pre-accident risk assessment
- Post-accident risk assessment
- Training records
- Inspection records for the accident location
- Maintenance records for the accident location
- Complaint records for the accident location
- Equipment inspection/maintenance/safety records
- Photographs and CCTV footage
- Any other relevant documentation

For further information, please contact:
Insurance Office: Insurance@admin.ox.ac.uk