Name of Procedures	Incident and Hazard Reporting, Investigation and Corrective Actions Procedure
Description of Procedures	The procedure outlines the processes that are associated with investigating or reviewing reports of incidents and hazards. It also supports the University to develop treatments (risk controls) to manage these risks and prevent recurrence.
☑ New procedures	☐ Revision
Description of Revision	The procedure replaces the ACU Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation Guidelines and is aligned with **riskware**, ACU's incident and hazard reporting system and database introduced in June 2016.

Original Effective Date	27 June 2017
Review Due Date	April 2022
Revision Effective Date	
Approval Date	
References	ACU Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy ACU WHS Risk Management Procedure ACU WHS Risk Management Form **riskware** **riskware** Quick Reference User Guides ACU WHS Risk Management Form for Practical Activities/Research ACU Critical Incident Management Policy Emergency and Safety Information, ACU website

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1   Background

ACU is committed to complying with its legal obligations associated with maintaining a register of injuries, and the effective management of reported incidents, illnesses and hazards that occur within the working and learning environment.

ACU's staff members, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors participate and contribute to the identification and management of work health and safety (**WHS**) risks within the working and learning environment. This is through reporting incidents and hazards in **riskware**, and for relevant supervisors or other officers of the University the investigation or review of reports logged in **riskware**, and the development of Action Plans and associated treatments or corrective actions.

The University notifies state work health and safety regulators (State WHS Regulators) about notifiable incidents (serious and dangerous incidents, and fatalities). Injury notifications are also reported to State WHS Regulators via ACU's workers' compensation insurers.

2   Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors participate and contribute to the identification and management of incidents and hazards, and managing associated risks.

Reports of incidents and hazards in **riskware** are investigated or assessed by nominated supervisors or other relevant University staff, who are accountable for developing and recording Action Plans and associated treatments or corrective actions to manage these risks.

Members of ACU's community should familiarise themselves with their responsibilities, which are outlined in more detail below.

2.1 Staff Members, Students, Volunteers, Visitors and Contractors

All members of the ACU community are actively involved in managing risk and log reports of incidents and hazards, and may log reports on behalf of other people. The report is entered into a system that the University has implemented, called **riskware**.

(a) Where a staff member makes the report about incidents and hazards, the report is notified to the nominated supervisor who undertakes the action of developing and recording Action Plans and associated treatments or corrective actions to manage the identified risks.

(b) Where a staff member makes the report on behalf of another staff member, it is important that the notification is reassigned to the nominated supervisor of the affected person.

(c) Where a staff member makes the report on behalf of a student, volunteer or visitor, the staff member making the report should consult with their nominated supervisor in relation to whom the report should be reassigned for action. Depending on the nature and location of the incident or hazard, this may be a relevant Faculty or School staff member, or the relevant staff member from the Students, Learning and Teaching Portfolio, or the relevant State Facilities Manager. If it is not clear, the report can instead be assigned to the default supervisory name 'ACU Management' in **riskware** so that a notification is sent to Human Resources who can reassign the notification to the relevant staff member.

(d) Where a student makes the report about incidents and hazards, or on behalf of another student, the report will be assigned to the relevant staff member for action. Depending on the nature and location of the incident or hazard, this may be a relevant Faculty or School staff member, or the relevant staff member from the Students, Learning and Teaching Portfolio, or the relevant State Facilities Manager. If it is not clear, the report can instead be assigned to the default supervisory name 'ACU Management' in riskware so that a notification is sent to Human Resources who can reassign the report to a relevant staff member.

(e) Where a contractor makes the report about incidents and hazards, the report will be assigned to the relevant organisational unit manager or supervisor where the contractor is conducting their work, who will consult with the relevant contractor/s about the treatments that are developed to manage the identified risk or risks.

2.2 Nominated Supervisors and other relevant staff

Nominated supervisors and other relevant staff are responsible for ensuring the management of WHS risks.

In the context of this procedure, nominated supervisors and other relevant staff are responsible for:

- reviewing and investigating reports of incidents and hazards;
- developing and recording Action Plans;
- implementing risk treatments (Control Measures and/or Corrective Actions); and
- sharing and applying learnings within their work unit to mitigate similar future risks.

2.2.1 Determining who is to take action on reports of incidents and hazards

(a) Where the report is made by a staff member, the staff member's nominated supervisor is responsible for taking action in response to the report.

(b) Where the report is made by a staff member on behalf of another staff member, the affected staff member's nominated supervisor is responsible for taking action in response to the report. A nominated supervisor who receives a notification from one of their staff on behalf of another staff member reassigns the report to the affected staff member's nominated supervisor.

(c) Where the report is made by a staff member on behalf of a student, volunteer or visitor, the nominated supervisor determines other relevant staff to whom the report should be assigned for action. Depending on the nature and location of the incident or hazard, this may be a relevant Faculty or School staff member, or the relevant staff member from the Teaching and Learning Portfolio, or the relevant State Facilities Manager. If it is not clear, the report can be assigned to the default supervisory name 'ACU Management' in **riskware** so that it is notified to Human Resources who can reassign the notification to the relevant staff member.

(d) Where the report is made by a student in their own name or on behalf of another student, the staff member who is notified assigns the report to other relevant staff for action. Depending on the nature and location of the incident or hazard, this may be a relevant Faculty or School staff member, or the relevant staff member from the Teaching and Learning Portfolio, or the relevant State Facilities Manager. If it is not clear, the report can be assigned to the default supervisory name 'ACU Management' in **riskware** so that Human Resources who can reassign the report to the relevant staff member.

(e) Where the report is made by a contractor, the organisational unit manager or supervisor where the contractor is conducting their work is responsible for taking action in response to the report in consultation with the relevant contractor.

2.2.2 Actions to be taken on reports of incidents and hazards

(a) Review and investigate

The nominated supervisor or other relevant staff member reviews the report, investigates the incident or hazard, and records the investigation in **riskware** within the Investigation tab.

The nominated supervisor or other relevant staff member assesses the risk and assigns a Risk Rating, which will guide the selection of risk treatments (Control Measures and/or Corrective Actions) to reduce the risk of injury, property damage and/or environmental damage.

The scope of an incident investigation is relative to the nature of the incident and the Risk Rating, and would typically be broadened in the case of a high Risk Rating.

Some incident investigations may need to be conducted in consultation with subject matter experts such as local facilities management staff, a staff member with relevant expertise, and/or members of the Work Health & Safety team in Human Resources.

The nominated supervisor or other relevant staff member engages other staff members as needed in assessing risk and developing and implementing Action Plans.

See the Appendix to this procedure for more information about the factors that should be considered during an incident investigation.

(b) Develop and record an Action Plan

The nominated supervisor uses the information gained in the review or investigation to identify risk treatments (Control Measures and/or Corrective Actions), and records these in an Action Plan in **riskware** within the Action Planning tab.

As part of developing the Action Plan, the nominated supervisor or other relevant staff member also reviews any relevant existing risk treatments, to determine whether these have effectively managed the risk.

The selection of effective Control Measures and/or Corrective Actions is made relative to the Risk Rating. The nominated supervisor or other relevant staff member also refers to the Hierarchy of Control (in the riskware Action Planning tab) when considering options for managing risk.

In cases of an incident involving illness or injury that affects a staff member's capacity to perform their role, the nominated supervisor consults with Human Resources to determine the actions to be taken.

riskware Quick Reference Guides are available on the ACU Human Resources website:

> Quick Reference Guide for developing Action Plan for an Incident
> Quick Reference Guide for developing Action Plan for a Hazard

(c) Implement risk treatments (Control Measures and/or Corrective Actions)

The nominated supervisor or other relevant staff member implements the risk treatments identified in the Action Plan. A treatment is assigned to another manager when the treatment can only be implemented by the manager of that organisational unit, after consultation with that manager and agreement on timing and other considerations for implementation.

(d) Share and apply learnings as appropriate

The nominated supervisor or other relevant staff member identifies learnings from the investigation and the implementation of risk treatments that can be applied within the organisational unit to mitigate similar risks in future.

2.3 First Aid Officers

Where an ACU First Aid Officer responds to an incident that requires medical attention, the First Aid Officer will support the affected staff member or student to make a report of the incident or injury within **riskware**. A First Aid Officer can make a report on behalf of a visitor, volunteer or contractor.

In the case of an injured staff member, the First Aid Officer advises the staff member to contact Human Resources in relation to injury management and/or potential workers' compensation.

First Aid Officers may recommend improvements to the way in which the University manages its first aid response.

2.4 WHS Committees and Health and Safety Representatives

Each campus WHS Committee conducts a review of incident and hazard reports and associated treatments at its quarterly meetings to assist the University to assess and manage risk. The Committee considers whether the Corrective Actions taken in response to incidents could be applied more broadly at the local campus or across all. Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) may be consulted by staff and supervisors about incidents and hazards, and associated treatments, affecting their work group.

2.5 Officers of the University (Members of the Senior Executive, the Executive, Senior Management and Management)

Officers of the University are responsible for ensuring that appropriate resources are allocated to manage WHS risks within the workplace and that learnings from incidents and hazards are

applied to reduce the risk of their recurrence. Officers are responsible for ensuring that they are knowledgeable about hazards and risks, including those identified through reports of incidents and hazards, and for providing oversight to ensure that risks are eliminated and/or managed in their respective portfolio, organisational area or unit.

2.6 Associate Vice-Chancellors and Campus Deans

The Associate Vice-Chancellor or Campus Dean reviews the campus WHS Risk Register to ensure that any significant risk, including WHS risks identified through incident and hazard reports, are being effectively managed on their campus and that risk treatments and controls are reviewed in response to incident and hazard reports and in response to any changes to the working and learning environment.

2.7 Human Resources

Human Resources:

(a) provides advice to managers and staff about processes for identifying hazards and managing risk.

(b) provides advice to organisational units about reviewing and investigating incidents and hazards within riskware.

(c) in the case of an incident classified as Serious (injury or illness), liaises with Properties and Facilities and other organisational units upon notification of the incident to ensure that the relevant WHS State Regulator is notified. Human Resources participates in investigation meetings, which may be conducted by the WHS State Regulator, and works with organisational units to preserve the site until the it is reopened by the WHS State Regulator.

(d) provides procedural guidance on claims for workers' compensation and works with managers and staff to manage periods of absence, consideration of alternative duties, and facilitation of return to work.

3 Managing the Initial Response to Serious Incidents

In the event of an emergency, the health and safety of any affected person is the overriding priority. First Aid Officers in attendance should remain with any affected people until emergency services support arrives. A report of an incident will be made once it is determined that everyone is safe.

The WHS State Regulators classify a range of incidents as immediately reportable to the Regulator. These reportable incidents fall with a classification of Serious Incidents, including Dangerous Incidents or fatalities.

If a Serious Incident occurs:

- emergency services is to be contacted by dialling 000; and
- the ACU National Security Centre is to be contacted on extension 8888 or 1300 729 453.

The ACU National Security Centre sends an alert to the Incident Response Group. The Incident Lead then manages the incident in accordance with the Critical Incident Management Policy. Human Resources is alerted, notifies the WHS State Regulator, and acts as the contact with the Regulator.

First Aid support can be activated through the SafeZone App or the ACU National Security Centre on extension 8888 or 1300 729 453 at the time of reporting the Serious Incident.

The site of the incident is secured and preserved, so that the WHS State Regulator can conduct an investigation.

4 Records of Incidents and Investigations

Records of all incident reports, investigations, and associated Action Plans will be maintained. More comprehensive investigation reports are completed whenever a Serious or Critical Incident occurs. These reports are also uploaded into the relevant Action Plan in **riskware**.

5   Definitions

Term	Explanation
Action Plans	Action Plans are documented within ACU's incident and hazard reporting database, **riskware**. An Action Plan would typically include treatments (controls/corrective actions) and timelines for managing the risks which are associated with reports of incidents or hazards.
Control Measures	Control measures include actions that can be taken to reduce the potential of exposure to the hazard, or the **control measure** could be to remove the hazard or to reduce the likelihood of the risk of the exposure to that hazard being realised.
Corrective Actions	Corrective action (inclusive of preventive action) is an action taken to correct a health and safety related problem or potential problem, and to prevent, as far as it is practical, a recurrence.
Hazard	A hazard is anything within the working and learning environment that has the potential to harm people, property or the environment.
Hierarchy of Control	The Hierarchy of Control provides a basic guide for controlling hazards in the workplace. The hierarchy should be referenced whenever treatments are developed.
Injury	Any physical or mental damage to the body caused by exposure to a hazard.
Members of the Senior Executive, Executive, Senior Management and Management	As defined by the University's Delegation of Authority Policy and Register
Notifiable incident	An notifiable incident is any of the following which is required to be notified to the relevant statutory authority within a specified timeframe: a) the death of a person, or b) a serious injury or illness of a person, or c) a dangerous incident.
Officers	People who make decisions, or participate in making decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of a business or undertaking. It is a requirement of Health and Safety legislation that any officer of an organisation must exercise due diligence to ensure that the organisation complies with its health and safety duties. This mean they must ensure that the organisation has appropriate systems of work in place and they must actively monitor and evaluate health and safety management within the organisation.
Risk Rating	Rates the level of risk of the incident or hazard taking into consideration the possible *consequences* of someone being exposed to an incident and the *likelihood* of this occurring
Serious injury or illness	An injury or illness requiring the person to have immediate treatment as an inpatient in hospital. Serious incidents, as defined by WHS regulators, also include amputations, serious burns, an, head or eye injuries. Immediate treatment for: • The separation of the person's skin from the underlying tissue • a spinal injury • the loss of a bodily function • serious lacerations • medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance a prescribed serious illness
Treatments	Implement both existing and future treatments in order to prevent and/or mitigate the risk.
Workplace incidents	Any incident resulting in a work injury, work caused illness or dangerous event.
Work Illness	An illness or exacerbation of an illness to which work, a workplace, a workplace activity or specified high risk plant was a significant contributing factor.

Appendix A: Investigations of Incidents or 'Near Miss' Checklist

Use this checklist to structure investigations and document the review within **riskware**. It is intended only as a guide.

Be guided by the significance of the incident when deciding how deeply to investigate it. You should consider: the actual outcomes, the worst case scenario that could have resulted from the incident and whether a similar incident is likely to occur. As a 'rule of thumb', you should put more effort into investigations that are more significant, or could have had serious consequences.

Establish...

The Facts

- Names of injured/ill employees/witnesses/people early on the scene
- Condition of any equipment
- Any chemicals /substances in use or present
- Layout of area
- Place, time, conditions
- Extent of any injury/ill health/damage/disruption
- Make use of camera, sketches, measurement to record the undisturbed scene
- Consider taking statements from those who were witnesses – statements should be signed by witnesses below the declaration 'I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true'

What was happening?

What was being done at the time and what happened?

- Immediate causes
- Events leading up to the incident
- Any evidence linking case of ill health to work
- Competence, e.g. what instructions and training were given before the event and how much experience in the job did the people involved (including Nominated Supervisors) have? Were staff members, students, contractors or visitors aware of the dangers associated with the activity?
- What were the established methods of carrying out the task? Were they adequate? Were they being followed?
- Behaviour and actions of individuals
- Role of Nominated supervisors: Had those involved in the incident been told to carry out the particular task/activity or were they acting on their own initiative?
- What was the worst that could have happened?
- Has something similar happened before?
- Could it happen again?

The best way to do it

- How should the job have been done?
- How was it actually done?
- Review any risk assessments and procedures for the activity.
- What precautions should have been in force?
- What training should those carrying out the activity have received?
- What precautions were actually taken? Compare them with those which should have been taken. What training was actually given? Compare it with training which should have been given.

What a More Effective Response 'looks like?'

Was prompt and appropriate action taken, such as making the area safe (e.g. electrical isolation, suitable fire-fighting, effective first aid responses and applying correct spillage procedures) and were any continuing risks effective dealt with?

How can our responses be improved?

Why did it occur? (Contributing Factors)

These might include:

- Management or supervision failure
- Lack of competence
- Inadequate training
- Whether there were short comings in original design of equipment or facilities, or whether human error (such as rushing to a meeting) or environmental conditions were Contributing Factors
- A failure to comply with/supervise safe work instructions
- Absence of a system for maintenance

How to Avoid a Reoccurrence

When making decisions about the right course of action: think whether the outcome could have been more serious and what prevented this from happening.

Reappraise the precautions derived from the risk assessment - do they satisfy the intentions of ACU's WHS&W Policy and do they meet the recommendations of any guidelines?

If the intended precautions appear adequate but they were not fully implemented, why was this? What needs to be done to ensure necessary precautions are taken in the future?

Actions to prevent a recurrence might include

- assess and manage risks
- improve physical safeguards
- introduce better test and maintenance arrangements
- improve safe work methods
- provide and use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- make changes to supervision and training arrangements
- review similar dangers elsewhere in the University
- review procedures involving outside contractors
- improve inspection systems