Organisational arrangements: incident investigation

1.0 Introduction

It is a legal requirement on a person injured at work to record their injury and on employers to investigate the circumstances. It is essential that the causes of incidents and near misses are identified in order that appropriate action is taken to prevent a recurrence in line with the objectives set out in the University's health and safety policy statement of intent.

2.0 Incident Investigation

All staff and students are required to complete an online Accident/Incident Report Form: myintranet.westminster.ac.uk/my-tools/emergency/report-an-incident if they suffer an injury, near miss, work-related illness or dangerous occurrence while on University premises or engaged on University business off campus. If the injured/ ill person cannot complete the form themselves, someone else should do this on their behalf (usually a first aider). Additionally, if any damage or loss (not physical injury) has arisen as a result of an incident, this too needs reporting. Contractors and visitors are also required to report all above incidents and hard copy accident forms are available for visitors and contractors use at reception areas, as required.

The SHW Team must be notified immediately of the following, initially by calling (internal) extension 65107 from any internal phone:

- Incidents which result in a University employee or self-employed person dying, suffering a major injury, or being away from work or unable to do their normal duties for more than seven consecutive days (not counting the day of the incident).
- Incidents which result in a person not at work (eg student, member of the public) suffering an injury and being taken to hospital.
- A University employee suffering a specified work-related disease.
- One of the specified dangerous occurrences (please see links below). These do not necessarily result in injury, but have the potential to do significant harm.

An Accident/Incident Report Form should also be completed in the normal way.

First aiders must also use the Accident/Incident Report Form to record any assistance they provide.

Where an investigation is required, the SHW Team may allocate the incident to the person responsible for supervising the member of staff, the student or (in respect of a visitor) the activity. An investigation is to be completed in accordance with the University's investigation flowchart in ***Appendix 1***. The SHW Team (only) is responsible for reporting certain incidents to the Health and Safety Executive, as required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013, where the incident arises "out of or in connection with work".

3.0 Non-conformities

The University of Westminster operates in a “no-blame culture” and incident investigations should seek to identify non-conformities, corrective actions and preventive actions without prejudice or agenda. Where non-conformities are identified and negligence shown, however, then appropriate action may include disciplinary measures being taken against the Staff member or Student as per University policy and procedures, or action taken to prevent recurrence of unacceptable behaviour on the part of contractors/visitors.

Staff Disciplinary Procedure:
myintranet.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-services/human-resources-organisation-development/our-services-and-information/hr-policies-guides-and-forms

Student Disciplinary Procedure:
myintranet.westminster.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/116727/Student-Disciplinary-Procedure.pdf

4.0 Corrective and Preventive Action

Incident statistics, along with corresponding non-conformities, corrective actions and preventive actions will be reported to local SHW groups by a member of the SHW team for further discussion and in order to highlight common problems. Where appropriate, details of preventive actions arising from incident investigation may be disseminated around the University outside of these meetings in order to best control risks and prevent incidents.

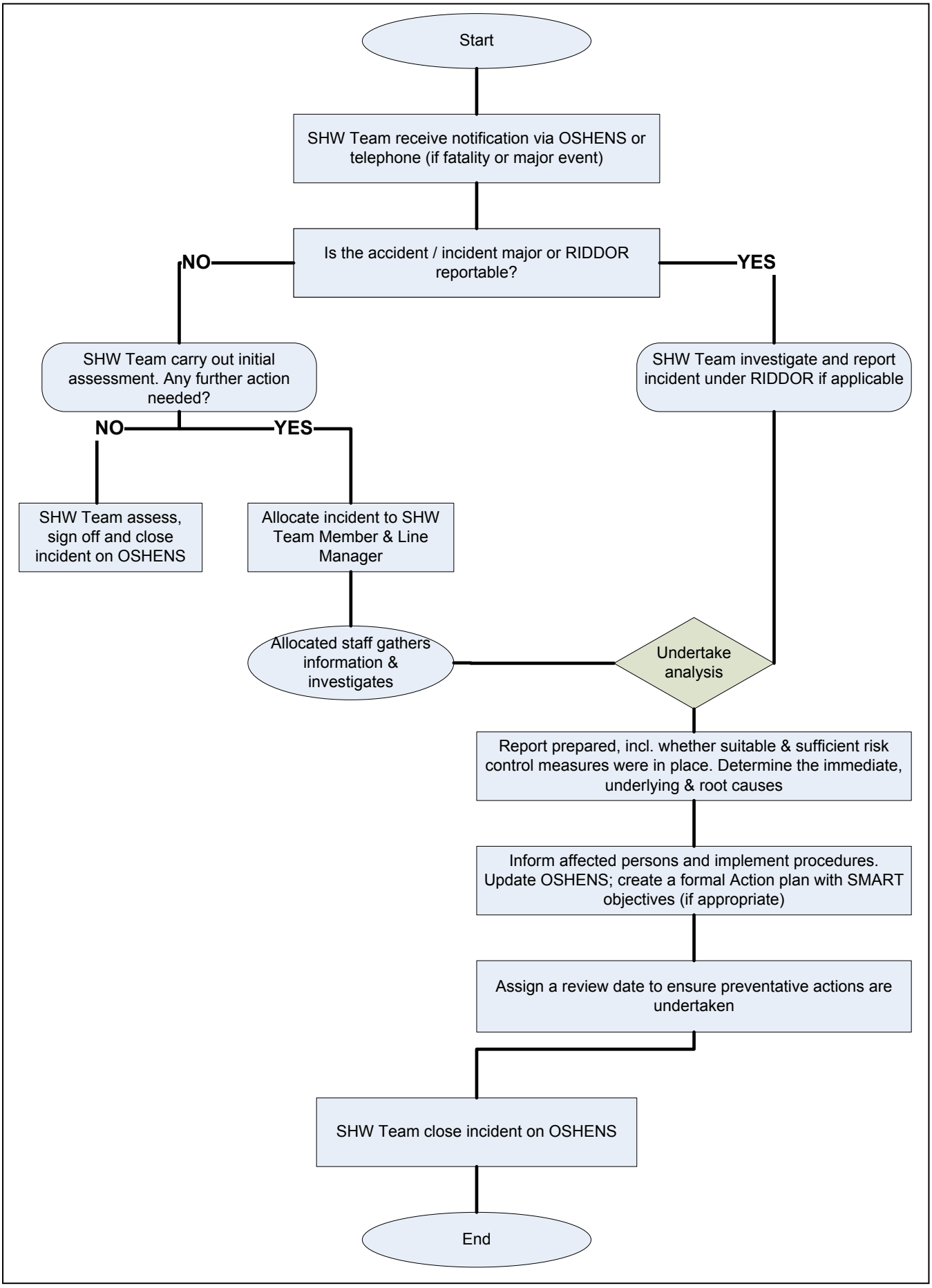
Where similar activities take place in other departments, faculties or spaces, the SHW team will make efforts to communicate any recommended preventive actions to relevant managers outside of the local safety group meetings.

Further Reading

1. HSE Riddor: hse.gov.uk/riddor

2. HSE HSG245: Investigating Accidents and Incidents: hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsg245.pdf

3. Accident/Incident Report Form:
   myintranet.westminster.ac.uk/my-tools/emergency/report-an-incident

4. OSHENS User Guide:
   https://myintranet.westminster.ac.uk/mytools/emergency/?a=187490:workspace%3A%2F%2FSpacesStore%2Ffc5d94d-4bf8-480d-b2dd-bf6915e6f45d

Appendix 1 – Incident Investigation Flowchart