

## **Occupational Health & Safety**

### **1. Rationale**

Oxford English Language Centre (Oxford) is committed to the provision of an environment which protects the health and safety of employees, contractors and students.

Oxford maintains a safe, healthy working environment and every effort is made to provide working conditions conducive to the well-being of staff.

### **2. Scope**

This policy and procedure applies to all staff, contractors and students.

### **3. Policy**

3.1 Oxford promotes and maintains the highest degree of health, safety and well-being of all employees by:

- designing an occupational environment which minimises the possibility of accidents and work related ill effects;
- providing safe equipment and systems of work;
- implementing arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of chemicals (when applicable)
- maintaining the workplace in a safe condition such as ensuring fire exits are not blocked, emergency equipment is serviceable, and the worksite is generally tidy;
- providing adequate facilities such as clean toilets, cool and clean drinking water, and hygienic eating areas; and
- making sure workers have adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to work in a safe and healthy manner.

3.2 All workers, employees, contractors and students, have a duty of care to ensure that they work in a manner that is not harmful to their own health and safety and the health and safety of others.

3.3 The Academic Director/Principal is responsible for the safety, health and welfare of all employees and contractors and will ensure that policies and procedures are clearly understood and adhered to.

3.4 Oxford recognises and complies with its obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and the corresponding regulations, compliance codes and non-statutory guidance.

3.5 Oxford has appropriate Occupational Health and Safety procedures that ensure the welfare and safety of its staff, contractors and students. This policy is implemented by the following methods:

- preventative strategies, including workplace and job design, identification of hazards in the workplace and taking of appropriate remedial action.
- occupational health promotion, consultation with employees and training for employees, contractors and students;
- medical, health and first-aid services for the treatment of work-related injury and illness;
- occupational health testing and monitoring programs as required;

- programs for the rehabilitation of ill or injured staff will be in accordance with our rehabilitation policy; and
  - information and records relevant to health and safety are appropriately maintained
- 3.6 Oxford has an occupational health and safety program which includes the following:
- all staff are responsible and accountable for minimising the potential for occupational injury to and illness of themselves and their colleagues;
  - all staff are to be competent in the techniques of accident prevention so that health and safety hazards in the workplace can be identified and controlled;
  - the training, of all staff will allow all staff and students to operate safely;
  - all staff are responsible for minimising the potential for occupational injury and illness within their workplace and are expected to perform duties according to safe work procedures;
  - all staff are expected to report all hazards and accidents within 30 days of becoming aware of it;
  - Oxford maintains its equipment and work practices have been established which are safe and minimise risk to health;
  - a system for the reporting and recording of occupational incidents, accidents, injuries and illnesses is maintained; and
  - all occupational incidents, accidents, injuries, illnesses and deaths are investigated and appropriate remedial action taken to prevent similar occurrences.
- 3.7 Oxford encourages all employees, contractors and students to accept individual responsibility for the following functions:
- encourage safe work practices; and
  - to bring to the notice of the Academic Director/Principal any safety or health hazard of which the employee is aware.

#### **4. Procedure**

##### **Education and Training**

- 4.1 OHS issues are discussed on induction to Oxford and at Management meetings, the following points are to be considered.
- initiate, develop and implement occupational safety and health measures;
  - be informed about safety standards in comparable workplaces;
  - review and make recommendations on rules and procedures for safety and health issues at the workplace;
  - recommend setting up a system and procedures to enable monitoring of the safety and health of persons at that workplace;
  - oversee procedures related to safety and health in that workplace;
  - have available to persons in that workplace, information relating to hazards or any other details;
  - make recommendations on training, education and promotion of safety and health; and
  - consider and make recommendations on changes to be made following an accident or incident.

### **Employee and Student safety**

- 4.2 Oxford sees Student health, safety and wellbeing as a priority. Student safety means freedom from the risk of harassment, intimidation, robbery and assault and enhanced feelings of safety, and reflects an enhanced student experience with respect to overall student welfare.
- 4.3 Oxford has the following practices:
- It has a safe environment for study.
  - Students and staff are reminded that an important aspect of assuring their safety rests with the individual student or staff member.
  - Robberies, sexual misconduct, relationship abuse, violence, assault, stalking, sexual or other harassment. It will promptly investigate and respond to specific complaints of this nature.
  - It ensures that all students are aware of student services available.
  - Information on student safety tips is provided to students.
  - Where there is clear and convincing evidence, it will lead to disciplinary sanctions which are included in the individual code of conduct. The right to confidentiality and due process is enshrined in policy.
  - It will hold persons who breach the code of conduct accountable through appropriate disciplinary action, while respecting the rights of all staff involved.
  - It is aware they also have an obligation to uphold the laws of the wider community. Although these laws and an individual code of conduct may overlap, they operate independently and do not substitute for each other. For example. Criminal activities will be reported to and investigated by the police. Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities is important for effective implementation of safety policies and implementation plans.

### **Reporting an Injury**

- 4.4 All workers (staff and students) are expected to report any injury or illness within 30 days of becoming aware of it.
- 4.5 The injury or illness must be recorded in the workplace's register of injuries within 30 days of becoming aware of it or the worker may not be entitled to compensation. This should be done by the worker, or someone on the worker's behalf.
- 4.6 If the worker is unable to record the injury or illness in the register of injuries, the worker still needs to notify Oxford in writing within 30 days of becoming aware of the injury or illness.
- 4.7 The worker should also keep Oxford informed about any time away from work that is required, or any assistance that required to return to safe work, which could include reduced hours or modifications to duties or work area.
- 4.8 Oxford will:
- Notify WorkSafe Victoria (VWA) only if there has been a serious incident
  - Ensure the Register of Injuries is accessible and has been filled out
  - Communicate with the worker while away from work
  - Provide return to work information, and assist with planning the return to work.

## **Making a Claim**

- 4.9 If a worker (employee or student) needs medical treatment or time off work because of an injury or illness, a claim will need to be made. If the worker makes a claim, the employee or student may choose their preferred doctor or healthcare provider. If occupational rehabilitation services are offered, a choice can be made from a list of at least three providers of these services. The form may be accessed:
- via download from the VWA website: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/claims>
  - from an Australia Post outlet
  - from Ozford's VWA Agent: QBE Workers Compensation (VIC) Limited
  - by contacting the VWA Advisory Service on 1800 136 089 or (03) 9641 1555 or [info@worksafe.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@worksafe.vic.gov.au)
- 4.10 When the worker completes a claim form, the workers needs to ensure that all the injuries or illnesses related to the claim for compensation are listed.
- 4.11 The form and the Certificate of Capacity may be hand delivered to Ozford, or it can be sent in the mail.
- 4.12 Workers may be required to attend an examination - Independent medical examinations are conducted to provide impartial information to make decisions about the entitlement to weekly payments and treatment and to support recovery, rehabilitation and return to safe work.
- 4.13 Workers may be asked to provide a statement - A Circumstance Investigator may be appointed to obtain information and statements from witnesses about the claimed injury. This is the opportunity to give the VWA Agent details about the injury and the events that took place.
- 4.14 Workers will receive a decision within 28 days - VWA Agents are required to notify in writing about the decision/s made on the claim within 28 days from the date they received the claim from Ozford.
- 4.15 Ozford will complete the 'Employer Lodgement Details' section of the claim form and provide a copy to the worker. Ozford will then submit the claim to the VWA Agent within 10 calendar days of receiving it. Ozford will
- Acknowledge that it has received the injury claim form in writing and provide a copy of the completed claim form
  - Complete an Employer Injury Claim Report
  - Lodge the claim and report with the VWA Agent within 10 calendar days
  - Cooperate with a Circumstance Investigator if appointed
  - Appoint a Return to Work Coordinator (if one is not already appointed)
  - Plan the return to work in consultation with the worker, the treating health practitioner, the occupational rehabilitation provider (if one is appointed) and the VWA Agent
  - Stay in regular contact with the worker while the worker is off work.
  - If the claim is approved:
  - Plan the return to work in consultation with the worker, the treating health practitioner, the occupational rehabilitation provider (if one is appointed) and the VWA Agent
  - Stay in regular contact with the worker while the worker is off work.

- Pay weekly payments for lost income once the worker provides a valid Certificate of Capacity
- Pay any medical excess
- Assist with returning to work, if the worker needs time off.
- Ozford is required, within reason, to maintain employment for a period of 52 weeks while there is an incapacity for work.

**4.16 The VWA Agent:**

- will review the claim documentation and may contact the worker for further information
- may contact treating health practitioners to obtain further information
- may arrange an Independent Medical Examination for the worker to attend
- may obtain further information about the circumstances of the injury or condition
- will notify the worker within 28 days about the outcome of the claim.
- If the claim is approved:
- Review requests for treatment
- Manage the treatment program in conjunction with the treating health practitioners
- Support the return to work program
- Develop strategies for a timely and safe return to work
- Review offers of suitable employment provided
- Support any suitable plan for the return to work
- Arrange an occupational rehabilitation provider to assist the return to work if required
- Make direct payment to healthcare providers for services within 30 days from receipt of their invoice
- Reimburse the worker for the reasonable costs of treatment paid for within 30 days of the VWA Agent receiving the receipt
- Reimburse reasonable costs of travel to and from treatment within 30 days of the VWA Agent receiving the request.

**Representation**

- 4.17 An injured worker can be represented, assisted and supported in the return to work process. A worker's representative cannot be a legal practitioner. An employer must consult directly with an injured worker about their return to work, however a worker may be assisted by a representative during any consultation.

**Reviewing a Decision**

- 4.18 If the worker believes the claim for compensation has not been handled correctly, VWA requires that the matter is referred to Ozford, the treating health practitioner or the Victorian WorkCover Authority (VWA) Agent.
- 4.19 VWA's Advisory Service provides free and confidential advice to both workers and employers. <http://www.vwa.vic.gov.au/contact-us/advisory-service>.
- 4.20 The worker can request the VWA Agent undertakes a review of the decision they have made. This review is made by a senior person within the VWA Agent who was not involved in the original decision.

4.21 If the worker is still not satisfied with the decision by the VWA Agent, the worker can contact the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service.  
<http://www.conciliation.vic.gov.au/>

4.22 If the worker cannot reach a resolution through the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service, the worker should seek legal advice in respect to further options.

#### **Return to work information**

- 4.23 Oxford must make information available to a worker about:
- the employer's return to work obligations and how the employer is meeting these obligations,
  - the return to work rights and obligations of the worker and how workers can obtain further information about their rights and obligations,
  - the name and contact details of the employer's authorised Agent,
  - the name and contact details of the employer's return to work coordinator (if applicable), and
  - the procedure for resolving return to work issues.

#### **Privacy**

4.24 Oxford maintains the privacy of confidential information.

#### **5. Feedback**

Feedback or comments on this policy and procedure is welcomed by the Executive Management Team.