



## Student Emergency Contact Procedure

Summary			
<p>The procedure summarises how student emergency contact details are collected and updated, the circumstances under which the university will use emergency contact details, decision making and who will make contact.</p> <p>The document has been introduced to provide clarity for staff, students and nominated Emergency Contacts, and to ensure that correct action is taken in emergency circumstances.</p>			
Scope			
Applies to all staff, for compliance			
Document Control			
Document type	Procedure		
Document owner	Ali Golden, Deputy Director of Student Services (Health and Inclusion)		
Division	Student Services		
Lead contact	Nicky Newcombe, EPIR Manager		
Approved by/on	Mark Ames, Director of Student Services 14/08/2019.		
Document status	Published		
Version	V2.0		
Date of publication	14/08/2019	Next review date	14/08/2020
Date of original publication	01/06/2018	Revision frequency	1 year
Superseded documents	V1.0		
Related documents			
Keywords	Emergency, contact, next of kin.		

## Student Emergency Contact Procedure

### 1. Providing and updating emergency contact details

- 1.1 All students are required to provide details of an emergency contact when registering for their programme. This information is held on the University's student record system, in accordance with the University's [Fair Processing Notice](#) and current UK data protection legislation.
- 1.2 Students can nominate anyone they choose to be their emergency contact. We expect that for the majority of our students the emergency contact will be a parent or guardian. However, you should be aware that it could be another responsible individual.
- 1.3 Students should ensure that the emergency contact is aware that they have been nominated and that their contact details will be given to the University. Students should also ensure that the emergency contact has given permission to be an emergency contact. Wherever possible, students should give a mobile phone number as well as a landline so that contact can be made quickly.
- 1.4 Students are asked to keep these details up to date and may change these and other personal details at any time by logging onto Student Info. This information is mandatory, i.e. it cannot be left blank. The University will assume that the information is up to date and may need to use it without being able to check with the student first. Therefore, it is important that students review it regularly.

### 2. Circumstances when the University may use an emergency contact

- 2.1 Under data protection legislation, we may disclose personal information about a student without consent when it is in their 'vital interests' to do so; this means in serious or life and death situations.
- 2.2 Students are now invited, on registration each year, to provide consent in advance to the University informing a nominated emergency contact if there is serious concern about the student's welfare. This guidance sets out the circumstances in which we may inform the emergency contact based on the student's consent.
- 2.3 Every student is an individual and their personal circumstances at the time will be taken into consideration before using the emergency contact details provided. The professional judgement of our wellbeing staff will be used in deciding whether to alert the emergency contact to a welfare concern.
- 2.4 Informing the emergency contact will be decided on a case-by-case basis and authorised by senior staff in Student Services, taking into consideration the nature and seriousness of the welfare concern and following consultation with other colleagues such as Senior Tutors in academic schools as appropriate.
- 2.5 We would normally tell the student that we intend to alert their emergency contact unless it is not possible for us to do so or to do so would cause delay.
- 2.6 The following are examples of circumstances in which we might inform the emergency contact:
  - A student has attended or been admitted to hospital in an emergency.
  - A student has suffered a serious physical injury, including self-harm.
  - A student ceases to engage with their studies and we have been unable to contact them.
  - A student has not recently been seen in their hall of residence and we have

been unable to contact them.

- A student has an ongoing illness and they appear to be deteriorating
- A student is experiencing a mental health crisis

2.7 Students are free to withdraw their consent at any time. However, we may still decide to inform their Emergency Contact if we consider it to be in their vital interests to do so.

2.8 In addition to attempting to contact the emergency contact, the University will pass the contact details to the emergency services, for example to the ambulance crew or by telephoning the Emergency Department at the hospital, so that they can support their patient.

2.9 In the event of a suspected or confirmed death of a student, the University will pass the emergency contact details to the emergency services to support them in their role of contacting next of kin. It is not the role of the University to first inform next of kin of a death.

2.10 The University supports the aims of the [Information sharing and suicide prevention Consensus statement](#) coordinated by the Department of Health to improve information and support for families who are concerned about a relative who may be at risk of suicide and to better support those who have been bereaved by suicide.

### **3. Deciding to contact the emergency contact**

3.1 If any member of staff considers that the student's emergency contact needs to be contacted, they should in the first instance discuss the case with colleagues in the Residential Life Service or Student Wellbeing Service.

3.2 This decision will be taken by the 'Authoriser', who is usually the Head of Student Wellbeing or Head of Student Residential Life during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. the decision can be escalated to the Deputy Director of Student Services, Director of Student Services, Deputy Registrar (Academic Services), Director of Legal Services and Deputy University Secretary, and Registrar as required. Out of hours, enquirers should contact University Security who can contact the Deputy Director of Student Services and other senior staff listed, following the University's Incident and Crisis Management Framework.

3.3 Any contact will ordinarily be made by staff in the Residential Life Service, Student Wellbeing Service, or the escalated staff listed. However, the circumstances will dictate what is appropriate and the Authoriser will advise who should contact the Emergency Contact.