



# **Kingston University**

## **Student Death and Serious Incident Procedure**

### **Student Services**

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## 1.0 Introduction and scope

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that in the sad event of a student becoming seriously ill, suffering serious injury or death, the university responds appropriately and sensitively, with due regard for the student, their family, their friends and others who may be impacted. It sets out the recommended procedure for dealing with an emergency, and the associated administrative arrangements following a death or serious incident. It also provides guidance on postvention support for staff and students.
- 1.2 There are related policies outlining the actions which should be taken in emergency situations. These include the University's [Risk Assessment Policy](#) and [Emergency Procedure](#). **1.3** This document provides an overview of roles and responsibilities for university staff and sets out what students, their family or friends can usually expect if a student becomes seriously ill, injured or where there is a sudden and unexpected death. This procedure is a guide and there may be occasions where a different response is required, depending on the circumstances surrounding the incident.

## 2.0 Disclosure

- 2.1 A serious incident involving a student death or serious incident on campus is likely to become known amongst other students very quickly. Staff involved should only disclose information to the senior member of staff overseeing the incident, or to an appropriate contact from Student Wellbeing and/or KUSCO Security, so the University's response can be properly coordinated.

## 3.0 Immediate action upon discovery – on site

- 3.1 If a member of staff or a student discovers a serious incident resulting in the injury or death of a student on any campus, at a university Hall of Residence, or any university managed property the following actions should be taken:
- Do not enter the area of a serious incident unless you are sure that it is safe to do so.
  - Call the appropriate emergency services on 999 immediately. You will need to give information about the situation and the exact location of the student or incident. In the event of a death, you should request that the Police attend as they must be notified of any death that does not occur in a hospital. The Police have a responsibility to act on behalf of the coroner to establish who the deceased was, to identify the cause of death and to notify the next of kin.
  - Contact KUSCO Security (020 8417 6666 or ext. 66666). Security will help to secure the area (on campus and in KUSCO managed halls of residence) and to deal with the incident in accordance with KUSCO procedures. Security staff are all trained in first aid and will evacuate the area as appropriate.
  - If the incident takes place at Hall of Residence managed by an external security provider, KUSCO Security should still be notified so they can alert the relevant senior member of Kingston University staff.
  - During usual office hours, contact Student Wellbeing on [studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk) as soon as possible to advise of the incident. This is monitored daily during University working days.
  - Outside of office hours, contact KUSCO Security (020 8417 6666 or ext. 66666).

**Do not attempt to move or touch the body of a student who you believe has died.**

- 3.2 If you are qualified in first aid and believe the student to be alive, you should assist by administering first aid within the limits of your training.
- 3.3 If you are not qualified in first aid you should remain with the student if safe to do so and wait for emergency services / KUSCO Security to arrive.
- 3.4 Refer all press related matters to the University communications press office - telephone 020 8417 3034 or email [press@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:press@kingston.ac.uk)

**4.0 Immediate action upon discovery – off site**

- 4.1 Students undertake university activities away from one of the main sites for a variety of reasons. These can include fieldtrips, placements, exchange programmes, social or sporting activities and can be in the UK or overseas and of varying duration.
- 4.2 All activities organised by the University that take students away from one of the main University sites will have procedures governing how emergency situations should be dealt with, and who should be notified in the event of a death or serious incident. This procedure is not intended to duplicate or replace the guidance set out as part of these local risk assessments. However, once staff become aware of an incident, the following actions should be taken:
- Do not put yourself at risk.
  - Call the appropriate emergency services immediately.
  - Inform the activity leader (if appropriate) who will initiate the specific local procedure.
  - During office hours notify the relevant university Head of School or Faculty contact, who must inform Student Wellbeing by emailing [studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk) as soon as possible.
  - Outside of office hours, contact KUSCO Security (020 8417 6666 or ext. 66666).
  - Refer all press related matters to the University Press Office - telephone 020 8417 3034 or email [press@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:press@kingston.ac.uk)
- 4.3 **Fieldtrips:** Detailed arrangements for dealing with an emergency that may arise while on a fieldtrip should be available as part of the safety arrangements and risk assessment for the trip. As part of these arrangements, emergency contact details should be held on the Student Records system (SITS/ OSIS) and be readily available to the fieldtrip leader and Course Support and Administration staff. Staff and students may also have been provided with contact information for use, both during office hours and out of hours, to allow them to contact the University in an emergency.
- 4.4 **Placements and exchange programmes:** A student may be seriously or fatally injured whilst on a university organised placement. Placements can be with an employer or at another educational institution in the UK or overseas. Liability cover may differ with individual work placements; each organisation will set out their responsibility in terms of any loss of life or serious injury to a student working or studying within their organisation.
- 4.5 **Social and sporting activities:** Students may undertake a variety of sporting or social activities organised by the university or by the Union of Kingston Students. In the event of a serious incident or death of a student during such an activity, the identified leader of the activity

should notify the university immediately by emailing [studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk). The Union of Kingston Students has separate insurance cover.

- 4.6 **Overseas activities:** Any of the above activities may take place overseas. If a student becomes seriously ill, injured, or dies while overseas, the university's Insurance Advisor should be contacted urgently so medical repatriation and legal assistance can be arranged under the travel insurance policy, if applicable. The university will also need to respond to any liability issues arising from the incident. Additional considerations may be necessary such as assisting with travel and accommodation arrangements for family members to travel to the country and arranging for family members to be met at their destination by English speaking representatives or leaders of the trip. Again, the Insurance Advisor should be contacted as this may be covered by the insurers. Consideration may also need to be given to assist with repatriation to the UK if this is not covered by the university's, or the student's own travel insurance policy.
- 4.7 All Kingston University registered students are covered by the University's travel policy for study-related activities although there may be variations in the liability cover for work placements, and students may wish to take out their own travel insurance.
- 4.8 **Partner Institutions:** The university runs many collaborative courses with partner institutions in the UK and abroad. In the event of a student death or serious incident at a partner institution, the partner institution may also be notified directly. In such situations the partner institution is expected to contact the relevant Faculty at the university. The Faculty will liaise with the partner institution to determine who will undertake the necessary actions listed in section 5.
- 4.9 The majority of cases of a student death occur off campus. The death may be the result of an accident, illness, suicide, or crime. If a student death is reported to a member of staff, the following information should be collected as appropriate (depending on who is reporting the incident):
- Details of the deceased student (name, date of birth, address, course etc).
  - Contact details of someone (normally next of kin) that the university can contact in relation to any arrangements that may need to be made. This should include a phone number and address, and the individual's relationship to the student.
  - If the death has been reported or witnessed by other students, consider the immediate support needs of the student(s) affected, e.g., wellbeing support or alternative accommodation, and collect their details as appropriate.
- 4.10 Once as much relevant information as possible has been collected, notify Student Wellbeing by emailing [studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:studentsofconcern@kingston.ac.uk) as soon as possible. Student Wellbeing will attempt to verify the information and will notify the relevant departments within the University to implement the considerations outlined in Section 6. Staff should not act upon a third party report of a student death until it has been verified and confirmed by Student Wellbeing.

## 5.0 Initial administrative action

- 5.1 An appropriate member of staff in Student Wellbeing (usually the Senior Health Adviser) will be responsible for ensuring the relevant departments are notified of the incident. The Head of Department / Faculty Dean will be notified of the student's death and will inform the course team, after which Student Wellbeing will inform other university departments. Student Wellbeing will coordinate and record the actions taken by each department.
- 5.2 Some departments may need to take immediate action to assist those already dealing with the incident or may need to implement other procedures. Departments should be notified by email or by phone as necessary.

## **6.0 Immediate action to consider by Student Wellbeing**

- Notify core group about the incident (Executive Director for Students, Student Services Director, Associate Director Student Life, Health and Wellbeing and Counselling & Wellbeing Manager)
- Notify relevant university departments of the death or serious incident
- Monitor and record actions taken
- Implement any health-related policies as appropriate
- Assist Faculty, Directorate or Halls staff in arranging student support & communications
- Arrange counselling support for affected students if appropriate
- Assist Faculty, Directorate or Halls staff in arranging staff support via HR & staff communications

## **7.0 Immediate action to consider by core group**

- 7.1 Inform appropriate members of the Senior Leadership Team and help coordinate letters of condolence.

## **8.0 Immediate action to consider by Accommodation team**

- 8.1 Assist in finding alternative accommodation if students are unable to return to their residence.

## **9.0 Immediate action to consider by Faculty Dean**

- 9.1 Disseminate information to staff immediately affected by incident so they can respond to student enquiries appropriately.
- 9.2 Inform staff and students about the death or incident.
- 9.3 Assist with making facilities available for students if the incident has occurred in an academic setting.
- 9.4 Inform and liaise with the relevant contact at partner institution as appropriate.

## **10.0 Immediate action to consider by Insurance Advisor**

- 10.1 Inform the insurers and coordinate the university's response accordingly.

## **11.0 Immediate action to consider by Study Abroad & International Learning Office**

- 11.1 Notify appropriate contact at partner college/overseas institution.

11.2 Assist with identifying students on the same exchange programme who may need support.

## **12.0 Immediate action to consider by Press Office**

12.1 Prepare initial press statement and respond to any press enquiries as appropriate.

## **13.0 Immediate action to consider by Risk & Business Continuity**

13.1 Initiation of the University's Emergency Procedure if appropriate.

## **14.0 Immediate action to consider by Health and Safety Manager**

14.1 Notify Health and Safety Executive of incident and complete necessary reporting procedures.

14.2 Respond to any health and safety issues within the University.

## **15.0 Follow-up action and administrative arrangements**

15.1 The action required after an incident or death on, or off campus will be similar once the immediate situation has been dealt with. The table below is intended to guide staff through the appropriate considerations in the days following a serious incident or the death of a student.

15.2 Any intended or follow up action taken in respect of these points should be reported to Student Wellbeing who will co-ordinate and record the university's response.

<b>Department</b>	<b>Follow up actions to consider</b>
Student Counselling & Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liaise with police, coroner and/or hospital to confirm identity.</li><li>• Ensure the student's emergency contact has been informed.</li><li>• Identify an appropriate point of contact for family members and inform relevant staff who this is.</li><li>• Liaise and assist where necessary with advising and supporting other students in halls, in private accommodation or on the same course.</li><li>• Make impacted students aware of availability of pastoral support and counselling.</li><li>• Organise or provide additional counselling services.</li></ul>
Faith and Spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consult with family on a memorial if appropriate.</li><li>• Advise on religious/cultural customs that the university should be aware of and appropriate places of worship or reflection for staff/students/family.</li></ul>
Sport and Active Lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the event of a student death, the fitness centre provider should be alerted to ensure membership and associated direct debits are cancelled.</li></ul>
Student Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update accommodation records and remove the student from mailing lists.</li><li>• Liaise with Halls Management to assist in finding alternative accommodation for affected students if needed.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with Halls Management and family regarding return of belongings.</li> <li>• Provide information on suitable accommodation in the area for family members visiting the University and make an initial reservation if needed.</li> <li>• Update and cancel any outstanding funding applications and remove student from mailing lists.</li> <li>• Consider availability of funding to assist family with costs, e.g., repatriation, in conjunction with Associate Director, Student Life, Health and Wellbeing.</li> </ul>
ITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the event of death, update SITS, making the student's status deceased and change the Master Student Record to a deceased record.</li> <li>• Inform Student Wellbeing and the Course Support and Administration office that necessary updates have been made.</li> <li>• Emergency contact details are available on SITS if required.</li> </ul>
Credit Control/Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancel any direct debits or outstanding fees.</li> <li>• In the event of death, confirm with Student Wellbeing whether a copy of the death certificate is required for refund purposes.</li> <li>• Raise credit for any fees to be refunded.</li> <li>• Arrange for any refund to be paid into student's account or to next of kin.</li> </ul>
Union of Kingston Students (UKS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure UKS and NUS membership is cancelled in the event of a death.</li> <li>• Inform members of clubs/societies if the student was a member.</li> <li>• Inform Sabbatical Officers so that appropriate student support can be arranged.</li> </ul>
Dean of Faculty, in liaison with relevant faculty/course support and administration staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise Student Wellbeing of the actions to be taken by a partner institution, including whether a letter of condolence has been sent and other students informed etc.</li> <li>• Advise staff and students of the availability of university wellbeing services such as counselling and faith and spirituality support.</li> <li>• Update Faculty records and remove student name/photo from lists in the event of death.</li> <li>• Ensure availability of course team to support other students.</li> <li>• Liaise with Senior Faith Advisor regarding staff/student attendance at funeral or memorial service.</li> <li>• In consultation with Senior Faith Advisor/family member, consider the possibility of an appropriate memorial.</li> <li>• Liaise with Academic Registry to consider posthumous award if student near the end of their studies or issue certificate/transcript to family.</li> <li>• Collate any work submitted by the student for return to the family if appropriate.</li> <li>• Arrange to meet family members if they wish to visit the university.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send letter of condolence to next of kin (in conjunction with the Vice-Chancellor's Office).</li> </ul>
KUSCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform reception and switchboard staff as appropriate.</li> <li>• Ensure staff have appropriate contact details to direct callers.</li> <li>• Notify students of availability of support and counselling services.</li> <li>• Liaise with Student Advice Manager or next of kin regarding return of belongings.</li> </ul>
Health and Safety office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess health and safety implications of an incident on campus or on a university organised activity off campus.</li> <li>• Implement closures or changes to practices where necessary.</li> </ul>
Information Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update student's borrower account.</li> <li>• Withdraw any outstanding loan items.</li> <li>• Cancel or suspend any outstanding fines.</li> </ul>
VC's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the event of death, send letter of condolence to family/next of kin (in conjunction with Faculty).</li> </ul>
Risk & Business Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with student and faculty if appropriate regarding any claim.</li> </ul>
Brand and Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handle all media enquiries.</li> <li>• Produce statement for use across university if appropriate.</li> </ul>
Student Recruitment and Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure student removed from relevant lists and databases.</li> </ul>
Study Abroad and International Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify contact details of next of kin as appropriate.</li> <li>• Assist with liaison with partner institution regarding repatriation</li> </ul>

## 16.0 Records

- 16.1 Records of all actions and communications surrounding a serious incident or death of a student will be retained securely by Student Wellbeing in line with the published retention period.
- 16.2 Record of actions taken, and information received will be completed by Student Wellbeing for each case reported and will be filed with all associated records.

## 17.0 Review and update

- 17.1 This procedure will be reviewed biennially from the issue date as a minimum. It may also be updated on an ad hoc basis by Student Wellbeing, because of procedural, operational or general changes. It may also be updated or changed following any incident.
- 17.2 Student Wellbeing will be responsible for reviewing the action taken by the university under this procedure. This may involve communication with other members of staff who have dealt with the incident. Reviews will inform any future amendments to this procedure.