



# **Kingston University**

## **Missing Students Procedure**

### **Student Services**

### **2025/26**

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## **1.0 Purpose and scope**

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to ensure there are clear guidelines and procedures for assessing concerns and taking appropriate action when a student is reported missing. Staff who are concerned about students for other reasons should refer to [Students of Concern - guidance for staff](#) (internal link).

## **2.0 Initial assessment of concern and action**

- 2.1 In any circumstances when there is immediate danger to a student or someone else, the Emergency Services should be called on 999.
- 2.2 Staff concerned that a student may be missing, or who receive a report of a missing student (e.g., from a family member) should gather as much information as possible, including:
- The student's name, date of birth, and course
  - Whether the student has any known physical or mental health conditions, or other risk factors
  - How long the student has been missing/out of contact
  - When and who had last known contact with the student
  - Whether lack of contact with the student is unusual

If the concern is being raised by a third party, the reporting person should be asked for their details and their relationship to the missing student.

- 2.3 Staff should be mindful of the need to adhere to data protection requirements (section 4.0).
- 2.4 Third parties reporting a student missing, should be advised that the Student Wellbeing team will investigate but will not be able to provide feedback to the third party, due to data protection. If contact is made with the student, they will be informed who raised the concern so they can contact that person themselves, should they wish to do so. If the third party has significant concerns about a student's welfare, they should be advised to contact the Police.
- 2.5 Information gathered about the missing student (see 2.2 above) should complete the Missing Student reporting form [here](#).
- 2.6 If the student has already been reported as a missing person and the police are the third party requesting information, staff members should refer to the Police Protocol available on the University [Policies & Regulations page](#).

## **3.0 Action by Student Wellbeing team**

- 3.1 The priority is to ascertain that the student is safe. The Senior Health Adviser or Student Counselling and Wellbeing Manager will make discreet enquiries such as checking student records and attempting to verify the safety of the student by contacting them using personal contact information. This may involve:
- Calling the student on their landline and mobile phone.
  - Emailing the student on their Kingston University and personal email addresses.
  - Liaising with Halls of Residence managers to ascertain whether the student has been seen and requesting a welfare check if appropriate.
  - Liaising with the Student Engagement team to ascertain the student's recent attendance and engagement.
  - Liaising with the IT Service Desk to ascertain when the student last accessed the University network and when their ID card was last registered at an access point.

- Checking for interaction with other professional support services.
  - Liaising with student's Personal Tutor and Course Leader.
- 3.2 If initial enquires confirm the student is safe and well, the Senior Health Adviser or Student Counselling and Wellbeing Manager will inform them who raised the concern (if a third party) so the student can contact that person, should they wish to do so.
- 3.3 If initial enquiries indicate the student may be missing or have come to harm, the Associate Director Student Life, Health and Wellbeing (or an appropriate delegate) should be informed. The Associate Director Student Life, Health and Wellbeing (or appropriate delegate) will be responsible for deciding whether the Police should be informed and (or) the student's emergency contact notified.
- 3.4 In the event that a decision has been made to report the student to the Police as a missing person, the Senior Health Adviser or Student Counselling and Wellbeing Manager should complete a Processing of Sensitive Personal Data form and send this to the Compliance and Information Governance (CIG) team, part of the Governance Compliance and Legal Office (GCLO).
- 3.5 The Police should be called by the Senior Health Adviser or Student Counselling and Wellbeing Manager on telephone number 101, to report the student as missing. In certain cases, it may be appropriate to discuss with the CIG team what personal data will be disclosed prior to contacting the Police. Depending on the level of data requested by the Police, a Police Disclosure Request form may also be required.
- 3.6 Depending on the circumstances, the Senior Health Adviser or Student Counselling and Wellbeing Manager should also consider informing the following departments:
- Vice Chancellors' Office
  - Course and Student Administration Student Engagement Team
  - International Office
  - KU Security
  - Press Office
- 3.7 Upon resolution, the Senior Health Adviser or Student Counselling and Wellbeing Manager should offer to arrange any relevant support services for the student.

## **4.0 Data Protection**

- 4.1 A student has a legal and ethical right as an adult to make their own choices as to whom they wish information about themselves to be disclosed.
- It is not appropriate to disclose to a third party whether a student is currently enrolled, in receipt of support from services within or outside of the University, or any contact staff may have had with them. Therefore, in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, any disclosure to an external third party should not usually take place without the explicit consent of the individual.
  - Any questions relating to data protection or how the University is processing personal data should be addressed to the University's Data Protection Officer by email at [dataprotection@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@kingston.ac.uk).
- 4.2 Where there is an emergency life or death scenario, information can be disclosed to the Police or other emergency services; a life or death scenario can be defined as a situation that is extremely urgent and important because someone is at risk of serious harm or

death. A student's emergency contact may also be involved in these circumstances (using the most recent details provided by the student).

## **5.0 Advice on supporting someone in distress**

- 5.1 If the student is being reported missing by a third party, the person trying to locate the student may be understandably distressed. The staff member handling the interaction should:
  - Allow them the space to speak and relay back that you understand their concern and take it seriously.
  - Assure them support is available for all students at the University.
  - Inform them about external services available to them (e.g., Police, NHS, community services).
- 5.2 If the third party is a student and they have been affected by the situation, it may be appropriate to signpost them to services available within Student Wellbeing Hub.
- 5.3 Dealing with a situation involving a missing student can be a stressful and challenging experience. Confidential support and advice is available for staff through the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) (internal link).
- 5.4 Members of staff who would like further training or support should contact the Organisational Development team.