



Student Death Procedure

Owner:	Director of Student Support Services
Reviewed by:	Student Life Committee
Approved by:	Senate (7 July 2021)
Review due date:	June 2022; June 2025
Update history:	Senate (11 July 2018) July 2022 (Establishment of “Lead Manager role”; addition of Chaplaincy involvement; Notification of next of kin; and post-graduation research posthumous awards)

To discuss receiving the document in an alternative format, please contact the disabilities team at disabilities@roehampton.ac.uk

1. Introductory Statement

1.1 The death of a student of the University of Roehampton (hereafter “the University”) is a particular situation that shall be consistently managed in a manner appropriate to the circumstances. Those with specific roles as set out in this procedure shall be supported in the delivery of their responsibilities with due regard to their own wellbeing, as well as any distress identified within the student community being appropriately responded to (a checklist of responsibilities can be found in Appendix 1).

1.2 The purpose of this procedure is to:

- Set out responsibilities in the event of a student death;
- Ensure that the response to such an event is appropriate, timely and effective;
- Ensure that the University communicates effectively with the family and all public authorities involved in the incident;
- Ensure that the University acts in a supportive way to all involved, both internally and towards external organisations.

2. Principles

2.1 The University will act in a timely and sensitive manner and with respect and compassion. Consideration will be extended to those closely involved with the student or the incident leading to the death, including the family or next of kin, friends, fellow students and staff members.

2.2 The University will seek to collaborate and cooperate with external agencies to facilitate any investigations or administrative activities related to the death.

2.3 The University will show due regard to the sensitive nature of the death when managing information relating to the student and the incident. Any public statements made for or on behalf of the University will only be released after they have been checked for accuracy and approved by the Communications Office. Any staff involved in responding to the incident will always operate in line with the University’s duties as per the Data Protection Act 2018 and relevant Policies.

3. Scope of Procedure

3.1 This procedure will apply to staff and to those students who were enrolled directly with the University of Roehampton and who were either studying with attendance, or through a distance learning programme. Institutions enrolling students on University of Roehampton programmes through a collaborative partnership will be expected to have their own local policies.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Initial Disclosure

Any and all members of staff can be the initial point of contact for the University becoming aware of a student death. Such a disclosure can originate from family members of the deceased, discovery of the scene, police or other agencies. Upon such a disclosure, all staff are required to:

- Make a note of all information provided and details of the reporter/situation

- Contact the Security Desk on ext. 3333
- Maintain confidentiality and avoid unnecessary sharing of information

4.2 Director of Student Support Services (or their nominated deputy)

The Director of Student Support Services shall be responsible for the overall coordination of immediate activities concerning student deaths. These responsibilities include notifying:

- the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer
- the relevant Head(s) of College
- the relevant Dean of School/Faculty
- the Director of Communications
- the University Secretary
- Registry
- The University Librarian
- The Director of Finance
- The Students' Union President
- The International Office (if appropriate)

The Director of Student Support Services shall also hold responsibilities for secondary action in regard to student deaths. These responsibilities include:

- Coordinating the provision of appropriate support services to students impacted by the student death
- Identifying, through consultation with other Senior Leaders, the appointed "Lead Manager" for all activities relating to the incident

4.3 Lead Manager

The Lead Manager shall be ultimately responsible for ensuring that all activities captured by this procedure for responding to the death of a student are completed. Such responsibilities include:

- Ensuring Incident Debriefs take place
- Ensuring appropriate family liaison activities take place
- Ensuring an Incident Review takes place with appropriate staff members

4.4 Head(s) of College

The relevant Head(s) of College (or nominated deputy) shall be responsible primarily for liaison between the deceased's family and relevant University Schools/Faculty. Specific responsibilities include:

- Facilitating police activity in notifying next of kin (e.g. providing next of kin details)
- Identification and notification of student death to impacted members of the student community. This may include flatmates, classmates, society members, etc.
- Immediate support and signposting to relevant services (including Student Support Services) to those parties identified above
- Collating University information pertaining to the deceased (e.g. student history)
- Composing letters of condolence (alongside the Vice-Chancellor)
- Notifying the relevant Dean of School/Faculty
- Appointing appropriate Family Liaison

The Head(s) of College (or nominated deputy) shall also hold responsibilities for secondary action in regard to student deaths. These responsibilities include:

- Arranging collection of deceased's belongings and/or academic work
- Arranging any refunds of monies (where relevant) to the deceased's next of kin
- Arranging any family visits to the University
- Notifying the Local Authority of student death
- Providing information to staff/students wishing to attend funeral services
- Arranging any memorials and dedications (if appropriate)

4.5 Dean of School/Faculty

The relevant Dean shall be responsible for specific actions following a student death. These responsibilities include:

- Notifying all academics who have had contact with the deceased within the current term
- Ensuring Departmental Offices remove the deceased's name and contact details from distribution lists

4.6 Director of Communications

The Director of Communications shall be responsible for specific actions following a student death. These responsibilities include:

- Preparation of Press statements (if required)
- Assisting in the management of information-sharing
- Ensuring communication channels (e.g. social networks, local media) are monitored for content relating to the student death
- Ensuring all involved members of staff have access to template communications

4.7 University Secretary

The University Secretary shall be responsible for specific actions following a student death. These responsibilities include:

- Management of any required legal representation
- Liaising with police if required
- Closing any active casework concerning the deceased

4.8 Registry

Registry shall be responsible for specific actions following a student death. These responsibilities include:

- Closing the deceased's registration (status code L21 – Left deceased)
- Notifying the Director of Student Support Services of the deceased's details
- Informing Information and Returns to delete the deceased's details from the Student Allocator
- Determining any posthumous award availability (see section 5)

4.9 University Librarian

The University Librarian shall be responsible for specific actions following a student death. These responsibilities include:

- Closing the deceased's library account

4.10 Director of Finance

The Director of Finance shall be responsible for specific actions following a student death. These responsibilities include:

- Closing the deceased's account and ceasing any debt-recovery activity (if relevant)
- Ensuring the Student Loans Company is notified of the student death

4.11 College Chaplain

The College Chaplain shall be responsible for specific actions following a student death. These responsibilities include:

- presence and support as needed, under the direction of the coordinating member of staff
- A recommendation as to whether another Chaplain, representing a different faith tradition, should be notified, in which case the Chaplain will contact that second party and work together with them under the direction of the coordinating member of staff

5. Posthumous Academic Awards

5.1 Registry shall be responsible for determining for taught degree students whether the deceased has sufficient credits for a posthumous award. Where sufficient credits are present, the Registry shall:

- Take Chair's Action with the Academic Registrar
- Advise Dean of School/Faculty/ Programme Convener/ Principal/ Head of College of award details
- Organise production of a certificate

5.2 Dean of School/Faculty/ Programme Convener shall be responsible for:

- Liaising with the family of the deceased regarding the arrangement of a private ceremony or posting a certificate
- Where a private ceremony is requested, liaising with the Senior Events Officer

5.3 If insufficient credits for an award, Registry shall advise the Dean of School/Faculty Academic Registrar/ Programme Convener and Head of College.

5.4 Recommendations for posthumous awards to research students will be made by the Research Degrees Committee in line with the process outlined in the Research Degrees Regulations part 29.

6. Repatriation

6.1 Repatriation is typically organised between a funeral director and the relevant airline and embassy.

7. Communications

7.1 Notifying Next of Kin

The University shall not be responsible for notifying the next of kin of the deceased that the death has occurred. This responsibility shall lie with Emergency Services in order to manage

the risks and distress involved. In the unlikely circumstances where Emergency Services are unable to make contact with the deceased's next of kin, the University can assist where appropriate risk assessment activities have taken place.

Appendix 1

Primary Activities (up to 12 hours after notification of student death)

Role	Activity	Completed
Director of Student Support Services (or nominated deputy)	Notify Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer	
	Notify Head(s) of College	
	Notify Dean of School/ Faculty	
	Notify Director and Head of Communications	
	Notify University Secretary	
	Notify Registry	
	Notify University Librarian	
	Notify Director of Finance	
	Notify Student Union President	
	Notify International Office (if relevant)	
Head(s) of College	Facilitate police activity in notifying next of kin	
	Identify and notify other impacted members of student community	
	Support and signpost impacted parties to relevant support	
	Collate student information/ history	
	Compose letter of condolence (alongside Vice-Chancellor)	
	Notify Head(s) of Department	
	Appoint Family Liaison	
Dean of School/Faculty	Notify all academics who have had contact with the deceased within the current term	
	Ensure Departmental Offices remove the deceased's name and contact details from distribution lists	
Director of Communications	Prepare any necessary Press statements	
	Assist in the management of necessary data-sharing	
	Ensure communication channels are monitored for	

	content relating to the student death	
University Secretary	Manage any required legal representation	
	Liaise with police (if required)	
	Close any active casework concerning the deceased	
Registry	Close the deceased's registration (status code L21 – Left deceased)	
	Notify Director of Student Support Services of the deceased's details	
	Inform Information and Returns of the requirement to delete the deceased's details from Student Allocator	

Appendix 2

Secondary Activities (up to 10 days following notification of student death)

Role	Activity	Completed
Director of Student Support Services (or nominated deputy)	Ensure ongoing provision of support to impacted members of student community	
Head(s) of College	Arrange with next of kin for the collection of belongings and any academic work (via Family Liaison)	
	Determine and facilitate any refunds of monies to the deceased's next of kin (for example Halls fees)	
	Arrange any next of kin visits to the University	
	Notify Local Authority of student death	
	Provide information to staff/ students wishing to attend funeral services	
Head(s) of College	Facilitate police activity in notifying next of kin	
	Identify and notify other impacted members of student community	
	Support and signpost impacted parties to relevant support	
	Collate student information/ history	
	Compose letter of condolence (alongside Vice-Chancellor)	
	Notify Dean of School/Faculty	
	Appoint Family Liaison	
Registry	Determine Posthumous Award applicability	