

Student Emergency Contact

UPR EQ07 Appendix 2 version 01.0

Policies superseded by this document

This appendix is an addition to version 07.0 of UPR EQ07.

Summary of significant changes to the previous version

This is a new appendix and it should be read in full.

Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in [UPR GV08](#).

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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 [Data Protection Policy](#) and current UK data protection legislation.
- 1.2 Students can nominate anyone they choose to be their emergency contact. We expect that for most of our students the emergency contact will be a partner, parent, guardian, close friend. 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 telephone number 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 on their [Student Record](#), they can make these changes in the profile section, where; home address, term time address, email address and phone number is stored. This information is mandatory and 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 to ensure the information is correct.

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; <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/lawful-basis/a-guide-to-lawful-basis/vital-interests/> .
- 2.2 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 Student Wellbeing & Safeguarding staff will be used in deciding whether to alert the emergency contact to a welfare concern.
- 2.3 Informing the emergency contact will be decided on a case-by-case basis and authorised by senior staff in the Dean of Students Office, taking into consideration the nature and seriousness of the welfare concern and following consultation with other colleagues across academic schools and professional business areas as appropriate.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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.
 - A student has asked the University to contact their emergency contact on their behalf.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 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.

- 2.8 The University supports the aims of the [consensus statement for information sharing and suicide prevention](#) published 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 Dean of Students Office or refer the case via the [Cause for Concern Form](#).
- 3.2 This decision will be taken by a senior manager in the Dean of Students Office who would usually be: The Deputy Director of Student Wellbeing, Deputy Director Safeguarding & Community, Head of Disability, Head of Counselling & Mental Health, Residence Life Manager, Student Community & Safeguarding Manager or the Head of Safeguarding & Compliance. Out of hours, enquirers should contact University Security who can contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other senior staff listed, following the University's Emergency Incident Protocol.
- 3.3 Any contact will ordinarily be made by staff in the Dean of Students Office. However, the circumstances will determine what is appropriate and the 'decision maker' will advise who should contact the Emergency Contact.

Sharon Harrison-Barker
Secretary and Registrar
Signed: **1 September 2023**

Alternative format

If you need this document in an alternative format, please email us at governanceservices@herts.ac.uk or telephone us on +44 (0)1707 28 6006.