

The Data Protection Act (DPA)

The Data Protection Act (DPA) protects individuals' rights with regards to their personal data, regulating the information that can be held by an organisation, how it is processed and to whom it can be disclosed. At enrolment we inform students of how we will process and protect their data and the handbook 'A-Z of the University of Hertfordshire' provides detail on how the students' personal data will be processed.

Releasing information to parents and third parties

The University regularly receives enquiries from parents and other third parties regarding students/applicants. However, the University's relationship is with the student/applicant and we therefore cannot release information to parents or any other third parties unless prior permission is provided, usually in writing, from the student. This is the case even if the third party is contributing financially to tuition fees.

What can the University tell you?

Confirming or denying that an individual is a student here would infringe the DPA and may in extreme circumstances result in placing an individual in danger. We do understand that parents may be concerned about their son/daughter and so will discuss University procedures i.e. explain examination procedures, discuss the implications of failing a module, accommodation costs etc. However, we will not be able to tell you if a student is attending classes, how well they are doing, whether they have paid their accommodation charges, and other things about individual students. If a student has given us their explicit consent to discuss a certain matter with a third party then we can and will do so.

Information on University procedures and Student Support Services can be found on our website:

Student Support Services

<http://www.herts.ac.uk/why-us/student-support/home.cfm>

General facts and figures

<http://www.herts.ac.uk/about-us/facts-and-figures/home.cfm>

University Policies and Regulations

<http://www.herts.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-governance/uprs.cfm>

In some circumstances you may have major concerns (e.g. have not heard from your son/daughter for months). In these cases if you leave contact details/correspondence with us, should the individual be a student here we will endeavour to pass them on and encourage the student to make contact. If the individual is not a student the details will be securely destroyed.

There may be exceptional circumstances (death or serious injury of a student) in which the usual need to obtain consent before disclosing information may be waived. In these circumstances the University would disclose information to a nominated emergency contact, provided by students at registration. If an enquirer claims to have a legal right to the information we would assume that they represent an official organisation which is fully aware of the Data Protection Act and which has its own code or procedures. We would therefore not expect any objection to a small delay in providing the information while we check credentials and the claimed right of access.



Data Protection