
Protocol for the death or serious injury of a student

Responsible Office	Student Experience/ Student Wellbeing Services
Responsible Officer	PVC Student Experience
Approval authority	Senior Leadership Group
Date of approval	Amendments agreed at SLG 20 Sept 2021
Amended (if applicable)	21 Sept 2021
Related Procedures	Emergency Management Plan Major Incident Escalation Process
Related University Policies	Mental Health Framework Safeguarding Policy
Effective Date	
Supersedes	(New)
Next review due	June 2025

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To ensure the University has effective guidance in place to respond appropriately and professionally to the death or serious injury of a student and adheres to the following principles:
 - i. The University, external partners and other agencies work together to manage the situation effectively, sensitively and professionally;
 - ii. Care, compassion and sensitivity is maintained at all times for all parties involved, such as next of kin, friends, associates and individuals directly involved;
 - iii. Clarity regarding roles, responsibilities and requirements for record keeping of those involved is provided, ensuring a consistent approach is maintained;
 - iv. The University's duty of care in relation to all students and staff is exercised at all times.
- 1.2 This protocol is for all University staff, students, Students' Union staff and Sabbatical Officers.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Head of Student Wellbeing Services or nominee coordinates the University's response to incidents of student death or serious injury.
- 2.2 The External Affairs Unit coordinates internal and external communications in liaison with the Head of Student Wellbeing Services (Appendix One).
- 2.3 The University Security Service liaises with the emergency services and follows the agreed Major Incident Escalation Process (Appendix Two).

3 Notifying the University of a student death or serious injury

- 3.1 **Inform Security, 01225 875555:** University Security Service act as the first point of contact. They are open 24 hours, year round and have access to the mobile and home telephone numbers for University emergency contacts outside of usual working hours as per the Major Incident Escalation Process (Appendix Two).
- 3.2 The degree of involvement of the University in a student death or critical incident will depend both on the location and manner of the event. The location in which the death or serious injury occurs will have a significant bearing on the degree of involvement of the University and its staff members. The location may be listed as:
 - on campus, in Halls of Residence or other residential property
 - on campus, in a University Department or other non-residential location
 - off campus, but while engaged in a University activity such as work or school placement
 - off campus, but while living in local lodgings away from the (family) home
 - off campus, in the permanent home or in a public place
 - in hospital
 - whilst abroad on placement or an exchange.

The courses of action to be taken will therefore be dependent on the individual circumstances of each case, but general principles and procedures are outlined in order to assist staff and students who may be involved in such incidents.

4 First actions

- 4.1 The person managing the situation (see 2.1) will assess the situation and assume overall control. They will work with colleagues on the ground, such as University Security and Police or Ambulance.
- 4.2 No member of University staff is expected to break the news to the next of kin. Those coordinating the situation may need to access the student record system to pass the next of kin details to the Police who have specially trained officers for this situation.
- 4.3 The Head of Student Wellbeing Services will act as the initial point of contact for the family.

- 4.4 A specified group of Senior Staff will always be briefed on the same day that a report of a death or serious injury is received with whatever information is available (Appendix Four: Checklist). They will be updated, as appropriate, over subsequent days.
- 4.5 If the incident has occurred on campus or in halls it may be necessary to notify fellow residents in order to help manage distress and avoid unhelpful rumour. Care must be taken to do this in the most appropriate way possible, making sure people have time to come to their own conclusions about what support they might need. The Head of Student Wellbeing and Head of Marketing and Communications should be the only people to authorise such notifications. They will provide advice and guidance to those affected about the range of support on offer and how to access it.
- 4.5 The University Chancery Office will call an initial meeting of the Emergency Management Team. EMT membership may vary depending on the situation, but will include the following, as appropriate or their nominee:
- Vice-Chancellor
 - Deputy Vice-Chancellor
 - Provost
 - PVC Student Experience/ PVC Finance & Infrastructure
 - Head of Student Wellbeing Services
 - Head of Marketing and Communications
 - University Secretary
 - Head of Facilities and Services
 - Security Manager
 - Head of School
 - Head of Student and Registry Services
 - Director of HR
 - Director of IT
 - Students' Union President
 - Students' Union CEO
- 4.6 EMT will:
- i. review the checklist
 - ii. share checklist with appropriate staff and ensure it is completed in real time to maintain a central record
 - iii. identify a major incident lead
 - iv. agree who will act as family liaison officer
 - v. identify a single point of contact for external services, such as police or coroner
 - vi. agree date for process review and lessons learned meeting.
- 4.7 The EMT will continue to meet until it is determined all necessary actions have been undertaken.

Appendix One: External Affairs Unit, Crisis Communications Plan
[Summary of Crisis Communications Plan: [link to full version](#)]

Aim

To provide accurate, timely information to all affected parties, to limit further loss of life and/or damage to infrastructure, and/or to pass on key messages as required / advised by government and/or its agencies.

Objectives

1. Quickly determine who/resource available to work on communications and assign roles and responsibilities.
2. Identify primary and secondary audiences AND the appropriate channels of communication.
3. Ensure all messages are ACCURATE, RELEVANT, TIMELY and CONSISTENT.
4. Ensure all communications are flexible, adaptable, agile and responsive.
5. Communications must inform and reassure, while aiming to contain or mitigate any misinformation.

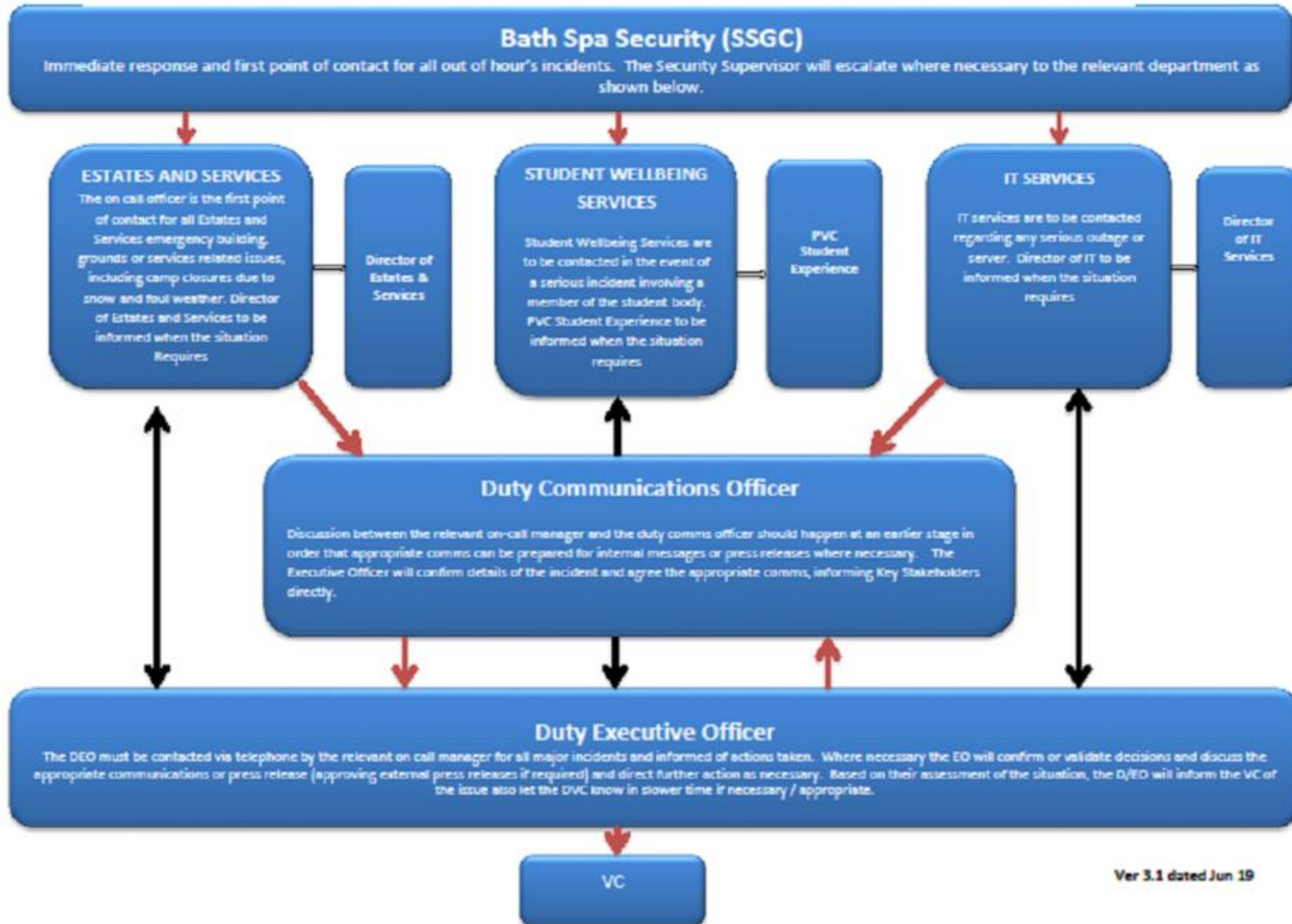
Student or staff death

In addition to the general rules outlined above, please follow these instructions:

- Permission to release the name of the staff member or student MUST be given by the family beforehand.
- There should be one member of staff who acts as University liaison person with the family and all requests should be made via them.
- Offer to act as media liaison on behalf of the family.
- If the police are involved in the case, all statements should be checked by the Media Team of the police force involved.
- Timing of statements must also be confirmed by the Media Team of the police force involved.
- If the cause of death or serious illness is from a contagious disease i.e. meningitis, this will be confirmed by Public Health England who must be liaised with over any statements and timing of any statement.

Appendix Two

BATH SPA UNIVERSITY MAJOR INCIDENT ESCALATION PROCESS



Appendix Three: Death or serious injury occurs on University premises

If the death or serious injury occurs on University premises immediately:

- Inform **Security, 01225 875555**

- If you discover someone on a University campus or premises or its immediate vicinity, or in off-campus accommodation, who is showing no signs of life or appears to be seriously injured immediately call **Security on: 01225 875555**; stating **'this is an emergency'** and give name, phone number and exact location.

- If the person making the discovery has already contacted the emergency services they should notify Security immediately. Security need to direct the emergency services, attend the scene and initiate the University Major Incident Escalation Process (Appendix Two).

- Secure the area – the person making the discovery should remain at the scene and not remove anything or allow others to do so until the emergency services arrive. If trained and it is appropriate and safe, the person should administer first aid.

- Do not contact family or friends or other third party – in the event of a student death or serious injury, the Police will make first contact with next of kin and the designated University lead will coordinate the institutional response.

Appendix Four	Checklist: In the case of a student death or serious injury	Notes
Alert	<p>Call received from Security or other source informing of student death or serious injury. Collect all known information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Name, course, student id, date of birth ● Names of students and/or staff involved ● Time/date/location of incident ● Contact numbers ● Whether emergency services have been called and which services 	
Immediately	<p>Assess whether someone should attend the site of the incident and if additional human resource is needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If safe to do so, support movement of affected students/staff away from the incident site to a safe recovery space and in the event of a death on campus, keep the area clear while the body is being removed. ● Gently support movement of affected students/staff. Speak calmly. Be patient, responsive and sensitive. At this stage practical help is likely to be the priority. ● Note the reactions of the affected students/staff. The goal is to reduce distress and assist with current needs; DO NOT ask anybody to recount any detail of the incident. The person may have experienced a shock and/or be in shock. ● Collect names and contact details. Ask for course details and academic tutor names. Reassure that academics can be notified if classes or assignments missed as result of the incident. ● Ask people NOT to use social media. ● Ask if there are other students who are not present who should be contacted. ● Advise students of the resources available – Student Wellbeing Services, Medical Services, Chaplaincy. ● SWS will coordinate immediate support for those affected/involved in the incident and make arrangements for follow up measures. 	

Day One: Tasks		
Head of Student Wellbeing Services to ensure notification is given to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Chancellor/Deputy V-C • Provost • Head of School • PVC Student Experience • Head of Marketing and Communications • University Secretary • Head of Student and Registry Services • Students' Union President and CEO • Head of Facilities and Services • University Medical Service • University Chaplaincy <p>If the student was post-graduate or international/EU and/or the incident occurred while on placement, fieldwork or study abroad, also notify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PVC Research and Enterprise • Head of Compliance 	
Chancelry Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange EMT meeting • Maintain log of actions and decisions 	
Practicalities/logistics		
Student and Registry Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend student records • Inform Student Finance (if appropriate) • Check if student needs to be removed from NSS population (if appropriate) • Check whether mitigating circumstances required for students involved/affected 	
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeze student account • Advise if student is due any refunds or is a debtor • Check if any fund/bursary applications are pending 	
External Affairs Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement the crisis comms plan, to include preparing press statements and handle all media enquiries • Assist with the dissemination of information, such as communication with affected students and staff 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor social media • Remove student from alumni database 	
International Advice	<p>If the deceased was an international student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with the relevant consulate/embassy • Ensure relevant communication is made with UKVI 	
Chaplaincy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Head of Student Wellbeing Services and facilitate outreach/space for those affected 	
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeze student account • Inform family liaison officer if the deceased had library books that should be returned. 	
SWS (Student Wellbeing Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate support and guidance for staff impacted by student death. • Ensure that affected students have access to support. • Ensure that affected students are aware of the mitigating circumstances policy and this is put in place in coordination with Registry and Student Services 	
HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider staff needs of those affected – directly and indirectly • To email all staff named in incident report directly to offer opportunity for de-brief and support • To review ongoing arrangements and access to support 	
SU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO to coordinate overall SU response • Work with EMT and inform if student member of club or society, member of staff, volunteer etc. • To ensure that the clubs and societies of which the deceased was a member are informed and their mailing lists are updated as required. • Liaise with SWS and Comms about communicating the death • To liaise with any external organisation representatives, SWS and EMT to ensure that students still taking part in an organised trip are provided with support as required • Take necessary follow up action if death occurred during Students' Union organised trip or activity (liaising with University Secretary) 	
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on where the deceased lived to assist in coordinating the response to other residents • Assisting with alternative – emergency and longer-term accommodation as required • Longer term - if incident in halls, consider renumber/naming room 	

Head of School, Academic staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To coordinate the School's response • Identify staff and students affected • Contribute to letters of condolence to the family • Assist with organisation of and attendance at memorial events/funeral • Confirm if deceased undertook any paid or unpaid activities for the school and if there are any wages to be paid to inform FLO 	
Estates (including Health & Safety)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is any impact to the University estate to take all required action • If the incident occurred on University premises to initiate all necessary Health and Safety protocols • Working with the University Secretary to lead any investigation following death or serious injury sustained on University premises or in relation to a University activity 	
University Secretary's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the Coroner is involved in investigating the circumstances of the death, to liaise with the Coroner and University staff as required • Where a death involves the preparation of a statement for the Police or Coroner to work with MIT/HR to facilitate this by interviewing staff etc • Check if any open complaints or appeals involving student 	
University Medical Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update any local records if deceased was a patient of the practice, as per NHS protocols 	
Public Health England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will coordinate any resultant case review 	
Week 4 to 8		
Chancelry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange lessons learned and process review meeting 	
Week 6 to 12		
Registry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact family to discuss option for posthumous award and/or attending graduation etc. • SITS record to be updated as appropriate. • If award certificate to be sent via post ensure letter from the VC is also included. Registry to contact Chancelry office to request this. 	
University Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain contact with Coroner and update EMT of the outcome as soon as possible 	