

**GOVERNANCE
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY**

Plymouth University

**Procedures to be followed
in the event of the death of
a student**

PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY

(December 2013)¹

1. Introduction

This paper sets out procedures to be followed in the sad event of the death of a University student, taking into account the need for:

- an appropriate level of response from the University
- a sensitive and compassionate approach, encompassing any requirements of the student's religion and the needs of any affected students or staff
- clear lines of responsibility
- any legal requirements

The location or circumstances of a student's death may have a bearing on the type of response from the University (for example, a death occurring on campus may require greater involvement than a death from natural causes at home). Each case must be assessed individually.

2. Reporting of death of a student

A student's death may be reported by a variety of sources and should be referred to the Dean of Students as soon as possible. Where necessary, the Dean of Students will check the accuracy of the information received before taking any further action.

Primary Contact

John Hilsdon, Head of Learning Support and Wellbeing
Mob: 07973 425931
Email: john.hilsdon@plymouth.ac.uk

Secondary Contact

Claire Oldfield, Complaints and Appeals Manager
01752 582052, Mob: 07539 304575
Email: claire.oldfield@plymouth.ac.uk

PA support : Sarah Fowles: Tel : 01752 585085; Email : sarah.fowles@plymouth.ac.uk

When notification of the death of a student occurs outside normal working hours it should be reported to Security in the first instance, who will notify the Duty Senior Manager.

If not reported immediately, a report of the death should be made to the Dean of Students as soon as possible on the next working day, who will then be responsible for informing other appropriate staff within the University.

3. Co-ordination of procedures

The Dean of Students will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate staff are notified as quickly as possible:

- The **Office of the Vice-Chancellor**
- The **Press & PR Office** - all enquiries from the media must be passed to the Press & PR Office, who will handle all media enquiries and liaise with appropriate colleagues/external

¹ Following structural changes associated with the Plymouth 2015 Services Review, this plan details interim procedures ahead of further development during 2015
March 2015 – Interim Policy

contacts if a statement/tribute is required. Out of Hours, the Duty Press Officer may be contacted on: 07854 522 452

- The **Faculty Dean, Business Manager and Registrar**, who will notify staff in the Faculty Office
- The student's **Head of School**, who will:
 - notify the student's Programme and Personal Tutors and other staff as appropriate
 - ensure that students on the same programme are informed
 - The Head of School may also contact the next of kin to convey sympathies (but liaise with the Dean of Students to avoid an excess of messages from the University)
- The **Co-ordinating Chaplain** (or other member of the **Chaplaincy Team** – see Appendix 1), who will:
 - contact or respond to the next of kin either to inform them initially or to provide bereavement counselling or assistance with sensitive issues, arrangements for the body, etc (working in liaison with the International Office, in case of the death of an international student)
 - contact the Students Union Support and Advice Centre and the Student Accommodation Office (if the student is in Hall or University-approved accommodation), to provide support as appropriate for fellow students
 - work closely with Health and Welfare staff to ensure availability of a counselling service for staff and students if required
 - liaise where necessary with police or doctors
- The Manager of the **Student Counselling Service**, to ensure that sufficient support is available to both staff and students affected
- **UPSU:Advice** which will
 - liaise with the Accommodation Office to ensure that students in the same Hall or accommodation are informed and supported
 - provide support as necessary for fellow students in conjunction with the Co-ordinating Chaplain
- **Student Accommodation** (if the student is in rented accommodation, whether or not this is University owned or approved), which will, as appropriate:
 - liaise with the Hall Warden/student's landlord
 - ensure the interim security of the student's possessions
 - liaise with the Chaplaincy to ensure that students in the same Hall or accommodation are supported as well as the student's family
- **Security** and **Switchboard** staff who may be required (in liaison with the Press & PR Office) to refer callers on to the appropriate individual dealing with the death or may be more closely involved through provision of emergency assistance or other initial response
- The **Head of the International Office** will be informed in the case of the death of an international student and will liaise with the Co-ordinating Chaplain, if necessary, in contacting families, arranging for the collection of the body and possessions and notifying embassies
- The **IT Support Desk** who will inform:
 - The Chief Information Officer and appropriate Library colleagues who will take any necessary action with regard to the student's Library Voyager account and Print account and liaise with the Finance department as appropriate

- Appropriate colleagues in TIS who will take any necessary action with regard to the student's computing account
- The **University Safety Officer** will be informed where the death is the result of an accident at the University or on a University organised activity (this is a statutory requirement)
- **Finance & Sustainability's Purchase to Pay (P2)** team, which will take any necessary action regarding insurance matters or outstanding debts to the University

4. **Administrative Actions**

Every effort must be made to avoid generating any inappropriate listings or correspondence which may cause further distress to the student's family or friends. To assist in this, various administrative tasks must be undertaken upon notification of the death.

Faculty Support Staff should:

- Amend the student's enrolment status to withdrawn
- Generate a withdrawal form which should be forwarded to the Data Support team as a matter of urgency
- Inform the Alumni Association, if necessary
- Ensure that the Results List for the programme is worded with sensitivity, so that the deceased student does not simply appear as "withdrawn". Faculties are encouraged to seek advice prior to the meeting of the Assessment Board if an award to a deceased student is to be considered
- Ensure the following teams have been notified: Student Funding Unit and Finance & Sustainability's Purchase to Pay (P2P) team (teamleaderp2p@plymouth.ac.uk); for actions below

The **Data Support Team** will amend the student record system, as appropriate:

- alert text (reading "deceased") will be entered on to the student's record (current and previous students)
- enter a flag on the system to exclude the student from reports as necessary
- send withdrawal form to Student Finance England
- amend student tuition fee on the Student Record System

The **Student Funding Unit** will contact the student's Local Authority and the Student Loan Company, as appropriate, to inform of the student's death and request amendment of relevant records to ensure no further cheques or correspondence for the student are issued. Any cheque being held for the student will be returned to the originator, with an explanation of the reason for its return, or cancelled (Loan cheques). If the student was in receipt of any other type of funding (e.g. EU reciprocal fees, overseas bursary, etc), the relevant UK or OS departments will be informed

Finance & Sustainability's Purchase to Pay (P2P) team will action any issues linked to fee payments or outstanding debt

Chaplaincy

Rev David Evans	Co-ordinating Chaplain *	587760 207817 (home) david.v.evans@plymouth.ac.uk
Rev Paul Bryce	Anglican *	225516 or 224688 paul.bryce@hotmail.com
Father Ian Hellyer	Catholic*	266523 ian@hellyer.org
Mrs Ann Jones	Methodist*	695218 ann.jones10@virgin.net
Mr Jonny Libby	Methodist*	290821 (mob 07894 702942) jonnylibby@hotmail.co.uk
Rev Alen McCulloch	Church of Scotland*	07532409080 alenjr63@gmail.com
Rev Colin Phipps	URC*	664188 (mob 07594186508) revcolin@sky.com
Rev Michael Shaw	Baptist	07958408551 mikepc.shaw@o2.co.uk
Capt Val Short	Salvation Army	563151 (mob 07931 959271) valerie.Short@salvationarmy.org.uk
Mrs Ann Stevens	Anglican	257764 (mob 07855939299) ann.stevens@live.co.uk
Mrs Karine Yuen	Chinese Church	07892231738 karineyuen@hotmail.com

Chaplaincy Assistants (from Sept 2014)

Bethany Brown and Georgia Dunn 587760

Chaplains marked with a * are happy to be contacted out of normal hours. The office number is 01752 587760. Numbers in italics not for circulation

You can e mail us at chaplaincy@plymouth.ac.uk

Also

Faith advisers

Buddhism	Duncan Moss
Hinduism	Sanjay Sharma
Islam	Mohammed Zaki Ahmed
Judaism	Nadine Abelson-Mitchell
Sikhism	Gursewak Aulakh

All members of the University academic staff – contact details available via portal

If needing a contact for the Orthodox church

Fr. Gregory Carpenter Orthodox 242238 (mob 07971316416)
frgregorypalamas@gmail.com

Updated 24.12.14