

## **Student Emergency Contact Protocol**

1. All students are asked to provide details of an emergency contact when registering for their programme. This information is held on the School's student record system, in accordance with the principles set out in the General Data Protection Regulation.
2. Students can nominate anyone they choose to be their emergency contact - it need not necessarily be their legal next of kin. Students should, however, let that person know that they have been nominated as the emergency contact 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 so that contact can be made quickly.
3. Students are asked each year (via registration) to confirm their emergency contact information for the University. They are also asked to up to date these details via their registration task. Students may change these and other personal details at any time by contacting the Registry Office at [sas.registry@sas.ac.uk](mailto:sas.registry@sas.ac.uk).

## **Emergency contacts and data protection**

4. There is often concern about the sharing of information and whether it breaches data protection law. The GDPR and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent the University raising concerns where there is a serious health or welfare issue without obtaining the consent of the student. The University has the legal grounds to do this where it assesses that the 'vital interests' of the individual are at stake. Where the circumstances described below apply, there is no data protection barrier to notifying the emergency contact. Similar grounds cover the sharing of data with emergency services or a health professional.

## **Circumstances when the School may use an emergency contact**

5. The University can use emergency contact information where we have demonstrable concerns for the life and wellbeing of a student. This is most likely to be when there are serious concerns for the welfare of the individual student. Examples of circumstances when a decision might possibly be made to get in touch with the emergency contact may include:
  - Where the University is made aware of the emergency admission to hospital (NB. The School is not always aware when a student has been admitted to hospital).
  - collection of the student by emergency services in what appears to be a potentially life-threatening condition.
  - serious physical or mental illness.
  - where in the opinion of the University it is not possible to reasonably keep a student safe.
  - when a student is deemed to be 'missing' or uncontactable. This will be demonstrated by a prolonged lack of contact and a lack of response to direct requests for contact and efforts to contact or locate the student have been unsuccessful.
6. In addition to attempting to contact the emergency contact, the School may pass these contact details to the emergency services or other healthcare professionals.
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 School to first inform next of kin of a death.

#### **Deciding to contact the emergency contact**

8. 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 the Institute Director or Head of Registry Services. A decision will then be made on the case presented. The decision can be escalated to the Director of Operations as required. The Director of Operations should be contacted during any out of hours emergencies.
9. Contact will only be made by the Head of Registry Services or appointed Deputy.

10. Once contact has been made a record of the action taken and the outcome should be kept on file.

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October 2018