



TU DUBLIN

STUDENT DEATH PROTOCOL

September 2024

Student Services and Wellbeing

Overview

The death of a student is of serious concern for the whole University. It is important therefore that the university community responds in a way that acknowledges the loss, acts sensitively, supports the bereaved on and off campus and supports the university community in the immediacy of the death and the long term if needed. The University must always be sensitive to the wishes of the family and relatives of the deceased, especially when distributing information about the death.

Stages in Response to Student Death

The protocol presents three stages in response to bereavement:

1. Communication
2. Actions, Roles and Responsibilities
3. On-going Support.

STAGE 1: COMMUNICATION

Information concerning the death of a student may come from a variety of different sources, however, the **Key Figure** must be made aware of the situation immediately, so they can confirm and establish the facts. If the information comes first to a member of staff, their immediate task is to inform the Key Figure. **The relevant Key Figure for all five Faculties is the Faculty Operations Manager and/or the Graduate Research office nominee.** If the student is normally domiciled outside of Ireland (EEA or non-EEA student) the Head of International Engagement is the Key Figure.

If the information is known outside the University for some time (e.g. over a weekend or during a holiday period) it is important to assume that the University **has not** been informed.

The Pastoral Care coordinator will contact the family. The coordinator also coordinates subsequent liaisons with the family and provides support along with the Counselling Service immediately after the death. **The Pastoral Care coordinator can offer assistance to the family and contact a person who can offer spiritual assistance if requested by the family.**

Informing Students/Staff

The Key Figure is the person through whom the information is made known to the rest of the University.

The Key Figure then ensures the information is communicated throughout the

University. In this role, they may be supported by a team comprising a Pastoral Care Coordinator, Counsellor, Nurse and Students' Union President/ Students' Union General Manager. The use of the memorandum in Appendix A will assist with this. **The Faculty Operations Manager** should immediately inform the following:

- President's office
- Senior Manager – Communications & Public Affairs
- Registrar and Vice President's office
- Chief Operations Officer
- Head of School
- Head of Discipline
- Head of Student Services and Wellbeing
- Head of Graduate Research School (if appropriate)
- Head of International Engagement (if appropriate)
- Deputy Head of Student Support
- Senior Manager of Student Support
- Senior Manager of Student Records
- Senior Manager Student Hubs
- Senior Manager of Student Life
- Head of Counselling Service
- Head of Library Services
- Faculty Liaison Librarian
- Clinical Nurse Manager
- Fees and Income office
- School Operations Lead
- Class Tutor (if applicable)
- General Manager Students' Union
- Students' Union President
- Campus and Estates Operations Safety Lead
- Technology Services
- Safety, Health and Welfare Senior Manager.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School to inform staff associated with the student's course of study and faculty.

How a deceased's colleagues or classmates are advised of the death is of great importance. The responsibility for this delicate issue will rest with the Head of Discipline. The Pastoral Care Coordinator and Counselling Service will be available to give support at that time.

Regardless of whether the students already know, the classmates must be told separately from the wider student population. It is also advisable to shut down any communication of the death over social media. This ensures that the University has some control over how the information is distributed. The media should be referred to Senior Manager – Communications & Public Affairs.

It is advisable that if the media wishes to interview/speak to a class/class member directly affected by a student death this is not allowed, and the University Communications team manages all responses to the media.

Only classmates of the deceased student will be informed of the death, the wider student body will not be informed of any student death.

Tea and coffee should be organised for the class to provide them with time to take in what has happened and to discuss it among themselves in a supported environment. It may be necessary to cancel scheduled classes for the remainder of the day. It is recommended that where a funeral is being held in Ireland and is on the same day a class would normally be scheduled, students should be advised that the class will be rescheduled to another time. If the funeral arrangements are known, an email with the funeral details should be sent to the affected class and staff listed in Appendix A by the Faculty Operations Manager. Where many students and staff wish to attend the funeral, a bus should be hired by the school to accommodate this and full details should be circulated as before.

If the student is normally domiciled outside of Ireland i.e. came to Ireland to study and has no family here, the Head of International Engagement will inform the relevant consular mission accredited to Ireland.

STAGE 2: ACTION, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities are set out below:

Faculty Operations Manager

- Convene and chair meetings if necessary to coordinate responses.
- Inform the Senior Manager of Communications & Public Affairs and the President's Office.
- Provide the relevant staff with the student's details: name, address, and college/school/centre.
- Make facilities available: rooms, tea, & coffee etc.
- Keep a record of events.
- Ensure the memo Appendix A is completed and circulated.
- Ensure that the Heads and Senior Managers are notified about the appropriate amendments to the student records.
- Liaise with the Head of School and on the management of class timetable.
- Assist in organising transport as needed.
- Ensure that those who should have been informed were so informed.

Pastoral Care Co-Ordinator

- Be present to support the students and staff on the site, campus, or centre.
- Convene a memorial service if appropriate.
- Contact and visit the family of the deceased when appropriate.

- Where appropriate and requested assist in funeral arrangements and act as a link with the staff/students or college administration for any staff/student involvement in the funeral.
- Attend the funeral or arrange for a member of the Student Support team to attend in their absence.
- Liaise with the Counselling Service on whatever bereavement support arrangements should be put in place.
- Inform the students that they are available to support them in organising an appropriate remembrance service.
- Record the student's details for the University (address, family, etc.) and invite the family to the annual University remembrance service.

Head of School

- Liaise with the relevant staff and Students
- Communicate with staff - programme, school and faculty.
- Consider extending coursework deadlines and defer assignments as appropriate.
- Rearrange the timetable on the day of the student's funeral as appropriate.
- Attend the funeral if possible or designate a representative.
- Contact and visit the family of the deceased when appropriate.
- Liaise with the support services as to the availability of support.
- Make the necessary amendments to class records/laboratory group lists.
- Liaise with the class tutor (if applicable) – keep a record for exam board meetings, etc.
- Write a letter of condolence to the family of the deceased student or make some other appropriate communication.
- Attend or be represented at the remembrance service.
- Liaise with the Pastoral Care Coordinator and SU to arrange transport to/from the funeral as necessary.

SU President/General Manager

- Liaise with the Student Support services at all times.
- Be aware of where the students' classes gather and be available to offer support.
- Attend the funeral to represent students and to support classmates.

Head of International Engagement

- Inform the relevant consular mission accredited to Ireland.
- Liaise with the consular mission to inform the family.
- Liaise with the consular mission to meet the family if they wish to come to Ireland to repatriate the body.
- Inform the Irish consular mission in a country where parents/family reside to facilitate entry visas for the family if required.
- Meet family with Pastoral Care and offer a memorial service on campus.
- Advise family of legalities around coroner, inquest, Gardaí etc.

STAGE 3: ON-GOING SUPPORT

As a guiding principle, it is best practice to allow on-going support to be led by the needs of those affected by the student's death. In the days or weeks following the funeral, the following should be observed:

Pastoral Care co-ordinator

- Arrange a remembrance service as appropriate.
- Be available to support students through bereavement and refer them to Support Services.

SU President/General Manager

- Inform the relevant student group of any remembrance service that may take place later to facilitate their attendance.

Counselling Service

- Be available to support students in coping with issues around bereavement.

Head of School

- Liaise with Support Services for students where there are concerns for future coping with bereavement.

Faculty Operations Manager

- Liaise with the Head of School on any necessary action arising from the student's death.

This Policy is for Students. All TU Dublin Staff dealing with incidents of Student Death should be made aware of the TU Dublin Employee Assistance Service which offers a free, **strictly confidential** counselling and information service. This service is provided by **Spectrum Life**. For more information on this service, please visit the following link: <https://www.tudublin.ie/intranet/human-resources/employee-assistance-service/>.

Remembrance

- It is important that we annually recognise the deceased students from TU Dublin.
- Each year in November the primary focus for Remembering the deceased will be a university-wide remembrance gathering in each of the three main locations within TU Dublin – Blanchardstown, Tallaght and Grangegorman.

Appendix A

Bereavement Protocol – Email Notification to be issued by Key Figure

From:

To: [See Circulation list] **Date:**

Dear Colleagues,

It is with greatest regret that I advise of the death of [Name]

Student Number:

Address:

Programme:

Year:

The removal arrangements are as follows:

Date:

Time:

Church:

The funeral arrangements are as follows:

Date:

Time:

Church:

Circulation list:

- **President's office.**
- **Senior Manager – Communications & Public Affairs.**
- **Registrar's and President's Offices**
- **Chief Operations Officer**
- **Head of School**
- **Head of Discipline**
- **Head of Student Services and Wellbeing**
- **Head of Library Services**
- **Faculty Liaison Librarian**
- **Head of International Engagement**
- **Deputy Head of Student Support**
- **Senior Manager of Student Support**
- **Senior Manager of Student Records**
- **Senior Manager Student Hubs**
- **Senior Manager of Student Life**
- **Head of Counselling Service**
- **Clinical Nurse Manager**
- **Fees and Income office**
- **School Operations lead**
- **Class Tutor (if applicable)**
- **General Manager Student's Union**
- **Students' Union President**
- **Buildings and Estates / Security**
- **Information Technology Services**

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