

# BISHOP GROSSETESUNIVERSITY

## Document Administration

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<b>Alternative Format:</b>	If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact <a href="mailto:governance@bishopg.ac.uk">governance@bishopg.ac.uk</a>

\*Please note, this document remains valid until formally revoked or replaced by the University.

## **Student Emergency Contact Procedure**

### **1. Providing and updating Emergency Contact details**

- 1.1 All students are required to provide details of an Emergency Contact when completing pre-enrolment information. This information is held on the University's student record system, in accordance with the University's [Fair Processing Policy – Students](#) and current UK data protection legislation.
- 1.2 Students can nominate anyone they choose to be their Emergency Contact. We expect that for the majority of our students the Emergency Contact will be a parent or guardian. However, you should be aware that it could be another responsible individual (e.g. a person over eighteen years of age).
- 1.3 Students should ensure that the Emergency Contact is aware that they have been nominated 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.
- 1.4 Students are asked to keep these details up to date and may change these and other personal details at any time by contacting the Faculty Administration Office at [sao@bishopg.ac.uk](mailto:sao@bishopg.ac.uk). This information is mandatory, i.e. it cannot be left blank. The University will assume that the information is up to date and may need to use it without being able to check with the student first.

### **2. Circumstances when the University may use an Emergency Contact**

- 2.1 Under data protection legislation, we may disclose personal information about a student without consent when it is in their 'vital interests' to do so; this means in serious or life and death situations.
- 2.2 Students are invited, on enrolment/re-enrolment, to provide consent in advance to the University informing a nominated Emergency Contact if there is serious concern about the student's welfare. This guidance sets out the circumstances in which we may inform the Emergency Contact based on the student's consent.
- 2.3 Every student is an individual and their personal circumstances at the time will be taken into consideration before using the Emergency Contact details provided. The professional judgement of our Wellbeing Panel will be used in deciding whether to alert the Emergency Contact to a welfare concern. The University's Wellbeing Panel consists of the Head of Student Advice or their representative, the Registrar and University Secretary and/or Head of Quality and Regulatory Compliance or their representative, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) and/ or an academic representative pertaining to the student's programme of study at Programme Leader level or above. Where relevant, a representative of the Accommodation Office will also join the panel.
- 2.4 Informing the Emergency Contact will be decided on a case-by-case basis and authorised by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) or Head of Student Advice and the Registrar and University Secretary or their nominee, taking into consideration the nature and seriousness of the welfare concern and following consultation with other colleagues such as Programme Leaders and Personal Tutors from the Faculty as appropriate.
- 2.5 We would normally tell the student that we intend to alert their Emergency Contact unless it is not possible for us to do so or to do so would cause delay.
- 2.6 The following are examples of circumstances in which we might inform the Emergency Contact:
  - A student has attended or been admitted to hospital in an emergency.

- A student has suffered a serious physical injury, including self-harm.
- A student ceases to engage with their studies and we have been unable to contact them.
- A student has not recently been seen in their hall of residence and we have been unable to contact them.
- A student has an ongoing illness and they appear to be deteriorating
- A student is experiencing a mental health crisis

2.7 Students are free to withdraw their consent at any time. However, we may still decide to inform their Emergency Contact if we consider it to be in their vital interests to do so.

2.8 In addition to attempting to contact the Emergency Contact, the University will pass the contact details to the emergency services, for example to the ambulance crew or by telephoning the Emergency Department at the hospital, so that they can support their patient.

2.9 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 the next of kin. It is not the role of the University to first inform next of kin of a death.

2.10 The University supports the aims of the [\*Information sharing and suicide prevention Consensus statement\*](#) coordinated by the Department of Health to improve information and support for families who are concerned about a relative who may be at risk of suicide and to better support those who have been bereaved by suicide.

### **3. Deciding to contact the Emergency Contact**

3.1 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 a member of the University's Wellbeing Panel.

3.2 This decision will be taken by the 'Authoriser', who is usually the Head of Student Advice or the Registrar and University Secretary or their nominee during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. Out of hours, enquirers should contact University Security who can contact the Head of Student Advice and other senior staff listed, following the University's Incident and Crisis Management Framework.

3.3 Any contact will ordinarily be made by a member of the University's Wellbeing Panel. However, the circumstances will dictate what is appropriate and the Authoriser will advise who should contact the Emergency Contact.