

## Student deaths or crises: guidelines

### Introduction

The following guidelines have been drawn up to help schools and halls of residence respond to the death of a student. They can also be used (with appropriate adjustment) to help to shape the response to other forms of crisis directly affecting one or more students – including, for example, life-threatening illness, serious injury, road accident, attack or attempted suicide.

News of a student death or other crisis can reach the University in a number of different ways, but in **all cases must be reported immediately to the University Secretary, Jennifer Sewel:**

(0113) 343 4011

University-Secretary@leeds.ac.uk

(out of office hours) via University Security on (0113) 343 2222

The Secretary (who has overall responsibility for the management of critical incidents), or Chris Warrington (Head of Student Support) acting on her behalf in respect of a student crisis, will ensure that information is conveyed to the relevant parties. Chris can be contacted on: [c.j.warrington@adm.leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.j.warrington@adm.leeds.ac.uk)

### Role of the school and/or the hall of residence

The parent school or hall of residence concerned has a key role to play in responding to a student death or other crisis, but it will be advised and supported by a co-ordinating team (the details of which are set-out below).

Staff in the school/hall will usually know the student best, and will therefore know how to contact families and friends. After consulting the co-ordinating team, the school and/or hall should:

- inform students and staff in the school/hall, drawing attention to sources of pastoral support (see below);
- liaise with the family and students about the attendance of staff and students at the funeral, and perhaps arrange transport from the school;
- write appropriate personal letters of condolence to bereaved parents (to complement a formal letter sent by the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the University institutionally);
- be prepared to meet parents and make arrangements for the collection of personal effects from the University;
- ensure that parents or other relatives are accommodated appropriately if they need to come to Leeds;
- take the lead in liaising with relevant parties about any memorial service;
- identify someone who can, if necessary, speak to the media (through the Communications Office).

## **Role of the co-ordinating team**

The co-ordinating team comprises colleagues from various service areas. Between them they will:

- support the school/hall, and usually arrange an early meeting to plan a response;
- act as a bridge between the school/hall affected and the range of resources available in the University and beyond;
- ensure that appropriate pastoral support is made available to staff and students as necessary, both in the immediate aftermath of a death or other crisis and subsequently;
- ensure that each incident is effectively followed up, and that unnecessary duplication is avoided;
- provide information about student support network agencies including the students' union advice centre and Leeds Student Medical Practice;
- respond to requests for help with the costs of accommodating relatives and other incidental costs.

## **Key Contacts**

### **Chris Warrington**

#### **Head of Student Support**

c.j.warrington@adm.leeds.ac.uk

Acting on behalf of the University Secretary, Chris will lead the co-ordination of the University's response to a student death or crisis, liaising with other members of the co-ordinating team as appropriate.

### **Rev. Anthea Colledge**

#### **Chaplaincy Co-ordinator**

(0113) 343 5073 or 07851 756 696 (out of hours 07780 613862)

A.Colledge@leeds.ac.uk

Anthea will advise staff on responding to a student death and will be available to discuss issues such as University attendance at funerals and community remembrance. Anthea, or one of her team, will co-ordinate the pastoral and spiritual response of different religious faiths; a member of the Chaplaincy is often the first of the co-ordinating team to provide pastoral support to those immediately affected by a death or other crisis (if necessary on site).

### **Jeanette Youds**

#### **Mental Health Team Manager, University of Leeds Mental Health Team**

(0113) 343 7458 or 07771 512598

J.Youds@leeds.ac.uk

Jeanette will offer assistance where the situation concerns student mental health, and will provide information and guidance around mental health needs, support and services for students, staff and parents. Jeanette can talk through appropriate responses to crises and clear pathways of care for those involved or affected by the incident. Jeanette can respond to a crisis situation or a concern around a risk of a student harming themselves or others.

### **Mike Byde**

#### **Interim Director of Student Operations**

m.byde@leeds.ac.uk

Mike will co-ordinate responses to student administrative matters, within the University and externally. This may include providing advice on the award and conferment of degrees and other qualifications; any financial support that might be available; and arrangements for fee adjustments.

**Mark Bownass**  
**Head of Security Services**  
(0113) 343 5483  
M.A.Bownass@leeds.ac.uk

Mark will liaise with police and other emergency services.

**Rebecca O'Hare**  
**Assistant Director (Residence Life & Accommodation Office)**  
(0113) 343 5937 or 07917 514579  
R.L.OHare@leeds.ac.uk

Rebecca will provide advice in relation to any student crisis which arises in one of the University halls of residence, and will assist with the accommodation needs of the affected student's family.

**Ian Rosser**  
**Acting Head of Corporate Communications**  
07712 389448

The Communications Office will advise on whether public statements should be issued and what they should say. All media enquiries to schools should be referred to the Communications Office, unless another specific arrangement has been agreed.

**The University Secretary and all team members can be contacted out of office hours through University Security on (0113) 343 2222.**

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