

# Death in Service

## Guidelines and Procedure

The death of an employee can affect friends and colleagues in different ways. King's is committed to providing the necessary support to our community.

This policy provides an outline of university responsibilities and practical steps for managers to consider.

This policy applies in the case of the death of an employee, including visitors, contractors and agency staff and there is a separate policy concerning the [death of a student](#).

The death of a retired employee should be reported to the Principal's Office in the first instance.

### Guidelines

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The death of an employee might be sudden or the result of a long illness of which individuals within our organisation are already aware. Each situation will be unique and there are a number of ways through which we may be informed.

Upon receiving notification of a death, the first point of contact should be the direct manager (if not already informed), relevant Executive Dean/Director and the local [HR Business Partnering Team](#). The [HR Business Partnering Team](#) may inform the Vice-President (People & Talent)/Chief People Officer People Officer if required.

Whatever way the information reaches us, the manager should, in the first instance, contact the family or next of kin to offer condolences.

It is important to agree a primary contact at the University, usually the manager, should there be any employment-related queries (e.g. pay and pension).

### Informing Colleagues

Communicating the news of the death of a colleague should be done in a sensitive way that is mindful of the different relationships they may have had in the workplace. There may be areas of the organisation, who should be communicated to before others and in person. Any communication should only include relevant facts and take the wishes of the family/next of kin into account.

The relevant Executive Dean/Director, in consultation with the [HR Business Partnering Team](#), will establish

how best to communicate the news across the University. Assistance may also be provided by the Chaplaincy.

### **Attending a Funeral/Memorial**

Attendance at the funeral or memorial service should only take place with invitation and this may mean that a representative will attend on behalf of the University.

[Compassionate Leave](#) can be taken to allow time off to attend the funeral or memorial service, where possible.

Colleagues may also wish to hold a memorial service at the University which can be planned in consultation with the Principal's Office and the Chaplaincy.

## **Procedure – Death on Campus**

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### **Initial Response**

A first responder is responsible for informing emergency services and campus security. Campus security will work with the emergency services as required.

### **Security Contacts**

Institute of Psychiatry	ext. 0001 (020 7848 0001)
Guy's, Strand, Waterloo	ext. 2222 (020 7848 2222)
NHS Trust buildings	ext. 3333 (020 7188 3333)
Denmark Hill West	ext. 5555 (020 7848 5555)

### **Informing Colleagues**

In the event of the death of an employee whilst on campus the Chief People Officer or their designate, should be informed to coordinate the University response.

The Principal's Office will have overall responsibility for communications which may be delegated to the Senior Vice Presidents/Principals/Directorate or Faculty lead as appropriate. In situations of a death on campus it is vital that only known facts are communicated.

Corporate Communications will assist in creating appropriate communication for internal and external channels.

### **Reporting**

Campus Security, Health & Safety Services and other directorates will be informed, as appropriate, to investigate and report on the incident.

In the event of a situation in which there are multiple deaths on campus, the Senior Vice-President (Operations) will be responsible for setting up a team to manage the response.

## **Further Support**

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Every person will deal with the death of a colleague differently and the University has a range of support services.

Our [bereavement](#) webpages provide details of resources and additional support available at King's. Our [Chaplaincy](#) are also available to support those mourning the death of a friend or colleague.

King's offer an [Employee Assistance Programme](#), it is independent, confidential, and free to use for the King's community. They can provide expert advice on a range of matters including coping with bereavement, legal matters and a counselling service.

The university's [Occupational Health](#) service can provide advice and support for an individual, team or department that is dealing with the death of a colleague.

## Version Control

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## APPENDIX A: Flowchart of Responsibilities

