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**LSBU**

London South  
Bank University

# Emergency and Trusted Contact Guidance

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**This Guidance is available in accessible formats on request from Wellbeing and Advice team. Please contact: [studentwellbeing@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@lsbu.ac.uk)**

## **Emergency and Trusted contact procedure**

**1** -This document outlines London South Bank University's (LSBU) protocol regarding Emergency and Trusted contact details, and the specific situations in which these contacts may be used.

The expectation is that students who require medical attention will independently engage with the NHS based on their individual needs, separate from the university. However, we can support students with this engagement with external services through the Mental Health and Wellbeing team.

There are instances where we may become aware of a student's ill health. In such cases, we will adopt a proactive stance by reaching out to Emergency and Trusted contacts. This allows us to communicate our concerns with the aim of supporting the student's wellbeing.

### **Emergency Contact**

**2.1** During enrolment, it is mandatory for every student to provide their emergency contact information. This information will be securely stored in the student records system.

**2.2** In the course of this process, students will be informed that by providing these contact details, consent is given to the University to reach out to their designated emergency contact in the event of an emergency pertaining to their vital interests (see section 3).

**2.3** Students will be encouraged to notify their emergency contact about their nomination and the sharing of their contact details with the University.

**2.4** Details about this procedure will be included in the guidance section related to student enrolment. This information will be accessible online for students at the time of enrolment.

### **When we will contact your emergency contact**

**3.1** The University will initiate contact with a student's emergency contact only when there is a significant concern regarding their wellbeing or safety, and only after a meeting of the Emergency Contact case panel. The University will always seek to gain agreement from the student on every occasion prior to making contact.

**3.2** The University retains the right to contact the emergency contact without prior consent when it is crucial for the student's vital interest; this typically pertains to significant situations where there are evident concerns about their wellbeing that are serious life or death situations. An explanation of Vital Interests is [here](#). Examples of where we contact emergency contacts are below;

- When the University is informed that the student has been admitted to the hospital in an emergency.

- When a student appears to be ‘missing’, is not responding to direct contact requests from the University, and subsequent attempts to locate the student have proven unsuccessful.
  - In the event of a suspected or confirmed death of a student, the University will typically provide the contact details to emergency services to facilitate them in reaching out to the student’s emergency contact.
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## **4 Trusted Contact**

### **4.1 What is a Trusted Contact?**

A trusted contact is an individual that the university can reach out to in the event of serious concerns about a student’s health or wellbeing. This person is nominated by the student and is someone they trust to handle sensitive information about them. The student should inform their trusted contact that we may contact them if we have serious concerns about the student’s health or wellbeing. It is the student’s responsibility to inform their trusted contact that they have been chosen for this crucial role.

### **4.2 Who Can Be Nominated as a Trusted Contact?**

A trusted contact must be over the age of 18. Typically, a trusted contact will be a parent, guardian, partner, or other close family member. However, it can be someone else, provided it is someone the student trusts. A trusted contact should be familiar with the student’s lived experience. The student should be confident that their nominated trusted contact will respect their privacy and understand the responsibilities of this role. A trusted contact should not be another LSBU student or staff member, unless they are also the parent/guardian/partner/close family member. Your trusted contact can be the same as your emergency contact but does not have to be.

### **4.2 When Will We Use Trusted Contact Information?**

We will not typically use a trusted contact without the student’s specific consent. By providing us with a trusted contact, the student provides consent to the university to contact this individual in circumstances such as those set out here. Students can withdraw consent at any time by deleting or changing the identified trusted contact. The trusted contact we use will be the person most recently identified by the student, and who remains the named trusted contact at the time the support is needed. If we are to contact this person, we will normally discuss this with the student at the time. Examples might include:

- When the student agrees with a Mental Health and Wellbeing Team professional who is supporting them that they would like us to contact the trusted contact;
- When the student asks a member of staff to contact their trusted contact. This might be because the student is unwell and/or does not feel able to make contact themselves.

We may use trusted contact without specific consent in exceptional circumstances that lead us to have grave concern about a student's wellbeing. Examples of such circumstances may include:

- Where we become aware a student is (or will be) hospitalised due to an emergency and we cannot establish contact with the emergency contact
- Where we become aware a student has suffered a serious injury (this could include self-harm; or use drugs and/or alcohol in high-risk amounts or combinations)
- If a student ceases to engage with their studies and/or professional support and/or does not respond to a reasonable number of attempts to contact them and where we consider there to be risk concerns.
- If we have been made aware a student has an ongoing serious illness (physical or mental), and/or there is evidence their health may be deteriorating
- Where there is a risk to the student concerned, or someone else from that student, and the student concerned
- To take reasonable action to prevent an unlawful act (e.g. harm to someone else)
- Where a student needs care or support and the lack thereof is affecting their wellbeing.
- Where a student is at risk of harm or neglect or is experiencing harm or neglect.
- If we think a student cannot protect themselves against harm, neglect or the risk of it.

This list is not exhaustive. A decision to contact a trusted contact will be made in response to presenting risk and information available to us. The decision will normally be made by appropriately senior and/or qualified member of staff in Student Services (see section 5).

#### **4.3 Is It Mandatory to Provide a Trusted Contact?**

Students are not legally required to provide a trusted contact to us. However, all students are strongly recommended to nominate a trusted contact.

#### **4.4 Can Students Change Their Trusted Contact?**

It is important all students take ownership of their nominated trusted contact and review it regularly. They can change their nomination at any time by emailing [studentlife@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:studentlife@lsbu.ac.uk) or by going into the Student Life Centre. For further information about how LSBU handles your personal data please see our [Student Privacy Notice](#).

### **5 How we decide when to contact your Emergency or Trusted Contact**

**5.1** Careful and risk assessed consideration will be given to utilising your emergency or trusted contact details in all circumstances. What is shared will always be proportionate. The Emergency and Trusted Contact panel will normally be led by the Head of Wellbeing and Advice (or a nominated senior member of staff in the Mental Health and Wellbeing team) in consultation with at least one other member of senior

university staff from either a professional services team or an academic school (for example the Associate Dean or Director of Operations).

**5.2** The current and presenting circumstances of the issue of concern, and any background information we hold, will be taken into consideration as part of this assessment process. Decisions to contact an emergency or trusted contact will be taken on a case-by-case basis and contact for one issue will not be taken as consent to contact on future areas of concern.

**5.3** The university will seek to discuss our intention to contact your emergency or trusted contact directly with you unless it is not possible to do so, would cause critical delay, or where capacity to consent has been significantly reduced or removed. In circumstances where you provide consent to make contact, we will seek to agree with you the parameters of information can be shared with them.

**5.4** If capacity to consent is a concern the university will share, if requested, both emergency and trusted contact details with emergency services and clinical professionals including, but not limited to: Paramedics, Police Officers, Psychiatric Liaison Officers, Approved Mental Health Professionals, the Emergency Department of a hospital and, Community Mental Health teams and General Practitioners.