

Maynooth University Student Death Protocol

[Summary]

(Version 7: Effective 30th April 2021)

KEY CONTACTS

Role	Telephone
Central Figure Ms. Marianne Dunne, Director of Student Services	(01) 474 7100 or (087) 710 3799
Alternates (in case of absence of Central Figure) Dr. Colleen Doyle, Student Support Officer or Mr. Michael Rafter, Director of Campus and Commercial Services or Ms. Rebecca Doolin, Director of External Relations	(01) 474 7627 or (087) 399 3461 (01) 474 7283 or (087) 251 7004 (01) 474 7454 or (087) 771 2838
Security 24hr number	(01) 708 3929 or 3333
An Garda Síochána, Maynooth Station	(01) 629 2380
An Garda Síochána, Leixlip Station (24/7 response)	(01) 666 7800

INTRODUCTION

The death of a member of the University Community is a matter of great concern for the whole community, especially the person's close friends, peers and University staff. It is important therefore that the University responds in a way that acknowledges the loss appropriately, deals sensitively with the aftermath and supports the affected people, on and off campus. It is important also in the days and weeks after the death (or news of the death) that ongoing communications and support is provided. Each death brings unique challenges for students and staff which need appropriate, planned and coordinated responses to address the distinctive circumstances that arise in each case.

The Protocol provides a framework for a co-ordinated University response in the event of the death of a student. The first actions are set out in this Summary. The full Protocol is available from Student Services (student.services@mu.ie) and is made available to any staff member who is required to be part of the Student Death Reponse Team.

RECEIVING INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEATH OF A STUDENT

Information about the death of a student may reach the University from a variety of possible sources and arrive on the desk of any one of several people in an academic Department, Student Services, Campus Services/Security, Safety Office, Registrar's Office, International Office or elsewhere (e.g. media). In the light of there being a need to deal with Gardai, distressed parents, etc. it is vital that whosoever receives notification of the death in the first instance, seeks to obtain as much essential information as possible. This should include, for example, details of the student, cause of death and where this occurred, who has already been informed, etc. Also it is essential that information be obtained on the informant, e.g. name, contact number, relationship to deceased, etc. A checklist is included below as a guide.

No matter where the information originates, or who receives it, it is essential that it is IMMEDIATELY communicated to the Central Figure (or alternate) who acts as the main University co-ordinator at all times.

FIRST STEPS

- If a death of a student occurs **while on part of their programme outside of the University** (such as an internship, work experience, placement, study abroad or fieldwork trip) the incident will be handled initially by the emergency services and An Garda Síochána in the workplace/field location. It is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána to notify the next of kin. The employer/work place/field trip co-ordinator should contact their assigned University contact (internship manager, Department Office, International Office, etc). Once informed, this University person should immediately inform the Central Figure. In the case of University fieldwork trips where there is a Maynooth University staff member present, this person should immediately inform the Central Figure and their Head of Department. It is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána to notify the next of kin.
- If a death of a student occurs during a **University sponsored event** (Student Society event, Sporting event) where no Maynooth University staff member or assigned person of contact is present, the incident will be handled initially by the emergency services, An Garda Síochána and/or the hospital involved. It is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána to notify the next of kin. As soon as any member of the University Community becomes aware of this incident, they should convey the information to the Central Figure as soon as possible for verification and further action.
- In the event of a **death on Campus**, the first contact should always be to the 24-hour Security Emergency Number (01) 708 3333, who will activate the Response Plan and inform other relevant people.

THE CENTRAL FIGURE

The Central Figure has the authority to manage this process on behalf of the University. In the absence of the Central Figure, the responsibilities of the role will be carried out by one of the Alternates.

The initial role of the Central Figure is to

- confirm the details of the incident and the details of the deceased student;
- advise the staff member who has received the news on follow-up actions, and
- convene the Student Death Protocol Response Team as soon as possible.

Actions in accordance with the Student Death Protocol will be initiated, coordinated, monitored, recorded, reviewed and terminated by the Central Figure. The Central Figure acts as the primary link for the flow of information and for the coordination of the work of the Team that will be convened to deal with the death.

THE RESPONSE TEAM

The composition of the Response Team will be determined by the Central Figure, bearing in mind the specific circumstances, but may include representatives of Student Services, Campus and Commercial Services, Security, External Relations, Academic Department(s), MSU, Chaplaincy Service, Counselling Service, Registry, Health & Safety Office, Human Resources, Accommodation Office, International Office.

The role of the Response Team is to agree who will undertake the required tasks in the hours and days following the death.

CHECKLIST (RECEIVING INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEATH OF A STUDENT)

Information about the death of a student may reach the University from a variety of possible sources and arrive on the desk of any member of staff. It is vital that whosoever receives notification of the death in the first instance, seeks to obtain as much essential information as possible. This checklist may be useful to guide the conversation (though the caller may not always be able to give each piece of information).

STUDENT NAME:	STUDENT ID:
GENDER:	AGE / DOB:
COURSE OF STUDY:	YEAR:
HOME ADDRESS:	LOCAL ADDRESS:
CALLER'S NAME:	CALLER'S CONTACT NO:
RELATIONSHIP TO DECEASED:	CAUSE OF DEATH: TIME & DATE:
ARRANGEMENTS (IF KNOWN):	WHO ELSE HAS BEEN INFORMED:
ADVISE CALLER INFORMATION WILL BE PASSED ON TO:	OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:
TIME & DATE OF CALL:	CENTRAL FIGURE / ALTERNATE INFORMED NAME: TIME/DATE: