

## Death in Service Guidelines (Employees)

July 2018

### 1. Applicable to all employees

This guidance is to inform managers and employees of the procedures to follow in the unfortunate circumstances when a colleague dies in service, either on or off College premises. It is recognised that the circumstances where an employee dies in service are always different and will require individually tailored approaches within the parameters set out below. This guidance also provides details of additional sources of support and advice for managers and employees.

In the event of the death of a student, please see separate guidance note.

### 2. Death on College Premises

If a death occurs on College premises, the employee discovering the individual should:

- contact the Lodge immediately, who will call the ambulance service and police
- inform their line manager, who will in turn inform senior management and HR
- stay near the person to keep the area clear and prevent access by others until further help arrives

Senior management will inform all line managers, who then

- may authorise affected colleagues to go home where appropriate and/or arrange for alternative places of work for colleagues remaining
- will raise an Incident/Near Miss (AIN) form ASAP and send it to the Lodge, who will follow College policy in notifying the necessary authorities

Senior management/HR will contact the next of kin ASAP to break the news. Under no circumstances should anyone else try to contact the next of kin without prior authorisation. If the individual is a temp, consultant or contractor senior management/HR will contact the agency or employer as appropriate.

### 3. Follow-up procedures

In all cases the following actions should be taken in a sensitive and compassionate way:

- a) The Principal will send a letter of condolence to the next of kin
- b) Senior Management (or a delegated deputy) will:
  - Brief team/departmental colleagues as soon as possible after the event, bearing in mind how much information the next of kin wish to be shared
  - Communicate the news more widely across College and University

- Deal with the media, in the event of media interest
- Establish if it is appropriate for a representative of College to attend the funeral in an official capacity and, if so, who
- Deal with any potential claim(s) under the College's insurance policies

The Line Manager will:

- Keep safe any personal possessions remaining in the workplace until such time arrangements are made by the next of kin for their collection or delivery
- Notify HR regarding untaken annual leave and/or other outstanding claims (e.g. overtime, etc.)
- Consider and deal with any immediate consequences on departmental workload, diary, planning, etc., including organising interim cover as necessary, in a tactful and sensitive way
- Liaise with IT to make appropriate arrangements for the immediate disablement of the individual's email and phone accounts, plus any software, systems and/or buildings fob access

HR will:

- Be the formal route of communication with the next of kin/family of the deceased as appropriate on behalf of the College
- If the individual is an overseas national, liaise with the police (who will contact the Embassy or High Commission) and assist with repatriation where necessary
- Establish the next of kin's wishes regarding funeral arrangements, floral or other tributes, whether colleagues may attend and share these details where appropriate
- Establish with line management and the next of kin if any College property (e.g. keys, equipment, papers, documentation, data, etc.) was kept by the individual at home and make arrangements for its return
- Make arrangements with the next of kin for personal possessions to be either collected or delivered
- Ensure that all contractual, pay and pensions matters are dealt with promptly

#### **4. Additional Support**

Requests for time off to attend the funeral should be dealt with tactfully, sensitively and should not be unreasonably refused.

The death of a colleague can have a big impact on individuals and teams and line/senior managers may have to be proactive in providing support. Bereavement counselling is available through the College's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with Health Assured. This is a free service to all staff, no referral is necessary and trained, professional staff can be reached on 0800 030 5182 or [www.healthassuredeap.com](http://www.healthassuredeap.com).

If an individual has been particularly affected by the death of a colleague this may impact on their own health or work performance. HR can provide some initial confidential support to the individual and advice to the manager on how they can help support their staff at work.