



Student Death Policy & Procedure

2020/2021

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Wellbeing Committee

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Student Death Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy is intended to identify and guide key University personnel through the steps that should be taken when there has been a student death, on or off University premises. This guidance details specific actions with timescales and identifies clear responsibilities and lines of communication, in order to ensure a timely, compassionate and professional response. It is not exhaustive, however, and should not unduly restrict actions as each event will be different.

In a specific emergency incident where there has been a student death, the following Policy and Procedure should take precedence but the principles of the UERIMP should also apply (i.e. the escalation and formation of response teams).

- 1.2 It is essential that the University has procedures in place which observe the following principles:

- The need for an appropriate level of response from the University;
- The need for a responsive, sensitive and compassionate approach which recognises the distress for the next of kin and the distress or potential for distress for staff and students close to the deceased student;
- The need to avoid confusion by developing clear lines of responsibility and communication and which offer a coherent approach to such events; and,
- The need to observe the legal obligations of the University and to protect the interests of the University.

- 1.3 The policy has been approved through the University Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee.

2 Introduction and Definitions

- 2.1 The definition of a 'student' for the purpose of this policy is a student registered for a UCA award or recognised award from external body and who is studying at the University. The policy does not cover students who are registered for a UCA award at partner institutions. The University will take this policy into consideration where a student's status has recently changed, due to withdrawal, intermission or suspension, and they are no longer a registered student at UCA.
- 2.2. The place of death may have a significant bearing on the degree of involvement of the University and its staff. The locations may be:
- On campus;
 - Off campus, in a hall of residence or other residential property of the University off campus, while living in local lodgings away from the (parental) home;
 - Off campus, while engaged in a University activity, including on a work placement or international field visit or study abroad;
 - Off campus, in the permanent home or in a public place; or
 - In hospital
- 2.3 The level to which the University may be required to respond to a student death, in ways other than being supportive, may be affected by the manner of death, which may fall into one of the following categories:
- Accidental
 - Suicide or possible suicide
 - Natural causes (with or without communicable disease implications)
 - Crime
- 2.4 It is important that the University foresees and plans for different scenarios. It should consider:
- The ways in which the University may become aware of the death of a student.
 - The names and roles of people within the University who **MUST** be informed of the death.
 - The roles and responsibilities of other members of the University staff, following a death.
 - The procedures and practice for informing next of kin, students and staff of a death; and
 - The ways in which the life of a student and their contribution to the University might be recognised and marked.

3. Objectives of the Policy

3.1 The University is committed to providing clear and comprehensive guidelines to individual members of the Leadership Team, Senior Managers and all UCA staff, in the event of a student death on or off University premises.

3.1.1 To make the roles and responsibilities for staff, in the event of a student death, clear and accountable.

3.1.2 Any member of staff who is notified about a student death is obliged to inform the University through relevant staff members, in line with this policy. These steps are clearly detailed in the Student Death Procedures and the process flow chart that follow this section.

3.2 Appropriate support will be provided by the University for students and staff following a student death.

3.2.1 Dealing with a fellow student's death will be traumatic and difficult for the student body and appropriate support services will be available through Academic Services in liaison with the Students' Union.

3.2.2 When a member, or members, of University staff are dealing with a student death and have been affected by the event the following should be offered:

3.2.2.1 All staff should be offered the opportunity to talk through the incident, in confidence, with their Line Manager or HR.

3.2.2.2 They should also be made aware of the external Counselling Helpline available to all staff (*See Appendix B*).

3.2.2.3 Access to short-term post-trauma support (e.g. opportunities to talk with peers and colleagues or structured group debriefing session) which may be facilitated either through the Student Counselling Service within Academic Services via HR, as well as signposting to external support services.

3.3. Training, support and guidance will be provided to all UCA staff who have responsibilities within the policy and available to all other UCA staff on request.

3.3.1 Guidance and training will be available to all UCA staff where necessary and with particular regard to ensuring appropriate training is made available to those staff that have named responsibilities within the policy, via the University's Learning & Development Team.

3.3.2 General awareness of the policy content and responsibilities will be communicated to all staff on an annual basis through email, the document store, myUCA, Staff Portal and University website.

4. Procedures to be followed, in the event of a student death

4.1 Purpose of these Procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to provide step by step guidelines for staff, regarding the action they need to take when dealing with a student death.

5. What are the specific responsibilities of the University?

- To inform appropriate people within the University and externally of the student death.
- To ensure the University has met and continues to meet its legal obligations.
- To create the time and space for students and staff affected by the death of a student to adjust to and to recover from the news of the death.
- To ensure that all concerned have confidence and assurance that the University is acting in a responsible, compassionate and sensitive manner; and,
- To ensure that no unnecessary routine administrative procedure is continued which may cause additional distress to relatives/friends of the deceased.

6. Discovery and Notification of a Death

6.1 Death, unless it occurs within a controlled environment such as a hospital, must always be notified to the Police. Anyone finding what they believe to be a body on campus or in a University property such as a hall of residence (whether or not they consider the person to be alive or dead) should contact the Emergency Services immediately.

6.2 Nothing should be touched or moved (other than to secure the area) until the Police have arrived and their guidance has been sought.

7. What do you do if you receive information about a student death?

- 7.1 Any member of University staff who receives information of a student death on or off University premises should immediately contact the Head of Campus, or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or other member of the Leadership Team. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will inform other members of the Leadership Team including the Vice-Chancellor.

Any student who becomes aware of a student death on or off University premises should immediately contact a member of staff on their campus.

The Head of Campus shall then undertake to inform the key people listed below:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (who shall inform the other members of Leadership Team including the Vice-Chancellor who will decide if appropriate to inform the Board of Governors)
- Head of Campus
- Executive Assistant to Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- University Secretary
- Head of School with responsibility for the School
- Director of Estates & Facilities
- Financial Controller (where necessary)
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager (interim) (HSWM)
- Director of Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement or Head of Communications
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Academic Services
- Head of Gateway Services & User Experience
- Head of Campus Registries
- Students' Union Chief Executive Officer
- Head of Accommodation (where necessary)

SEE *Appendix A* for contact details

- 7.2 On hearing of a death, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor will appoint an Executive Assistant as Clerk to the Response Team, who will co-ordinate communications between the Response Team, key people and the University on a regular basis and maintain accurate notes/records of the response to the incident on behalf of the University.
- 7.3 The specific responsibilities are detailed in the table below; each department representative is responsible for ensuring that they have taken action in line with the procedures set out. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will have overall responsibility for the following:

Key People	Responsibility
Head of Campus (or DVC or other LT member if unavailable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide senior management oversight of the University’s response to the student’s death and to ensure that it is appropriate to the circumstances. • To ensure a written record is maintained of the actions taken, to inform a review of the circumstances and any response that may be required following a student death, where appropriate. • To co-ordinate and ensure actions, outlined in the table below are undertaken in a timely manner. • To ensure that cultural requirements of the deceased or their family are taken into account. • To consider, with other key members of University staff, the Students’ Union and the student body but especially the family of the deceased, an appropriate memorial to the student. • To ensure that any requests from friends or family members for an on-site memorial are directed to the Vice-Chancellor. • To notify the Health Protection Team (HPT) and obtain advice if a communicable disease is the cause of death (Communicable Disease Policy). • HPT 0344 225 3861 (Option 1 for Kent) (Option 3, option 1 for Surrey)
Clerk to the Response Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide Executive Assistant support and act as Clerk to the Response Team. • To start a log of the incident and to maintain notes and records throughout the duration of the University’s response. • To inform the Director of Academic Services, Students’ Union Chief Executive Officer and Vice-President • To ensure information regarding the external Counselling Helpline is communicated to affected staff. • To arrange for Vice-Chancellor/Head of Campus to contact the family of the deceased. • To liaise with the Vice-Chancellor/Head of Campus to draft a letter of condolence to the family/partner of the deceased. • To arrange and assist appropriate representation by staff and students at a funeral and/or memorial service on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.
University Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To liaise with the Clerk to the Response Team. • To liaise with Legal Representatives, as appropriate.

Key People	Responsibility
<p>Director of Estates & Facilities and/or Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing.</p> <p><i>(Where a death has occurred on campus or in University student accommodation, (including third party accommodation provider)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess health and safety implications of any incident and follow the reporting procedures laid down by the HSE. The enforcing authority must be informed without delay through the Incident Contact Centre: 0345 300 99 23). – HSWM: to liaise with the Police and Coroner’s Office as appropriate. – HSWM • In consultation with the Police or other statutory authority, to consider implementing closures, modifications to premises or changes in practice where necessary, in agreement with Leadership team and University Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee or other responsible committee. – HSWM • To liaise with the Clerk to the Response Team.
<p>Financial Controller</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To liaise with the Clerk to the Response Team. • To liaise with Insurers, as appropriate.
<p>Head of School</p>	<p>To brief the course team of the student death and ensure the team shares the news with fellow students as soon as practicable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure ALL other tutors/administrators/technical/support staff at the campus are aware of the student death. • To ensure ALL students are informed in a timely and sensitive manner and that relevant questions are answered openly. • To ensure the availability a member of the Course Team to any student who wishes to talk. • To inform students of the arrangements in place for the provision of support including short-term, post-trauma support facilitated through the Student Counselling Service within Academic Services. • To ensure the continuation of the course without undue delay but being sensitive to the possible distress of some.

Key People	Responsibility
Head of Gateway Services & User Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To inform Academic Services Staff on the campus. • To liaise with University and Clerk to the Response Team to facilitate support to the deceased family, where appropriate or desired • To co-ordinate signposting and support to affected students including short-term post-trauma support facilitated through the Counselling Service and access to local faith services. • Arrangements for support to affected staff will be facilitated through the Line Manager, HR and signposting to the external staff Counselling Helpline or other external support services. • To provide Students' Union with all necessary support materials to facilitate effective signposting to students (e.g. Togetherall or Samaritan leaflets). • To liaise with the Gateway Services Manager at the campus to ensure the deceased's library accounts are cleared (e.g. outstanding materials are discharged and replacement copies reordered and fines/charges waived)
Director of Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement and/or Head of Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To brief all relevant staff on the process to be followed on receiving a media enquiry (e.g. all enquiries to be forwarded to the Head of Communications without comment) • To handle all media enquiries and to formulate a statement on behalf of the University in response to any enquiries received from the media. To monitor all media traffic (including social media) • To liaise with the Head of Campus on communication to students • To arrange, where appropriate and in consultation with UERIMP Gold Team, dissemination of information to the University at large • To arrange, where appropriate, the involvement of University representatives in the student's home country
Director of Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To write to member(s) of University staff who had direct involvement with the student, outlining the support arrangements in place for staff. • To ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for staff to seek help or support, internally or externally. Initial support may be facilitated in the earlier stages through Academic Services.

Key People	Responsibility
Director of Academic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the student’s record is updated immediately and that no correspondence regarding administrative procedures or fees is sent to the address of the deceased. A line should be inserted at the top of the address field (to appear on all labels and merged address details) reading “DO NOT DELIVER – RETURN TO SENDER” • To notify Finance to ensure that no University communications, including invoices, are sent to the deceased’s address. Any outstanding tuition fees will be waived by the University. • Liaise with the Head of Accommodation or third-party accommodation provider, where necessary. • To ensure SITS is updated to cancel Library, IT and other registrations in the name of the student but records are <u>not</u> deleted in the first instance. • To notify Accommodation, IT Services, Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement and other relevant departments of the cancellation of the student’s registration and accounts. • To contact with the relevant Campus Registrar, to discuss and confirm any actions above that should be taken at the local level.
Students’ Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist in signposting students to the support available from Academic Services and other external support services • To ensure Students’ Union registration and membership are cancelled. • To provide information about additional support services to students affected by the death. • To feed back any information it may gather from students to the University to support the process.

Key People	Responsibility
Head of Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the student lived in private or shared accommodation, to liaise with the landlord regarding rental, deposit, unpaid bills and with students sharing the property. • If the student lived in halls of residence, to liaise with the Director of Academic Services for the same reason. Any outstanding bills will be waived by the University. • Liaise with campus specific Accommodation team on communication and procedures regarding student death • Where a student has died in a student shared property (House in Multiple Occupation) to identify, with the Director of Academic Services and the landlord, the possibility of alternative accommodation should housemates desire either in the short or long term. It should be understood, that in some cases this will not be possible or will only be possible through the payment of more than one rent. • Make arrangements, where necessary, for the next of kin to collect the deceased's belongings from residence or arrange for these to be collected from the residence and transported, subject to liaison with Police.

7.4 International Students

The death of an International Student will require the Clerk to the Response Team to refer to the guidelines set out above and, in some circumstances, to undertake additional responsibilities with assistance from the Director of Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement in relation to the following:

- Liaison with relevant consulate/embassy.
- Visa arrangements for parents.
- Liaison with the family of the deceased over travel arrangements.
- Make arrangements to provide interpreters/translators, where required.
- To ensure that cultural requirements are taken into account with reference to burial and funeral arrangements.
- Assistance in any repatriation of the deceased.
- Certification of the death; and,
- Liaison with the Home Office (where appropriate).

8. Police Procedures

- 8.1 If there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a “*violent, unnatural death, or sudden death of which the cause is unknown.....*” has taken place then the Coroner is under a statutory duty (usually delegated to the Police at the scene) to establish certain information.
- 8.2 The Police will also normally arrange for the removal of the body and for any necessary postmortem.
- 8.3 The Police (or hospital) will also normally arrange that the next of kin are informed. The Director of Estates & Facilities / Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager (who are primarily responsible for liaising with the Police) will check with the Police whether this has been done and which person(s) has been informed before any information about the student’s identity is disclosed. The University shall assist the Police, if requested, by making available address and next of kin information from its Student Records System.
- 8.4 If there are witnesses whom the Police wish to interview, they should be taken to a private area removed from the immediate scene as soon as possible and provided with appropriate comforts.

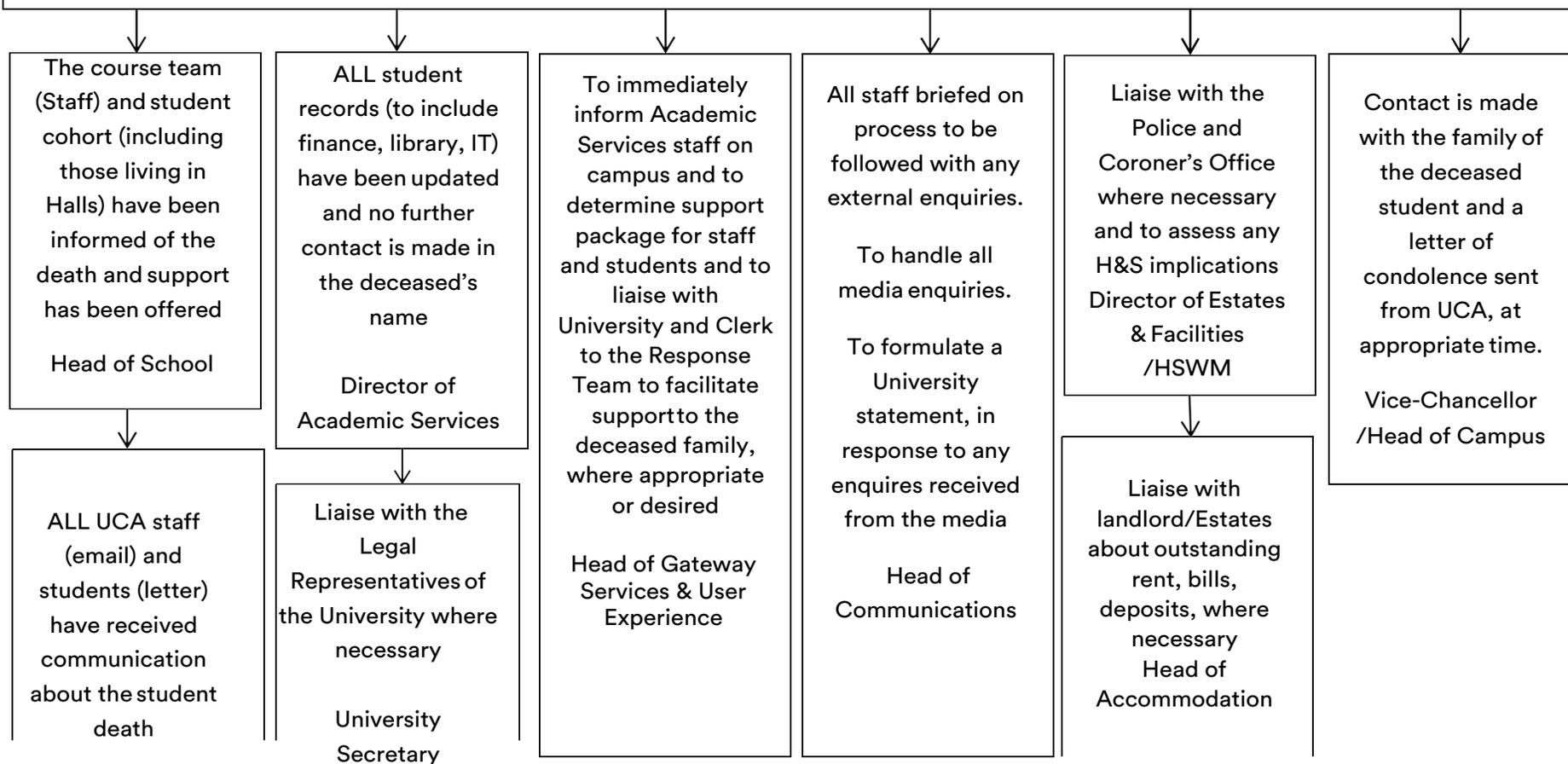
9. Suspected suicide

- 9.1 An apparent or alleged suicide is only confirmed by a Coroner’s verdict following an inquest. It is important that people acting in an official capacity with the University know this and do not pre-empt the Coroner’s verdict in public utterances.

10. What do you do if you receive information about a student death?

Any member of the University staff who becomes aware of a student death on or off University premises should immediately contact the Head of Campus with responsibility for the campus, or in their absence, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or other member of the Leadership Team who will be responsible for senior management oversight of the guidance contained with this policy, from this point, and will seek to appoint, with immediate effect, a Clerk to the Response Team (Executive Assistant to ED or EDLTR) who will co-ordinate communications in response to the incident.

Within 24 – 48 hours of the student death, where possible, it is very important that the following has been achieved:



11. What happens next?

Within two months:

- 11.1 The Head of Campus will appoint a nominee to conduct a post incident review to assess the effectiveness of the Student Death Policy. Any proposed changes arising from such a review, will be referred in the first instance to the Registrar and the University Secretary for advice.
- 11.2 The appointed member of staff will arrange an optional 'debrief session' for staff and students who knew the student or who were directly involved with the student death. While such a session may also offer staff and students an opportunity to talk about what happened and inform the review, care should be taken to ensure that students and staff clearly understand the purpose of the session.
- 11.3 Review the need for continuing support services for staff and students. In some cases, however, a student death can affect a group of students and have repercussions for many months, or years, after the event.

12. Monitoring and Review of Student Death Policy

12.1 Policy Review

- 12.1.1 The Student Death Policy will be reviewed by the Director of Academic Services every year and be signed off by the University Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee.

The following stakeholders will be consulted through the period of review:

- Vice-Chancellor
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- Head of Campus
- University Secretary
- Director of Estates & Facilities
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager (interim)
- Director of Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement/Head of Communications
- Director of Human Resources
- Head of Gateway Services & User Experience
- Head of Campus Registries
- Chief Executive Officer, Students' Union
- Financial Controller
- Head of Accommodation

13. Further Guidance

Further guidance can be found in the following relevant UCA policies:

- Support to Study Policy
- Student Drugs, Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Groups
- Communicable Disease Policy
- University Emergency Response and Incident Management Procedure (UERIMP)

Appendix A

Contact details for all key people listed in 7.1:

Executive

Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Catherine Harper	Catherine.Harper@uca.ac.uk	2788
		Mobile Number*	

* Please refer to the UERIMP confidential contact list.

Heads of Campus

Head of Campus-Canterbury	Terry Perk	tperk@uca.ac.uk	7386
Head of Campus-Epsom	Philip Powell	Philip.Powell@uca.ac.uk	2410
Head of Campus-Farnham	Sarah Clark	sclark@uca.ac.uk	2929
Head of Campus-Rochester	Jules Dagonet	Jules.Dagonet@uca.ac.uk	8631

Head of School

Director of the Business School for the Creative Industries	Philip Powell	Philip.Powell@uca.ac.uk	2410
Head of School: Fashion	Jules Dagonet	Jules.Dagonet@uca.ac.uk	8631
Head of School: Film, Media & Performing Arts	Agnieszka Piotrowska	Agnieszka.Piotrowska@uca.ac.uk	2742
Head of School: Fine Art & Photography	Terry Perk	tperk@uca.ac.uk	7386
Head of School: Further Education	Sarah Clark	sclark@uca.ac.uk	2602
Head of School: Craft & Design & Architecture	Colin Holden	cholden2@uca.ac.uk	1483

Departments

Interim Director of Estates & Facilities	Scott Barson	sbarson.t1@uca.ac.uk	7436
Financial Controller	Sam Laws	slaws@uca.ac.uk	2686
Director of Academic Services	Andrew Penman	apenman@uca.ac.uk	2712
Director of Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement	Angela Chadwick	achadwick@uca.ac.uk	2733
Head of Communications	Nicola Kalimeris	Nicola.Kalimeris@uca.a.uk	2731
Director of Human Resources	Angela Fisher	afisher@uca.ac.uk	2673
University Secretary	Marion Wilks	mwilks@uca.ac.uk	2603
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager (interim)	Emma Hilton	EHilton2@uca.ac.uk	2657
Head of Gateway Services & User Experience	Christina Lewis	clewis3@uca.ac.uk	2458
Students' Union Chief Executive Officer	Andy Squire	asquire.su@uca.ac.uk	1491
Head of Accommodation	Alice Weston	aweston@uca.ac.uk	2434
Head of Campus Registries	Andrew Varley	avarley@uca.ac.uk	7372

External Services offering support and advice

CRUSE

Cruse Bereavement Care exists to promote the well-being of bereaved people and to enable anyone bereaved by death to understand their grief and cope with their loss. Services are free to bereaved people. The charity provides support and offers information, advice, education and training services.

www.cruse.org.uk

0808 808 1677

Samaritans

Samaritans provides confidential, non-judgmental emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

www.samaritans.org

116 123

Togetherall

Togetherall offers access to a 24/7 online range of tools and services to support students mental health. The service has an active forum monitored at all times by trained practitioners.

www.togetherall.com/en-gb/

Employee Assistance Scheme (EAP)

24/7 free and confidential service offering practical information and emotional support including 24/7/365 access to telephone counsellors.

To access:

Online: www.my-eap.com, user name UCAwell

0800 1116 387

From abroad +44 845 330 5132

Useful Campus Contact Details

Canterbury			
Academic Services	Gateway Services	gatewaycanterbury@uca.ac.uk	7314
Facilities Assistants/Security		01227 817322 Number transfers to Security out of hours	7322
Accommodation Office	Dave Edwards	dedwards@uca.ac.uk	7380
Campus Registry	Andrew Varley	AVarley@uca.ac.uk	7372

Epsom			
Academic Services	Gateway Services	gatewayepsom@uca.ac.uk	2461
Facilities Assistants		01372 202452 Between 5pm-8pm Mon- Fri and Sat & Sun Duty Caretaker: 07879 482876	2452
Security		Security Guard: 07919 320235	
Accommodation Office	Alice Weston Sarah Blake	aweston@uca.ac.uk sblake1@uca.ac.uk	2434 2448
Campus Registry	Louise Bailey	Lbailey5@uca.ac.uk	2409

Farnham			
Academic Services	Gateway Services	gatewayfarnham@uca.ac.uk	2709
Facilities Assistants		01252 892663 Duty Facilities Assistant: 07909 680371	2663
Security		Security Guard: 07919 320235 Number transfers to Security out of hours	
Accommodation Office	Philippa Brooks Hayley Kirkup Susan Dibble	pbrooks2@uca.ac.uk hkirkup@uca.ac.uk sdibble@uca.ac.uk	2974 2662 2683
Campus Registry	Carol Fricker	cfricker@uca.ac.uk	2793

Rochester			
Academic Services	Gateway Services	gatewayrochester@uca.ac.uk	8734
Facilities Assistants /Security		01634 888726 Number transfers to Security out of hours	8726
Accommodation Office	Debby Dickman	ddickman@uca.ac.uk	8723
Campus Registry	Kailey Hazeldene	Kailey.Hazeldene@uca.ac.uk	8655