

# Missing or Deceased Student Arrangements Procedure

## Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) The objective of this Procedure is to enable the University to respond in a coordinated and appropriate manner when advised of the death of a student.

## Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) This procedure applies to:

- a. A student who has died.
- b. A student who is reported as missing.
- c. University actions in response to the death.

## Section 3 - Definitions

(3) Nil

## Section 4 - Policy Statement

(4) Nil

## Section 5 - Procedures

### Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Academic Registrar / Dean of Students	In collaboration with Student wellbeing and University Security, verify the death or missing status and coordinate any University response including the development of the communications strategy for the University.
Security	Assist with confirmation of the death or official missing status.
College Dean	Seek advice from the Academic Registrar as to the nature and timing of communication with the student's family. This may involve an initial contact with the family from the Registrar followed by College contact.
Other business units	Await advice from the Registrar as to the timing and nature of communication required.
Fees	Change the student record to reflect a deceased status in order to cancel enrolment and stop the generation of automatic correspondence Process refunds, remove debts, remit HECS where the student has an active enrolment in the current semester.

Role	Responsibilities
Assessments and Completions	Manage and amend student record in relation to graduations; assess in relation to possible aegrotat or posthumous award.
Library	Stop automated requests for return of library materials.
Student Wellbeing	Cancel any student loan and to be aware of a possible need for Counselling services.
Facilities	Make necessary arrangements in relation to University keys or access cards.
ITS	Make necessary arrangements in relation to email accounts and any lab or related IT access.
People and Culture	In the event the student is/was also a staff member, follow all protocols regarding deceased staff.
VUI	In the event that the student was an international student, liaise with the <a href="#">Department of Home Affairs</a> and other relevant government bodies regarding the death.
Social media team	Monitor tribute and other sites.
Alumni	Amend membership details.
Insurance	Manage any risk implications.
Legal	Manage response to external legal practitioners.
VC/DVCA office	Send letter of condolence.
Media/external relations	Manage response to media coverage or an unusual level of public scrutiny.

## Part B - Process

### Steps (for local and International onshore students)

#### Verification of the death or official missing status

(5) The University accepts any of the following as evidence of death:

- Notification from a government agency such as the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.
- A copy of the death certificate.
- A copy of the coroner's report.
- A copy of a police report which explicitly indicates the student's death or missing status.
- A letter from a solicitor or executor of the deceased's estate.
- Other evidence deemed appropriate by the Academic Registrar.

In the event that the Academic Registrar cannot obtain the evidence specified for a student's death, Student Connections ensures that no further correspondence is generated and sent to the student until such time as the student's status can be confirmed.

#### Response to death or missing status

(6) A decision is made by the Academic Registrar's office as to the timing and suitability of communication and follow-up actions from the University and/or College to the family. In the event of a missing student, the Academic Registrar's office determines the appropriate actions.

(7) In addition, the Academic Registrar's office coordinates communication and actions to class or cohort groups (particularly in the case of death as a result of notifiable or contagious illness) as well as University staff and business units such as Library, ITS, Enrolments, Student Financials, Completions, Student Wellbeing.

(8) The Academic Registrar coordinates:

- a. a letter from the Vice-Chancellor offering condolences on behalf of the University; and/or
- b. a letter from the student's College.

(9) The letter from the College is to:

- a. be authorised by the Dean;
- b. offer condolences on behalf of the College;
- c. provide additional items as appropriate in each instance, such as an academic transcript or testamur, options for graduation, a refund cheque and so on.

(10) The Academic Registrar's office ensures that matters are appropriately documented and stored to ensure that the University's position is legally defensible.

(11) The Academic Registrar's office liaises with Business Units of the University as follows:

- a. Student Financials (Government Reporting and Student Systems to amend student record) to change the student record to reflect a deceased status in order to cancel enrolment and stop the generation of automatic correspondence.
- b. Enrolments: If the student is an apprentice/trainee, the Manager of Apprenticeship Administration at Skills Victoria must be notified by telephone within 24 hours of notification.
- c. Student Financials to process refunds, remove debts, remit HECS/fees.
- d. Assessments and Completions in relation to advice re graduations and possible Posthumous Award.
- e. Library to stop automated requests for return of library materials.
- f. Student Wellbeing to cancel any student loan and to be aware of a possible need for Counselling services.
- g. Facilities to check if the student had University keys or access cards.
- h. ITS to make necessary arrangements in relation to email accounts and any lab or related IT access.
- i. People and Culture in the event the student was also a staff member.
- j. VUI if the student was an on-shore international student to cancel the eCOE through PRISMS and thereby notify [Department of Home Affairs](#); VUI may also contact the Australian Embassy in the student's home country in relation to assisting the student's family. VUI may also assist the family with cultural and religious requirements such as a funeral, tribute, repatriation of the body in accordance with country requirements as well as organising flights, cancelling the student's lease and utilities, meeting the family at the airport and organising their accommodation and ensuring counselling support is available for students and staff.
- k. Social media department (Marketing) to monitor tribute or other media sites.
- l. External relations in relation to managing media enquiries.
- m. Alumni if deceased person is a former student.

## **Further context for International off-shore students**

(12) In the case of international partnerships, where the death occurs off-shore, these steps will be followed to the extent that is reasonable given local partner customs, conventions and processes.

## **Further Steps for Local students studying off-shore**

(13) Office of Academic Registrar to contact Australian Embassy and request verification of death or missing status if needed.

(14) Australian Embassy to contact Victoria Police to notify next of kin. The Office of the Academic Registrar to be informed when this has happened.

## Section 6 - Guidelines

(15) Nil

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	11th March 2015
<b>Review Date</b>	11th March 2016
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-Chancellor
<b>Approval Date</b>	9th March 2015
<b>Expiry Date</b>	5th June 2018
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Darrel Caulfield Chief Student Officer and Registrar darrel.caulfield@vu.edu.au
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Darrel Caulfield Chief Student Officer and Registrar darrel.caulfield@vu.edu.au