



Student Trusted Contact Procedure

Responsible Office	Student Wellbeing Services
Responsible Officer	Head of Student Wellbeing Services
Approving Authority	Senior Leadership Group
Date of Approval	4 th March 2024
Effective Date	4 th March 2024
Related Procedures	Support to Study Procedure Fitness to Study Procedure Protocol for the death or serious injury of a student
Related University Policies	Safeguarding Policy Data Protection Policy
Amended (if applicable)	February 2024
Supersedes	Student Emergency Contact Procedure
Next review due	March 2027

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To explain how student trusted contact details are collected and updated and under which circumstances the University will make use of those contact details, how that process will be managed and who will be authorised to make contact.
- 1.2 To clarify when a trusted contact can be contacted by the University without student consent and in what circumstances the trusted contact will be contacted when a student has given advance consent by 'opting in'.

- 1.3 To provide a clear procedure for Bath Spa University staff, students, parents and supporters and the public and to ensure the correct procedure is followed.

Providing and updating trusted contact details

- 2.1 All students are required to provide details of a trusted contact person on registering with the University and this information is held securely on the University's student record system, SITS, in accordance with [BSU's Privacy Notice](#). It is mandatory for students to provide a trusted contact.
- 2.2 Students can nominate anyone they choose to be their trusted contact. It is expected that for the majority of students this will be a parent, partner or guardian, however, it can be another responsible and trusted adult.
- 2.3 Students should ensure that their designated trusted contact is aware that they have been nominated, that their contact details have been given to Bath Spa University and that they have given their permission to be nominated as their designated trusted contact. Students should ensure that the contact details are correct and that the phone number provided is the quickest and easiest way to contact the designated trusted person.
- 2.4 Students are asked to keep this information up to date and can make changes at any time by logging into the student App Hub. The University will assume that the information listed is correct, as in an emergency situation it may not be possible to check with the student first.

3. Circumstances when the University may use a student's trusted contact

- 3.1 Under data protection legislation, the University can legally use trusted contact information, without prior consent, in serious situations where it is in students' vital interests to do so. This is usually when there is a legal obligation to do so, or there is a significant safety concern, and it is believed that this action will protect the person, or someone else from risk of death or serious harm.
- 3.2 Trusted contacts are not routinely given information about academic progress or any other aspect of the student's life at University. The designated trusted person will only usually be contacted when there is a significant concern about the student's physical or mental health, wellbeing or safety.
- 3.3 Examples of circumstances when the University may decide to contact the designated trusted contact include, but are not limited to:
 - a. When the University is made aware of an emergency admission to hospital, or collection of the student by emergency services in what appears to be a potentially life-threatening or critical condition;
 - b. When, in the opinion of the University, it is not possible to reasonably keep a student safe, such as when they might be considered to be a threat to their own life, the safety or wellbeing of others or experiencing acute mental ill-health;
 - c. When the University is managing an emergency suspension, break from studies or withdrawal because of significant concerns about a student's fitness to study;
 - d. When the University has received a credible report that the student is missing, and there is genuine concern for their safety or wellbeing.
- 3.4 In addition to attempting to contact the designated trusted person, where appropriate the University may also pass the contact details to the emergency services, for example to paramedics or hospital emergency departments, where the information will help them to care for the student.

3.5 In the event of a suspected or confirmed death of a student, the University will pass the trusted contact details to the Police or other emergency services to support them in their role of contacting the next of kin. It is not the role of the University to first inform the trusted person of a death, and it should be noted that the trusted contact chosen by the student may not be their legal Next of Kin (see 2.2).

4. Providing advance permission – Opting in/Opting out

4.1 As part of their registration with Bath Spa University, it is mandatory for students to provide the contact details for a designated trusted person.

4.2 It is the student's choice whether they 'opt in' or 'opt out' of providing consent for their trusted person to be contacted.

4.3 Students will review their response to 'opt in' or 'opt out' each academic year at registration. Students will be reminded to check the personal details held by the University on their student record in January each year, and students are able to change their permissions at any time, by logging into the [App Hub](#).

4.4 University Advisors who provide support to students, such as Student Wellbeing Service Advisors, Registry and Student Services Advisors will discuss the use of trusted contacts during a discussion with a student and whether it may be helpful to include them in problem solving activities.

4.3 Examples of circumstances when the University may decide to contact the designated trusted person whether consent has been provided or not, include, but are not limited to:

- a. Serious physical or mental illness, or concerns about behaviour which might mean that someone is seriously unwell;
- b. When a student has missed key events without explanation, and we are unable to contact them; when there has been a prolonged lack of contact, despite efforts to get in touch with them.

4.4 Where students do not opt in, the University will only decide to contact a nominated emergency contact in the circumstances explained in section 3.

5. Authority to use the trusted contact

5.1 All requests for a student's designated trusted person to be contacted should be referred to a SWS Manager in the first instance. During usual working hours this can be done through the SWS staff only helpline. Out of hours, by calling Security on 01225 875555 and asking to speak with the SWS Manager on call.

5.2 All contact with a student's designated trusted person, will generally be made by SWS staff, although there may be exceptions, depending on the situation and this will be authorised by the PVC Student Experience, University Secretary or Head of SWS.

5.3 On no account should any employee of the University contact a student's trusted contact without authority as explained in 5.2.