



Magdalene College Cambridge
Student Welfare & Emergency Contact Procedure

Registered Charity Number 1137542

Summary

The procedure summarises how student emergency and welfare contact details are collected and updated, the circumstances under which the College will use these details, decision making, and who will make contact.

This document has been introduced to provide clarity for College staff, the College welfare team, students and nominated emergency contacts, and to ensure that correct action is taken in emergencies.

Student Emergency and Welfare Contact Procedure

1. Providing and updating emergency and welfare contact details

- 1.1 All students are asked to provide details of an emergency and welfare contact before they matriculate. They are also asked to provide consent in advance to the College informing the nominated emergency and welfare contact if the College has serious concern about the student's welfare, i.e. serious concerns relating to a student's health, including mental health, which may mean that there is a serious risk to the student's own wellbeing and/or safety or to the wellbeing and/or safety of others. In these circumstances, the College may contact someone the student trusts to discuss the specific concerns and to explore the possibility of any additional support that that person may provide to the student (the "emergency and welfare contact"). This guidance sets out the circumstances in which the College may inform the emergency and welfare contact based on the student's consent.
- 1.2 This information is held on the College's student file, in accordance with current UK data protection legislation and [the College's published procedures](#). The emergency and welfare contact nominated by the student has to give consent to the College that their details can be held on file.
- 1.3 A student's emergency and welfare contact may be their next of kin, or someone the student trusts, but must not be another student or member of staff of the College and/or the University. They can be a student at another university. The person must also be over the age of 18.
- 1.4 It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the emergency and welfare contact is aware that they have been nominated and that their contact details will be given to the College. See point 1.2 above. It is also the student's responsibility to ensure that the emergency and welfare contact has given permission in writing to be an emergency and welfare contact. Wherever possible, students should give a mobile phone number as well as a landline and an email address, so that contact can be made quickly.
- 1.5 Students are asked to keep these details up to date and may change these and other personal details at any time by contacting their Tutor or the Tutorial Office. The College will assume that the information is up to date and may need to use it without being able to check its accuracy with the student first.

2. Circumstances when the College may use an emergency and welfare contact

- 2.1 Under data protection legislation, the College may in any case disclose non-special category personal information (i.e. non-sensitive) about a student without consent when it is in their 'vital interests' to do so; this means in serious or life-and-death situations or in situations where there is a risk of significant harm to life. Special category personal information (e.g. information about a person's health) can also be disclosed without consent where necessary as follows: (i) in life-or-death situations usually where the student is physically or legally incapable of giving consent; or (ii) where the student has needs for care

and support, is at risk of harm and is unable to protect themselves, in circumstances where obtaining consent would prejudice the College's ability to help to protect the student from harm, the student cannot give consent (e.g. lacks capacity), or it is not reasonable for the College to obtain the student's consent.

2.2 Every student is an individual and their personal circumstances at the time will be taken into consideration before using the emergency and welfare contact details provided.

2.3 The student would normally be informed of a decision to alert their emergency and welfare contact, unless it were not possible to do so or to do so would cause delay.

2.4 The following are some examples of serious circumstances in which the College might inform the emergency and welfare contact:

- A student has attended or been admitted to hospital in an emergency.
- A student has suffered a serious physical injury, including self-harm.
- A student ceases to engage with their studies in circumstances where the welfare team already has concerns about the student's well-being and the welfare team has been unable to contact them.
- A student has not recently been seen in College in circumstances where the welfare team already has concerns about the student's well-being and the welfare team has been unable to contact them.
- The College has been advised that a student may be unwell or suicidal and the welfare team has been unable to contact them.
- A student has an ongoing illness and they appear to be deteriorating.
- A student is experiencing a mental health crisis.

2.5 Students may withdraw their consent at any time.

2.6 In addition to attempting to contact the emergency and welfare contact, the College may pass the contact details to the emergency services, for example to the ambulance crew or by telephoning the Emergency Department at the hospital, so that they can support their patient.

2.7 In the event of a suspected or confirmed death of a student, the College will pass the emergency contact details to the emergency services. It is not the role of the College to be the first to inform next of kin of a death.

2.8 The College supports the aims of the [Information sharing and suicide prevention Consensus statement](#) coordinated by the Department of Health to improve information and support for families who are concerned about a relative who may be at risk of suicide and better to support those who have been bereaved by suicide.

3. Deciding to contact the emergency and welfare contact

3.1 The decision to inform the emergency and welfare contact will normally be authorised by the Senior Tutor; exceptionally (and particularly out-of-hours) it may be taken by another member of the College welfare team who has been deputised by the Senior Tutor for this specific purpose.

3.2 The decision will be taken on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration the nature and seriousness of the welfare concern, and following consultation with other colleagues such as the student's Tutor, the College Nurse, the College Counsellor, or other members of the College welfare team. The Senior Tutor will advise who should contact the emergency and welfare contact.

3.3 If any member of College staff (for example, a Duty Porter) considers that the student's emergency and welfare contact should be contacted, they must in the first instance refer the case to the Senior Tutor or, exceptionally (and particularly out-of-hours), to another member of the College welfare team who has been deputised by the Senior Tutor for this specific purpose.

Emergency and Welfare Contact Details

Student name:	
Emergency and welfare contact name:	
Relationship to student:	
Contact Address:	
Contact Telephone No:	
Contact Email Address:	

I confirm that I have read and understood the contents of this document ("Student Emergency and Welfare Contact Procedure"). I give my consent for my emergency and welfare contact details as given above to be used as set out in this document.

Signature

Date