Procedure

Title: STAFF DEATH

Ref: HR/ER

Last updated: 3 November 2014

Notification

The death of an employee can be a traumatic experience for those who are left to deal with the loss of a team member. The information below is intended as guidance to ensure that processes are put in place effectively and sensitively as possible.

In the event of the death of a member of staff, it is important that all appropriate personnel are informed. The route by which the notification reaches the University cannot be controlled but thereafter it is the responsibility of the Academic Unit/Service and the Human Resources Department to co-ordinate the dissemination of information.

Head of Academic Unit/Professional Service (or their deputy in the event of their absence) will be responsible for informing the following:
- Their Human Resources Manager who will need the employee’s name and School/Service, date and cause of death, name and address of surviving spouse/dependant (if possible) and details of funeral arrangements (if possible).
- Colleagues within the Academic Unit/Service
- University Safety Advisor (if appropriate)
- Relevant Faculty Operating Officer (if appropriate)

The HR Director or nominated representative will be responsible for informing:
- HR Operations Team
- The Head of Payroll and Pension Services
- The Registrar and Chief Operating Officer who will inform the Vice Chancellor as appropriate
- Security
- iSolutions’ Serviceline
- University Librarian
- Director of Finance
- Secretariat
- Communications
- Chaplaincy
- Counselling Service

Procedure

The following procedure is to be followed in the event of the death of a member of staff or a pensioner. It is essential that information is disseminated sensitively in order to alleviate any further distress to relatives and colleagues.

Responsibility of Head of Academic Unit/Service

- The Head of Academic Unit/Service will inform staff and students (if applicable), and may consider a special meeting to inform colleagues. When colleagues are being informed of the death, they should also be made aware that they can contact the Counselling Service; Chaplaincy or HR for support should they require it.
• The Head of Academic Unit/Service may also wish to consider whether any former members of staff and students need to be notified.
• Depending on the nature of the circumstances, the Head of Academic Unit/Service may wish to consider removing photographs of the member of staff concerned, from noticeboards, and from the website.
• The Head of Academic Unit/Service also may wish to consider ensuring that the member of staff’s e-mail account is redirected to another nominated member of staff in the School/Service with immediate effect.
• Ensure that the Academic Unit’s/Service HR records are amended so that no inappropriate contact is made.
• Arrange for representation at the funeral.
• With approval of the deceased’s family, advise staff of funeral arrangements and arrange for staff to be released if they wish to attend the funeral (if appropriate).
• The School will also be responsible for dealing sensitively with any personal belongings held within the University in conjunction with relatives of the deceased.
• The Head of Academic Unit/Service will notify staff about funeral arrangements.
• The Head of Academic Unit/Service in conjunction with iSolutions will ensure that the employee is de-registered from local systems and other lists as appropriate (e.g. Academic Unit/Service web pages, University phone list).
• Check with ILLaD and iSolutions that the deceased is not registered for any training.

Responsibility of Human Resource (HR) Department
• Ensure the next of kin have a nominated member of staff to contact.
• HR will arrange for a letter of sympathy on behalf of the University to be sent to the next of kin.
• HR, if notified, will also arrange for the flag to fly at half-mast on the day of the funeral by liaising with Security. The flag will not normally be lowered for staff who have left or retired from the University over the previous ten years.
• HR will amend the employee’s HR record, so that no inappropriate contact is made.
• HR will report the death to Senate and/or Council via the Secretariat.

Responsibility of Finance Department
• The Head of Payroll & Pension Services will ensure that the final salary is paid along with any other entitlement and will contact the next of kin and relevant pension provider, if applicable, to arrange for death in service benefits to be paid.
• The Director of Finance will ensure that no invoices are sent to the deceased’s address, and deal with any other financial matters, e.g. if member of staff had a University credit card.

Responsibility of Communications
• If there is likely to be press interest in a death, Media Relations will liaise with the Academic Unit/Service to agree a strategy for handling the media. No information should be given to any external enquirer; instead they should be referred to Media Relations.
• Media Relations will also liaise with the Academic Unit/Service to co-ordinate any internal communication via Notice board.

Responsibility of the University Librarian
• The University Librarian will remove a member of staff from library records and ensure that no invoices are sent to the deceased’s address.

Donations
The University will make a donation of £50 to a named charity if requested. A request should be made to the Assistant HR Director (Client Services) who will arrange for a cheque to be raised through Finance.