

Emergency and Trusted Contacts Policy

Version 2

Policies superseded by this version

This document replaces the Emergency and Trusted Contacts Policy approved in June 2025 and effective from September 2025, with effect from the date this version is approved.

Summary of changes to previous version

The policy has been transferred into the University's updated policy template as part of the annual review. The substantive requirements of the current policy have been retained. Approval and effective dates for this version are to be confirmed.

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1 Introduction

City St George's, University of London has a responsibility to equitably protect the health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff. The University encourages all students to maintain a support network of individuals they trust and can call on for advice and guidance when experiencing challenges.

All students must provide up-to-date details of an Emergency Contact during registration. Students are also strongly encouraged to provide the current details of a Trusted Contact on an opt-in basis and to keep both sets of details current throughout their period of registration. This policy explains when the University may access and use this information, including where there are serious concerns about a student's health, safety or wellbeing.

The policy has been developed in line with relevant UK legislation, current best practice and Universities UK guidance about information sharing and suicide prevention.

2 Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

- 2.1 City St George's, University of London, regards freedom of speech and academic freedom to be fundamental to delivering its mission as the University of business, practice and the professions. Its values in this respect are set out in a code of practice on freedom of speech and academic freedom, which explains how the University will uphold, secure, and promote freedom of speech within the law: <https://www.citystgeorges.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/code-of-practice-on-freedom-of-speech>.
- 2.2 Nothing in this policy should be interpreted in any way that would be inconsistent with the code of practice and – in the event of any inconsistency – the provisions of the code will prevail.

3 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- 3.1 City St George's, University of London works to advance equity, diversity and inclusion in its activities, processes, and culture, for the whole University community, including staff, students and visitors.
- 3.2 The University will meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in its policies and seek to eliminate discrimination based on age, caring responsibilities, disability, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, neurodiversity, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.

4 Definitions

- 4.1 **Emergency Contact:** An adult (over 18) who knows the student well and, where relevant, understands their medical history. The University would usually contact this person following an emergency or serious incident where there is serious concern for the student's health and safety. Providing an Emergency Contact is mandatory as part of student registration.

Trusted Contact: An adult (over 18) whom the student trusts, who knows the student well and is able and willing to act in the student's best interests and provide support if needed. The nominated Trusted Contact can be the same person as the nominated Emergency Contact. Providing a Trusted Contact is optional and on an opt-in basis. A Trusted Contact may be contacted as a proactive, preventative measure where there are serious concerns about the student's wellbeing.

Need to know: Access to Emergency and Trusted Contact information is restricted to staff who require the information to respond to serious concerns about a student's health, safety or wellbeing.

5 Policy

5.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain the University's arrangements for collecting, storing and using Emergency and Trusted Contact details, and the circumstances in which the University may contact those individuals. It supports the University's responsibility to protect student health, safety and wellbeing while ensuring that personal information is handled appropriately and in accordance with data protection legislation.

5.2 Scope

This policy applies to all students of City St George's, University of London. It covers the provision and use of Emergency Contact and Trusted Contact information throughout a student's period of registration.

5.3 Principles

Students must provide an Emergency Contact as part of registration and are strongly encouraged to provide a Trusted Contact on an opt-in basis. Students are responsible for keeping these details up to date.

Students must notify the individual(s) they nominate and obtain their consent before sharing their contact details with the University. The Emergency Contact and/or Trusted Contact Information Sheet in Appendix 1 should be shared with them as appropriate.

Emergency Contact details will usually be used following an adverse situation or emergency where there is serious concern for a student's health and safety, such as a medical emergency, hospital admission, serious incident, or where the University has been unable to contact the student.

Trusted Contact details may be used proactively where the University has serious concerns that a student's physical or emotional wellbeing, or that of others, is at significant and imminent risk and the contact could help support the student. Trusted Contacts will not be contacted to discuss academic progress.

The University will make every effort to seek the student's consent before sharing personal information. However, information may be shared without consent on a case-by-case basis where necessary, including where the University considers this to be in the student's vital interests or where there may be a risk to life or serious harm.

Emergency and Trusted Contact information will be securely held on the University's electronic student records system, accessed on a need-to-know basis, and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. It will not be used or shared for unrelated purposes.

5.4 Roles and responsibilities

Students: provide an Emergency Contact; decide whether to opt in to providing a Trusted Contact; obtain the nominated person's consent; provide all requested contact methods; and keep contact details current, including reviewing them during annual re-registration.

Director of Student Experience (or nominee): authorises contact with an Emergency Contact and/or Trusted Contact.

Senior specialist staff: decisions about contacting an Emergency and/or Trusted Contact, particularly where information may be shared without the student's consent, are taken by experienced senior staff. Usually at least two of the following will discuss the individual circumstances: Head of Student Health & Wellbeing (or nominated senior member of staff); Head of Student Support and Designated Safeguarding Lead (or nominated senior member of staff in Student Support); Director of Student

Experience (or nominated senior member of staff in the Student Experience Directorate); and Academic Registrar (or nominated senior member of staff in Academic Services).

Designated Safeguarding Lead: must be consulted where the student is under 18.

6 Procedure

6.1 Emergency contact

An Emergency Contact will usually only be contacted where an emergency has occurred and there is serious concern for the student's health and safety. This may include a medical emergency or hospital admission, a serious incident, or where the University has been unable to contact the student.

Trusted Contact

A Trusted Contact may be contacted as a proactive, preventative measure if the University believes the student's physical or emotional wellbeing, or that of others, is at significant risk. Contact will only normally occur where there are serious concerns of significant, imminent risk and where serious or lasting harm may occur. The University will consider the student's current level of risk, recent behaviour, previous engagement with support, known medical history, concerns raised by others, capacity to make safe decisions, whether sharing information may increase the risk of harm, and the support needed to keep the student safe.

Authorisation and decision-making

Authorisation to speak with an Emergency Contact and/or Trusted Contact must be approved by the Director of Student Experience and/or their nominee. The University will make every effort to seek the student's consent in advance, although this may not always be possible. Decisions to share information without consent are made on a case-by-case basis.

Data and record keeping

Contact details are securely held on the electronic student records system. Whenever personal information is shared with an Emergency and/or Trusted Contact, the University records the justification for the decision, the nature of the information shared, with whom it was shared, and the time and date of disclosure. This information is securely held within our case management system and access is restricted to staff with responsibility for student Health and Wellbeing.

The University reserves the right to contact an Emergency and/or Trusted Contact without consent where it considers this to be in the student's vital interests, including where there may be a risk to life or serious harm.

7 Advice and guidance

- 7.1 Queries about this policy and advice on its application should be referred to Student Health & Wellbeing. Students can also refer to the Student Privacy Notice and the University's Data Protection Policy for information about how personal data is collected, used and retained.

8 Failure to comply

- 8.1 Failure by a student to provide an Emergency Contact means the mandatory registration requirement has not been met. Students are responsible for ensuring that nominated contacts have consented to their details being shared and for keeping those details current. Failure to follow the policy may also result in personal information being unavailable when urgent support is required. University staff must handle and disclose Emergency and Trusted Contact information in accordance with this policy and applicable data protection requirements.

9 Review

- 9.1 This policy is reviewed annually, with allowance for updates where required. The collection of Trusted Contact data on an opt-in basis will remain under review and may be updated in accordance with sector best-practice guidance. The policy is reviewed by Student Health & Wellbeing/Student Experience and submitted to the appropriate University approving authority. The approving authority for the previous version was the Safeguarding and Prevent Steering Group and SLT; the approving authority for this draft version is to be confirmed.

Policy information

Should you require further information regarding this policy or access to the policy in an alternative format, then please contact Student Health & Wellbeing (wellbeing@city.ac.uk).

Policy Title:	Emergency and Trusted Contacts Policy
Policy Version:	Version 2
Primary Author:	Student Health & Wellbeing/ Student Experience
Related Policies:	Data Protection Policy; Student Privacy Notice; Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom
Accountable Authority:	Director of Student Experience Head of Student Health & Wellbeing
Approving Authority:	Safeguarding and Prevent Steering Group and SLT
Date of Approval:	To be confirmed
Policy effective from:	To be confirmed following approval
Date of Review:	Annual review; next review date to be confirmed following approval

Appendix

Information to share with your Emergency Contact

Thank you for agreeing to be listed as my Emergency Contact with City St George's, in accordance with the [Emergency and Trusted Contacts Policy](#).

What is an Emergency Contact?

Emergency Contact: Someone that knows me well and understands my medical history. City St George's may reach out to an emergency contact in the event of a serious incident or concern about a student's immediate health and safety. This could be in the event of a medical emergency or hospital admission, a serious incident or if the University has been unable to make contact. Providing details of an Emergency Contact is a mandatory part of registration as a student.

Why I'm asking for your consent

City St George's requires students to inform and gain consent from anyone they wish to list as a contact. This ensures that you

- Understand your role
- Are aware of the type of information that may be shared
- Agree to your contact details being securely stored and used for this purpose.

What you're agreeing to

By giving me your verbal consent, you agree that:

I can share your name, relationship to me, and contact details (address, email and telephone number) with City St George's;

- I can share your name, relationship to me, and contact details (address, email and telephone number) with City St George's.
- Your name, relationship to me, and contact details will be securely held on City St George's electronic system.
- You may be contacted only in specific circumstances where there is a serious concern about my safety or wellbeing. This means that you should be available and able and willing to provide support when needed.
- You can withdraw your consent at any time by contacting me

The contact details that you provide to me will be securely held on City St George's electronic student records system. The information will only be accessible by staff on a 'need to know' basis.

Emergency Contact Data

City St George's is committed to handling data with care and ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) which set out the legislative framework for managing personal data. We collect Emergency and Trusted Contacts data for the purpose of supporting students when we have serious concerns about health and safety or wellbeing. Emergency and Trusted Contacts data is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Emergency and

Trusted Contacts data will be retained for a limited period, as stipulated in City St George's [Data Protection Policy](#), in accordance with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR, and shall not be used or shared for any other purposes. For more information about the personal data that we collect and how we use this, please see the [Student Privacy Notice](#)

Information to share with your Trusted Contact

Thank you for agreeing to be listed as my Trusted with City St George's, in accordance with the [Emergency and Trusted Contacts Policy](#).

What is Trusted Contact?

Trusted Contact: Someone who knows me well and is able and willing to provide support if needed. This is a person that City St George's may contact if there are serious concerns for a student's wellbeing. A Trusted Contact may be contacted to provide support if City St George's believes that a student's wellbeing, or that of others, is at significant risk.

Why I'm Asking for Your Consent

City St George's requires students to inform and gain consent from anyone they wish to list as a contact. This ensures you:

- Understand your role
- Are aware of the type of information that may be shared
- Agree to your contact details being securely stored by City St George's and used for this purpose.

What You're Agreeing To

By giving me your verbal consent, you agree that:

- I can share your name, relationship to me, and contact details ((address, email and telephone number) with City St George's.
- Your name, relationship to me, and contact details will be securely held on City St George's electronic system.
- You may be contacted only in specific circumstances where there is a serious concern about my safety or wellbeing. This means that you should be available and able and willing to provide support when needed.
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