

Process for death of a current member of staff

Initial Contact and Response

If you have received the direct notification of the death of a member of staff

- Offer your condolences and support.
- Offer to call them back or chat to them at a later time if they are very upset.

If they are happy to continue, then sensitively ask the following:

- the full name of the deceased person, date of birth and home address (if known)
- the job they did at the University
- the date of death
- the caller's relationship to the deceased and contact details
- advise the caller that the University will be in contact with them soon.

Inform Human Resources Operations-PS Connect by emailing
humanresources@exeter.ac.uk

Human Resources Operations - PS Connect

Inform HR Partner/Advisor and pass along any relevant contact details.

Inform Head of Pay and Pensions and the Pay and Benefits team for them to check pension scheme membership status and to cease pay.

Amend HR records to avoid inappropriate contact with member.

Check if there are next of kin and emergency contact details in trent.

Add a note on trent to say who contacted the University re the death.

Inform Pay and Benefits of any annual leave outstanding.

Assist the PVC/Director of Service with any details they need.

Human Resources Partner/Advisor

Inform PVC/Director of Service, Director of HR, Pay and Benefits team, Director of Communications, Occupational Health, Chaplaincy team and if required, Insurance Office and Estate Patrol.

Advise managers and staff of the various supports available. These are detailed in the [Support for Colleagues](#) section.

If the member of staff was an active member of ERSS, USS or NHS the Head of Pay and Pensions should be advised by the HR Partner of the name and contact details of the Next of Kin or the person who notified the University.

If the member of staff is not in the pension scheme, then the HR Partner/Advisor should collate the information about who is acting for the estate and inform the Pay and Benefits team.

If an academic member of staff, check if there is a promotion outstanding and the status of the promotion – if the promotion is nearly complete it might be possible to award this posthumously.

Pay and Benefits

The Pay and Benefits team will calculate the final salary to include any other entitlements, payroll will need to be informed of any holiday pay due.

The Payroll and Benefits Advisor can advise on car or bikes schemes.

The Head of Pay and Pensions will confirm to the Next of Kin or Executor of the Estate the amount due and arrange for payment to be made to the deceased's Estate, normally this would be the Executive of the Estate. If the person is in the pension scheme, this will be once we have the death certificate and details of who is acting on behalf of the estate.

Any overpayment of salary i.e. if the death occurs or notification is given after the payroll has been run will not be reclaimed if it is equivalent to less than one month's salary.

Where more than one month's salary has been overpaid, the Pay and Benefits team will inform the relevant HR Partner of the amount and any excess over one month's salary should be requested to be returned by the deceased's estate.

The leave date sent to HMRC should state the actual date of death even if there is an overpayment that is not being reclaimed. In those cases payroll will remove the retrospection on Trent so the payment is not reversed. No employee P45 is generated from Trent, it is just reported to HMRC via the Full Payment submission.

If the member of staff was an active member of ERSS, USS or NHS the Head of Pay and Pensions should be advised by the HR Partner of the name and contact details of the Next of Kin or the person who notified the University to enable them to contact Next of Kin to arrange settlement of any Death in Service benefits including those within the pension provision and request relevant documentation.

PVC/Director of Service

PVC/Director of Service (or their deputy) will contact the person who notified the University to offer condolences and ask for further details such as funeral dates.

Send letter of condolence.

Ensure colleagues and students are informed. Liaise with Marketing and Communications to draft a communication for all, where appropriate. This may include the Weekly Bulletin.

If you wish to set up an obituary profile page, then please contact digitalteam@exeter.ac.uk who will be able to arrange this for you.

If appropriate, call an all staff meeting.

Ensure that the member of staff's internal telephone and emails are redirected to a colleague.

Discuss the funeral with the family. Do they want university representation? Ensure that the wishes of the family are conveyed to staff.

Ensure any personal belongings have been dealt with sensitively. If appropriate, offer the family the opportunity to clear belongings from any office space and provide support to do this.

Inform university Senior Management, if appropriate.

Reviewed and updated August 2024

Support for Colleagues

The University EAP [Spectrum Life](#) is available 24/7 for 'in the moment support'. In addition, up to 6 sessions of free confidential counselling is available if clinically appropriate.

The [Chaplaincy](#) is available for open conversations if you have concerns, regardless of faith or world view.

Access Colleague Wellbeing web pages for resources and information on [bereavement](#) and [mental health](#) concerns.

A [Grief and Bereavement group](#) is available for colleagues – run by the chaplaincy.

[NHS IAPT services](#) – offers a free NHS talking therapies service such as counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) for mental health conditions such as anxiety and low mood.

If anxiety or low mood is impacting on your function, you should speak to the person you report to discuss what they can do to support you. An [Occupational Health Management Referral](#) is also available for advice and support using reasonable adjustments if needed.

Colleague Wellbeing has a [Mental Health Champions Network](#), Mental Health Champions are available to have open conversations about mental health and provide signposting.

Guidance for managers

Allow time in team meetings or 121s to allow team members to speak about how they are feeling and provide practical support where needed.

Speak to HR or [Occupational Health](#) for advice if needed.

Access the [Leaders and Managers Mental Health and Stress Toolkit](#) for ways to proactively manage team wellbeing and respond to concerns.

Signpost team members to the above services where required.