

BPP University – University Policies and Procedures

Missing Student Policy and Procedure



Scope	Students/Staff/External Agencies
Approved Date	July 2024
Approving Authority	Education and Standards Committee
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Document Owner	Education Services/Proctor's Office
Purpose	Outlines how to raise concerns about a student who is potentially missing, in addition to providing support and guidance on how missing students are identified and concerns about a missing student are managed effectively by the University.

Regulatory Mapping

BPP University General Academic Regulations
Section C: Registration, Engagement, Progress and Conduct

BPP University
University Policies and Procedures
Missing Student Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction	2
2. When is a student considered missing?	2
3. Stage 1 - Responding to an initial missing student report	3
4. Stage 2 – Confirmed Missing Student Protocol	4
5. Stage 3 – Ongoing Management and/or Closure of Missing Student Case	5

1. Introduction

1.1. The Missing Student Policy and Procedure outlines clearly on how to raise concerns about a student who is potentially missing, in addition to providing support and guidance on how missing students are identified and concerns about a missing student are managed effectively by the University.

1.2. It is important that where an individual has a concern that a student is missing it is reported to the University. The sooner a concern is reported to the University, the sooner the University can take steps to ascertain and support the missing student's safety and wellbeing. It is therefore vital that this concern is raised immediately.

1.3. The policy has the following stated aims:

- i. Define what the University regards as a 'missing' student versus what the University considers as an 'absent' student.
- ii. Define the actions the University takes once it has established a student is missing, including establishing the clear lines of responsibility in the event a student is missing, and the support processes for those involved in the missing student case.

2. When is a student considered missing?

2.1. The University will take any concern raised about a missing student seriously, whether raised by another member of the University (e.g., students/staff) or a third party (e.g., parent/guardian/Police). Concerns about a missing student may come from the University's student attendance and engagement monitoring. For

example, where a student does not respond to the University's attempts to contact a student.

- 2.2. It is important to emphasise that just because a student is absent from classes or has reduced engagement with their studies, does not mean a student is missing. In such situations, contact will be made with the student for lack of attendance and engagement under the terms of the Student Engagement, Attendance, and Academic Intervention Policy, and where there is no response, a determination will be made by the Head of Welfare and Student Support or a designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff as to whether to escalate the student as missing. As part of this determination, a key consideration will be the extent to which the student's lack of contact is out of character; the degree to which there is a concern for the student's wellbeing, health, and/or safety; and, the student is deemed to be "at risk".
- 2.3. Whenever a concern with respect to a missing student is raised, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the Head of Welfare and Student Support or a designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff, and the actions in this policy will be put into place, in order to manage the concern effectively, and support staff, students, and third parties involved.
- 2.4. Where the concern has been raised by the Police or Emergency Services, the University will co-operate and liaise with those services on the best course of action to take on managing the concern. In all instances of a concern with respect to a missing student being reported to the University, the Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff should be consulted immediately. The Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff will then be able to advise on the steps to be taken, either fully in line with this policy, or on advisement of third-party authorities that the University is working with.

3. Stage 1 - Responding to an initial missing student report

- 3.1. Where a concern is raised with respect to a missing student, this must be reported to the Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff as soon as possible. The Head of Student Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff will then act as the main point of contact.

- 3.2. The Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff will then gather key information about the student such as the reasons why the missing student concern is being raised, when the student was last in contact and/or last seen and any attempts to contact the student already, any key vulnerabilities or issues of concern with the student's wellbeing/welfare, and whether the student is already known to the University as "at risk". The Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff will also check that the contact details of the student are up to date, and any alternative and/or additional means of contact for the student of concern.
- 3.3. The Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff will do a comprehensive check across the University's information held on the student, and in consultation with University staff normally in contact with the student as to whether there were signs of tangible attendance and/or engagement, including checking engagement with University systems. A further attempt to contact the student using the contact information gathered will also be undertaken, in order to ascertain the student's whereabouts.

4. Stage 2 – Confirmed Missing Student Protocol

- 4.1. Once the Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff has undertaken the Stage 1 actions, or the University has been made aware of an immediate concern by the Police, emergency services, or third-party authorities, the student will be confirmed as missing. The Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and the University Proctor will be notified, and a Serious Incident Response Team (SIRT) will be assembled immediately as follows to be briefed by the Head of Welfare and Student Support or designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff:
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
 - The University Proctor, or in their absence, the Dean of Academic Quality & Policy.
 - The Head of Welfare and Student Support, or in their absence designated nominee from senior Safeguarding staff.
 - The Chief Legal Officer, or in their absence the Head of Legal.
 - A senior member of the Communications Team.

- A nominated representative by the respective Dean from the student's School to act as a single point of contact for the School, normally the Pro-Proctor.
 - Any relevant Safeguarding, Learning Support, and Proctor's Office staff required to support the case.
- 4.2. The SIRT will agree the following actions on the basis of the case information presented by the Head of Welfare and Student Support:
- The SIRT will agree the emergency contact actions required (e.g., should/how/when the student's registered next of kin be contacted).
 - The SIRT will agree contact with Police, Emergency Services, and other important welfare contacts such as hospitals, GP, Mental Health key worker, or other health professionals the student is registered with.
 - The SIRT will also agree contact with other external agencies, such as the Home Office, relevant Embassy, Consulate or High Commission.
 - The SIRT will also agree the arrangements for the support of staff, students, and associated third-parties involved in the case, including the communications and management of information on the case to ensure there are sufficient and appropriate updates on the case.
 - The SIRT will also agree the pattern of meetings required to manage the situation, and the key central members of the SIRT to be involved in managing the case whilst it is ongoing. An action plan will be agreed and followed by the SIRT.

5. Stage 3 – Ongoing Management and/or Closure of Missing Student Case

- 5.1. Where a student is found, their welfare and wellbeing will be confirmed and appropriate support will be provided to the student and those involved in the case. There may be referral to other university support policies and mechanisms where the missing student incident has raised a serious ongoing concern about the student's general welfare. The Head of Welfare and Student Support and University Proctor will determine whether further support is required such as Support to Study, Interruption of Studies, or other reasonable adjustments required to support the student's engagement with the University.

- 5.2. Where following Stages 1 & 2 the student is not found, the SIRT will meet to determine ongoing actions to be taken, and determine the main points of contact for liaison of students, staff, and third-parties.
- 5.3. In the rare and unfortunate event that the student is located and found to be deceased, the Response to Student Death Policy will come into effect.

Policy Revision History

Version Number	Description	Author	Reviewed by	Date
1.0	Revised and re-presented policy and now included in the UPPs.	Director of Academic Governance & Proctor	Dean of Academic Quality & Policy	July 2024