
Managing Personal and Work-Related Material for Absent or Deceased Staff and Students Procedures

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Responsible Officer: Vice-President (Corporate Services)

1. Introduction

The University acknowledges that, in the past, the management of personal and work-related material for deceased students and staff and those on sudden and extended absences have been dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Although in most cases these difficult issues have been handled with care and compassion, the University believes that there are benefits to be gained from implementing more formal procedures.

Rather than being overly prescriptive, these procedures aim to provide a basic framework within which these matters can be sympathetically handled. In order to maintain flexibility in dealing with these matters, the Vice-President (Corporate Services) and the relevant College Vice-President and Executive Dean / Portfolio Head may, on a case-by-case basis, agree to manage particular situations in alternative ways should the need arise.

The following procedures for managing the personal and work-related material of deceased staff or students and staff on sudden and extended absences recognises that:

Personal and work-related material — typically, email, social media material, electronic and paper documents – will likely reside in the individuals desk, office, workstation or connected to the individual's online accounts.

Work-related information, perhaps critical to ongoing University business, will co-reside with personal material and may include material kept in a deceased staff member's home office, online accounts and/or computers.

In the case of employees who are also enrolled students of the University, work-related material pertaining to their employment at the University may co-reside with personal material, including intellectual property in material related to their studies.

The University is required to access work-related information and implicit in this access is a classification of material between personal and work-related.

The University must ensure that it deals appropriately with requests from a member of the public about a deceased person.

A College Vice-President and Executive Dean / Portfolio Head may delegate the roles and responsibilities outlined in these procedures to another member of staff where appropriate.

2. Notification procedure for a deceased staff member or student

Where an officer of the University receives advice that a staff member or student has died, they should notify the Vice-President (Corporate Services), who will in turn inform the relevant College and Portfolio divisions.

3. Requests from a member of the public in relation to a deceased person

3.1 All requests from a member of the public in relation to a deceased staff member or student of the University, including from next of kin, will be referred to the Vice-President (Corporate Services) in the first instance.

3.2 The Vice-President (Corporate Services) will establish the person's bona fides as an authorised person with whom the University may deal and to whom material and/or information concerning the deceased may be released, having regard to the nature of the request, existing University policies or conventions and any relevant legislation.

4. Procedures for deceased staff member

4.1 Role of Supervisor

(i) Advise Information and Digital Services (IDS) that the email holder is deceased and to reset the access/email password.

(ii) Liaise with IDS regarding other changes which may need to be made to the University's web pages. In the event that changes are required to web pages which IDS are not responsible for updating, the supervisor will advise the appropriate person to make the necessary changes.

(iii) Review and respond to emails, and other work-related electronic and paper-based files of the deceased staff member. Ensure the work-related material is forwarded onto an appropriate officer of the University.

(iv) Liaise with the College Vice-President and Executive Dean / Portfolio Head in relation to arrangements with the deceased person's next of kin for recovery of any work-related material from the deceased person's home office and computer. In making these arrangements the University will take into account the sensitivities of the next of kin.

(v) In the case of any material/intellectual property created by the deceased that may be capable of commercial exploitation, or is otherwise confidential or sensitive in nature, the relevant College Vice-President and Executive Dean and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) should be informed of its existence and the material should be secured and kept confidential, pending advice as to how the material is to be handled.

(vi) Advise the College Vice-President and Executive Dean / Portfolio Head about the existence and nature of any personal effects of the deceased and take steps to secure same until advised by the College Vice-President and Executive Dean / Portfolio Head as to how the material is to be handled.

(vii) When appropriate, arrange with IDS to clear the hard disk and reinstall the operating system. The workstation will not be released for other purposes until this has been performed.

(viii) Advise the relevant People and Culture Business Partner in writing of the name of the deceased staff member and the date from which their pay should cease.

4.2 Role of College Vice-President and Executive Dean / Portfolio Head

- (i) Subject to 4.1 (v) and 4.1 (vii), consult with the Vice-President (Corporate Services) / People and Culture to make any necessary arrangements with the next of kin; and
- (ii) Subject to 4.1 (vi), consult with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) to make any necessary arrangements for handling intellectual property/material created by the deceased.

4.3 Role of Information and Digital Services (IDS)

- (i) Redirect the deceased staff member's emails to their supervisor (upon direction from the supervisor).
- (ii) Close down the email account after 14 days.
- (iii) Reset username access password, on request from supervisor.
- (iv) On direction of supervisor, clear the hard disk and reinstall the operating system.

4.4 Role of People and Culture

- (i) Stop the deceased staff member's pay at the advised date.
- (ii) Await instructions from the deceased staff member's estate regarding their outstanding entitlements.
- (iii) Advise Campus Security.

4.5 Role of Campus Security

Cancel the access card of the deceased staff member.

5. Procedures for deceased enrolled students

5.1 Role of the College Vice-President and Executive Dean

Upon being notified of the death of an enrolled student, the College Vice-President and Executive Dean will make contact with the Vice-President (Corporate Services) to discuss outstanding administrative or other matters which may require attention. These matters may include:

- (i) review electronic and paper-based files at the deceased student's workstation, if applicable, to sort any work-related material, if applicable, from personal and study-related material.
- (ii) review of the personal effects of the deceased student. In the case of study-related material/intellectual property created by the deceased which is confidential or sensitive in nature, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) should also be informed of its existence and the material should be secured and kept confidential, pending advice as to how the material is to be handled.
- (iii) liaise with Enrolment Services and IDS to ensure that all necessary administrative matters pertaining to the deceased student are resolved.

5.2 Role of Student Experience and Management

Make the relevant change in the student system– automatic processing passes this information into the relevant application.

5.3 Role of Information and Digital Services (IDS)

Close down the student's email and relevant accounts immediately.

6. Procedures for deceased graduand/alumni

Upon being notified of the death of a graduand/alumni, staff in Alumni relations (or area being notified) will notify Vice-President (Corporate Services) and Student Experience and Management.

6.1 Role of Student Experience and Management

Make the relevant change in the student system– automatic processing passes this information into the relevant application.

7. Sudden and extended absences – Staff

7.1 In the event that a staff member is unexpectedly absent for a significant period, e.g. through accident or illness, the staff member's Supervisor will:

- (i) inform People and Culture Business Partner;
- (ii) request IDS place an appropriate out-of-office message on the staff member's email; and
- (iii) to the extent that it is relevant, manage the work-related and personal material of the staff member in accordance with point 4.1 above.

7.2 The workstation will not be released for other purposes until the staff member confirms whether or not they will be returning to work.