



Residential Services Division

LSE Residential Services Missing Student Policy

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LSE Residential Services Missing Student Policy

The aim of this policy is to enable LSE Residential Services to make a sensitive and appropriate response following reports that a student in one of their Halls of Residences (LSE Managed and Non-LSE Managed) is suspected to be missing. A procedure is in place to support the policy.

This policy complies with the consumer information as required for the US Direct Loan programme and details the missing student procedures for LSE Residential Services.

LSE Residential Services Missing Student Procedure

Objectives of the procedure:

- To identify clear lines of responsibility in the event that a student in LSE Halls of Residences is suspected or notified as missing.
- To explain how to investigate the report of a student suspected as being missing efficiently and to identify the most appropriate course of action.
- To note how to cause minimum distress to the student's family and dependants.
- To explain how to liaise effectively with the local police service and other institutions as appropriate.
- To enable LSE to discharge their duty of care.
- To detail how to capture, record and update accurate information.

Residential Services – Introductory Pastoral Support Information

In LSE Halls of Residence, the key pastoral care team are the wardens and sub-wardens and the Head of Residential Life. These staff should take responsibility for knowing what the range of support services is and how to advise others. In Residences not directly managed by LSE an LSE staff member will usually oversee pastoral care on behalf of the school. Other frontline staff (eg, academic advisors, departmental administrative staff or reception and security staff in Halls) as well as designated peer supporters in Halls, friends, flatmates and classmates are also frequently early contacts for students in distress, and should be able to seek advice from others with more formal responsibility where the need arises.

When is a missing student a cause for concern?

A missing student is a cause for concern when they go missing from his/her residence without notice and their absence gives rise to serious concern and/or other people express serious concern.

Bear in mind that it is not necessarily a straightforward task to determine whether or not a student is missing. Students do not always notify relevant fellow residents about absences. Usually there are quite simple explanations why a student is 'missing', for example, they may be visiting family or friends without having told someone.



Procedure to be followed in the event that a student is reported missing:

Where a student is reported as missing by a fellow students/parents or other members of LSE staff, the following steps will be followed:

Steps 1 to 4 – Initial Report

1. The Head of Residential Life or their nominee will attempt to contact the Student. A clear deadline for contact will be given in messages to the Student.
2. The Residence Duty Manager, Warden or Subwarden should check the room to ensure that the student has not been taken ill inside the room and should then report to the person leading on the incident.

The Duty Manager must not try to search the room for any personal details as to the students' whereabouts, nor should they contact parents or next of kin.

Where there is a significant history of self-harm or mental health issues the Service Manager, Warden and Head of Residential Life must be contacted immediately in or outside of working hours.

Support can also be sought from the Out of Hours Support Group up until 11pm.

3. Initial concerns should be reported as follows:

The Head of Residential Life will contact LSE Head of Security.

The Head of Residential Life will contact the Dean's Office as appropriate.

4. The Head of Residential Life will lead the incident carrying out an initial risk assessment check (Appendix 1) and ensure that a detailed log of processes and communications is kept (Appendix 2).

Steps 5 to 11 – Follow Up Actions

5. The Head of Residential Life will notify and liaise with the following as deemed necessary and appropriate:

- Local Warden team
- Senior Subwardens
- Relevant Academic Department and tutor
- LSE Head of Security
- Local Hall Security
- Service Managers
- Police
- Friends, or another designated contact person

- Parents
- LSE Media/Communications Team
- Deans/Pro-Director Teaching and Learning
- Disability and Well-being Service
- Registry and/or Student Services Centre

6. The Head of Residential Life will notify the missing students relevant Head of Department if necessary and appropriate.

7. A missing person incident report will commence within 24 hours of the missing person report being received, or sooner if there is serious cause for concern or risk.

8. If a reported missing student is under the age of 18, the Head of Residential Life will attempt to contact the parent or legal guardian of the student. *(TBC)*

9. Once a missing person report has been filed with the Police, the Head of Residential Life or their nominee would act in accordance with police advice, updating staff and records, as appropriate.

10. Contact details provided by a Student are registered confidentially and any information provided by the LSE to assist the police in locating the individual must be in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA). Next of kin details provided by a Student are classified as personal data. However, if a Student has gone missing and is in potential danger it may be necessary to disclose details to a police service investigating the disappearance. This would be covered by an exemption in the DPA relating to disclosures to the police. There is a code of practice released by the National Policing Improvement agency, which can be found here: <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/other/9787777146872/9787777146872.pdf>. There is more difficulty if a private investigator is looking into the disappearance, but depending on verification of the private investigator's credentials and what they are asking for, the LSE could consider release.

11. Consultation will take place with residence staff during the event and post event as required and counselling offered and arranged.

Step 12 - Written Report

12. An incident report will be filed and updated concerning the missing person report.



Further Information:

Internal (LSE)

Working with students who give cause for concern

LSE Handbook for departmental tutors and academic advisers

Procedure to follow if a student does not attend classes and does not respond to meeting requests

Section 3.7 AWOL

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/TLC/Resources/Resources.aspx>

External

Metropolitan Police Missing Persons

Appendix 1

<u>Risk Assessment Checklist</u> Item	Detail	Considered Risk – Yes or No
Name		
Date of Birth		
Residence		
Age		
Student No		
Gender		
Nationality		
Course		
Length of course		
Length of time since last seen by informant(s)		
Requires essential medication/treatment		
Disclosed disability ?		
Does the student suffer from any form of physical or psychiatric condition that makes it desirable to have them considered a high risk?		
Is the Student's absence a significant change in their established pattern of behaviour, which cannot be explained, and gives reason that some harm may befall them?		
Is the Student usually resident abroad and have they gone missing in the UK?		
Is the Student usually resident in the UK and have they gone missing abroad?		
Is the Student aged 65 years or over?		
Has the Student any drug/alcohol related difficulties?		
Has the Student stated an intent to harm themselves/others?		
Has the Student recently been involved in racial/violent		



incidents(s)?		
Has the Student been a victim of crime, especially harassment, bullying or violence?		
Does the Student partake in any hazardous sports or activities?		
Has the Student had any recent injuries, especially head injuries?		
Are there adverse weather conditions?		
Does the Student have a previous history of going missing?		
Are there known to be family/relationship difficulties?		
How long is it since the student was last seen by any member of the university community?		
Is there any suspicion of abduction?		
Has there been any evidence of current or recent financial problems?		
Has there been any cause for concern over Student's academic work?		
When reporting a student missing to the police, the answer to one of the following questions must be "Yes" for them to take immediate action.		
Is there any suspicion that the student is being trafficked in to the sex trade ?		
Is there any suspicion that the student is involved in criminal activity ?		
Has the student displayed any signs of mental or emotional strain or have they recently experienced a mental health breakdown ?		
Assessment Completed By	Position	Date/Time



Appendix 2

Processes and Communication Log

Action Taken	Communication/Detail	Who Took action	Date/Time

END