

## Death Protocol – Staff, Governors and Members of the Court

1. As soon as a member of Imperial receives the news of the death of a:

- a. Current member of staff or former senior member of staff (including Visiting Professors and senior Honorary Staff)
- b. Governor (a Governor is member of the University's Council)
- c. Member of the Court

The information should be passed on to the relevant Responsible Adviser (defined below) as soon as possible, who will co-ordinate Imperial's response.

The protocol to be followed in the event of the death of a student is covered in a separate document, available on the HR Policies webpage.

### For a current member of staff or former senior member of staff

2. **The Responsible Adviser is the Chief People Officer** who must:

- a. Where appropriate, ensure that the following are notified:

- (1) President
  - (2) Provost
  - (2) Registrar and University Secretary
  - (3) Dean of the relevant Faculty
  - (4) Head of the relevant Service/Department/Division
  - (5) Vice-President, Communications and Strategic Engagement
  - (6) Director of Occupational Health
  - (7) The relevant Head of People Partnering (who will notify the Pension Specialists, Research Services (where relevant), and the Staff Hub)

Giving the date and cause of death (if known), together with any other relevant information available regarding the circumstances. Also to provide information on their length of service, role, known next of kin and any other relevant information.

- b. In the unlikely event that the next of kin has not been informed of the staff member's death, ensure that they are told, in conjunction with the Police and/or other emergency services, if they have been involved; this will depend upon the circumstances surrounding the death.
  - c. Ensure that the drafting of an official Imperial letter of condolence to the deceased's family is signed and sent by the President or nominated person in the President's absence (with a copy to the Head of People Partnering, who will in turn forward a copy to the Department/Division concerned). The host Department/Division is encouraged to send its own letter of condolence to the family. The draft letter from the President should be prepared by the local Head of People Partnering with input from the department and reviewed by the Chief People Officer before submission to the President.

- d. In case of internal or external enquiries about the deceased, agree a contact person with the Head of Department/Division and the Director of Legal Services, as to who will deal with all such enquiries. If a Coroner is involved the Director of Legal Services will be the Coroner's point of contact with Imperial.

3. **The Head of People Partnering** must ensure that:

- a. The official Imperial [letter of condolence](#) is drafted for the President to sign. It must be reviewed by the Chief People Officer before submission to the President.
- b. Send a copy of the draft condolence letter to the Pensions Specialists so that they are aware who the next of kin is. Confirm once the President has signed the condolence letter and it has been issued and inform the Pensions Specialists, so they know it's time to make contact.
- c. Liaise with Occupational Health regarding the provision of counselling support of staff members who may be affected.
- d. Ensure that Research Services and the Staff Hub are informed of the staff member's death.
- e. Ensure that a member of the Staff Hub amends ICIS, informs Payroll, asks ICT to put up an appropriate out of office response if required, and files the details.

4. **The Staff Hub** must:

- a. When a Leaver's request is received from a Head of Department/Division, send a copy of it to Payroll, Pensions Specialists, the Library, ICT, Security and Research Accounts, if necessary, to inform them of the death. Security and ICT must be told of the death *via* the Leaver's Form, so that the ID card of the deceased can be de-activated and the Imperial account de-activated (with ICT being asked to put up an appropriate out of office response if required).
- b. Amend ICIS and the file details (or file archive for former members of staff).

5. **The Pensions Specialists** must:

- a. Deal with all pensions and pay issues, liaising with the relevant pensions' authority, next of kin, the relevant Department/Division and other Imperial staff, including those in People Team and Payroll, as appropriate.

b. If the deceased was a current staff member (excluding Senior Research Investigators, Distinguished Research Fellows or any other staff who were re-employed following retirement), this will include organising an *ex gratia* payment of two months' gross salary regardless of whether or not the deceased was a member of an Imperial pension scheme.

6. **The Head of Service/Department/Division** must:

- a. Co-ordinate any departmental/divisional action such as informing their staff, including the Departmental/Divisional Operating Manager, and writing a letter of condolence.
- b. Liaise with the deceased's family to find out the funeral arrangements and whether a floral tribute and/or charity donations are requested. If they are requested, make the necessary arrangements, keeping the Head of People Partnering informed as appropriate. It is not normal university practice to send a floral tribute or make a donation to charity for former members of staff that have left Imperial employment for more than 6 months. However, exceptions may be made where, for example, the deceased was a member of the university for many years.
- c. Disseminate information in the Department/Division about the deceased's funeral (and/or memorial service, if appropriate) and, where appropriate, arrange for someone to represent the Department/Division on the day, if this is acceptable to the deceased's family.
- d. If the deceased was a current member of staff who died in service:
  - (1) Complete a Leaver's Form. This should state whether a suitable out of office message should be added to the closed email account by ICT. The form also needs to have the amount of annual leave outstanding inserted so that this can be paid along with any salary due.
  - (2) Authorise, with the agreement also of the Registrar and University Secretary, a staff member to check through the deceased's desk and email account.
  - (3) Check if the deceased was a central Imperial authorised signatory or had access to an Imperial credit card. If so, the Head of Department/Division must inform the Financial Controller.
  - (4) Check if the deceased had an Imperial mobile phone and, if so, inform the relevant Departmental Telecom Representative.
  - (5) Check if the deceased held a CBS Personal/Project Licence and, if so, inform CBS.

7. **The Departmental/Divisional Operational Manager** must:

- a. Check the departmental web pages, calendar entries, directory information and organisation charts and, where necessary, make the appropriate amendments.

- b. Check whether the deceased had a Professional Web Page, blog or wiki. If so, the departmental/divisional operational manager should make arrangements to update the pages and, when appropriate, to have them removed.
- 8. **The Registrar and University Secretary** must, in the event that there are security or safety implications (such as a death on Imperial premises or Imperial-related business), or if a police investigation is instigated, co-ordinate any related action and inform the following of any developments:
  - a. President
  - b. Chief People Officer
  - c. Vice-President, Communications and Strategic Engagement
  - d. Head of the relevant Department/Division
  - e. Director of Safety
  - f. Head of Security
- 9. **The Vice-President, Communications and Strategic Engagement** must:
  - a. Deal with media and similar external queries (if any), in consultation with the relevant Department/Division, and, where appropriate, deal, in liaison with the President and the relevant Department/Division, with such matters as the preparation of an obituary and enquiries regarding a memorial service (usually only necessary in the case of senior staff).
  - b. Ensure that, where appropriate, the central mailing lists, calendar entries, media liaison register, and central Imperial web pages are amended.

#### **For current or former Governors and Members of the Court**

- 10. **The Responsible Adviser is the Registrar and University Secretary** who must:
  - a. Inform the Chairman, President, and Vice-President, Communications and Strategic Engagement of the death, giving the date and cause of death (if known), together with any other relevant information available regarding the circumstances.
  - b. Draft an official Imperial letter of condolence for the Chairman to sign.
  - c. Liaise with the deceased's family to find out the funeral arrangements and whether a floral tribute and/or charity donations are requested. If they are requested, make the necessary arrangements.
  - d. Disseminate information in Imperial about the deceased's funeral (and/ or memorial service, if necessary) and, where appropriate, arrange for someone to represent the Imperial on the day, if this is acceptable to the deceased's family.
  - e. In the event that there are security or safety implications (such as a death on Imperial premises or Imperial -related business), or if a police investigation is instigated, co-ordinate action and inform the following of any developments:

- (1) President
- (2) Chief People Officer
- (3) Vice-President, Communications and Strategic Engagement
- (4) Director of Safety
- (5). Head of Security

11. **The Vice-President, Communications and Strategic Engagement** must:

- a. Deal with media and similar external queries (if any) and, where appropriate, deal, in liaison with the President and the Registrar and University Secretary, with such matters as the preparation of an obituary and enquiries regarding a memorial service (usually only necessary in the case of Governors).
- b. Ensure that central mailing lists, calendar entries, the media liaison register, and central Imperial web pages (if appropriate) are amended.

**For honorary staff who are not senior**

12. The Staff Hub must:

- a. Amend ICIS and the file details.

13. **The Head of Service/Department/Division** must:

- a. Co-ordinate any departmental/divisional action such as informing their staff, including the Departmental/Divisional Operating Manager, and writing a letter of condolence.