



**PEMBROKE**  
COLLEGE OXFORD

## **Student Emergency Contact Policy**

## 1. Providing and updating emergency contact details

- 1.1 All students are required to provide details of an emergency contact when registering at college.
- 1.2 The college can use emergency contact information in very serious situations where it is in the student's 'vital interests' to do so.
- 1.3 Students are asked each year to agree that the college may use the emergency contact details in situations which are not 'life or death' but where there are serious concerns about the student's wellbeing. A student will be able to opt-in or out of this agreement.
- 1.4 Students can nominate anyone they choose to be their emergency contact. We expect that for most students the emergency contact will be a parent or guardian. However, the student could choose another responsible adult.
- 1.5 Students should ensure that the emergency contact is aware that they have been nominated and that their contact details will be given to the college. Students should also ensure that the emergency contact has given permission to be an emergency contact. Wherever possible, students should give a mobile phone number as well as a landline and an email address so that contact can be made quickly.
- 1.6 Students are asked to keep these details up to date and may change these and other personal details on an annual basis or at any time by informing the Academic Office. This information is mandatory, i.e. it cannot be left blank. The college will assume that the information is up to date and may need to use it without being able to check with the student first.

## 2. Circumstances when the college may use an emergency contact

Emergency contacts are not routinely updated about any aspect of the student's life at college. Those nominated will only be contacted when there is a significant concern about the student's health or safety. In line with the college's confidentiality policy [\[link\]](#) we will not normally be able to respond to queries about the student from the emergency contact or any other family member or friend.

## 3. Concerns for Life

3.1 The college can use emergency contact information (without prior consent) where it is in the student's 'vital interests' to do so. This will usually be a scenario, where we have demonstrable concerns for the life of the student e.g.:

- Where the college is aware that a student has been admitted to hospital as an emergency, or collected by the emergency services, in what appears to be a potentially life-threatening condition;
- Where in the opinion of the college it is not possible to reasonably keep a student safe, where there may be a threat to their life and assistance from the emergency contact is needed.

In this type of scenario, in addition to attempting to contact the emergency contact, if requested, the college will pass the emergency contact details to the police in line with our legal responsibilities.

3.2 If the student is living away from college provided accommodation Pembroke college staff are unable to attend or provide assistance at any other address. However, students are able to access all welfare support within college and university and NHS services.

## 4. Concerns for Well-being

- 4.1 It may also be in a student's best interests for the college to use the emergency contact in other situations where there is a significant concern about a student's health or safety, but the college must have a student's consent for this. Consent will have been registered via an annual return, and will apply throughout the duration of their course.
- 4.2 If a student consents to the use of their emergency contact in this way, the student will still be consulted prior to college making any contact, if this is possible. If this is the case, the college welfare team will take time to discuss the options with the student at the time of need, and will take the student's wishes into consideration, but may get in touch with the emergency contact on the basis of the initial consent, over-riding the student's wishes if this is considered necessary.
- 4.3 If the student does not consent to the use of their emergency contact in this way, the college will actively engage and discuss with the student the opportunity to consent at the time concerns are raised. However, if the student has not given consent, then the college will only be able to contact the emergency contact in a 'life or death' situation, or with the student's consent at the time the concerns have been raised.

## 5. College Procedure

- 5.1 Any decision to make contact with a student's emergency contact will be taken by a nominated college officer with the agreement of at least two college officers. (NB college officers are: The Master; Academic Director; Domestic Bursar; Finance Bursar and Development Director).

5.2 Examples of circumstances when a decision might be made to get in touch with the emergency contact include but are not limited to:

Serious physical or mental illness or concerns about behaviour that might mean that someone is seriously unwell.