

Communicating with Parents and 3rd Parties

1. Introduction

Students and their families should understand that Bangor University is an adult environment and students are expected to assume an adult level of responsibility and have the necessary skills to study and live independently alongside people from a wide variety of ages and backgrounds. Students are therefore responsible for all communication with the University whether they have reached the age of 18 or not¹. This is in accordance with both the Data Protection Act 2018 and the University's Data Protection Policy.

2. Rights and Responsibilities

No information about a student can be released to another person without the student's consent. Members of staff receiving requests from parents, close family members or any other 3rd party should remember:

The University (including any staff members) cannot:

- Confirm or deny whether an individual is a student or prospective student at Bangor University
- Provide details of a student's address, attendance, general whereabouts or wellbeing
- Discuss a student's academic progress, including module choices, timetable, assessment, assessment dates or marks
- Discuss matters related to the student's personal record, for example fee payment, disciplinary procedures or an ongoing complaint / investigation
- Instigate a complaint or appeal procedure on behalf of a 3rd party
students must lodge these themselves

The University (including any staff members) can:

- Supply, or direct enquirers to, information on the University's policies and procedures that are publicly available
- Make appropriate enquiries if a serious concern for a student's well-being is raised but will not divulge the result of those enquiries
- Relay a message regarding an extreme situation to a student but cannot confirm if the message was received
- Release information as long as the written consent of the student is received

In extreme situations that require an emergency contact the University will

- supply emergency contact details to the relevant statutory authority² or
- contact the emergency contact directly

Student Consent to release information:

- Must be submitted by letter or email from the student's University email

¹ <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/governance-and-compliance/policy-register/documents/policy-procedures-under-18.pdf>

² <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/governance-and-compliance/documents/disclosure-procedure-en.pdf>

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- Can be given verbally in exceptional circumstances but should be backed up in writing as soon as possible
- Should only given for a clearly defined issue and only information relating to that issue will be released
- Wider consent can only be given where a student has complex support needs that are unlikely to change.
- Where consent to release information is obtained the University will inform relevant staff. For reasons of confidentiality, this will not include all staff that may have contact with the student. Parents and third parties may contact other staff however, the staff will need to seek authorisation prior to disclosing any information.

3. Guidance for Staff

Please refer any queries about this policy to Governance Services explaining that you are bound by University Policy and the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Further guidance on data protection is available from Governance Services on ext 8525. Please contact: <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/governance-and-compliance/index.php.en> to see the Data Protection Policy and related policies.