

King's College London

Home Visit Procedure

1. Purpose and Scope

King's College London recognises the importance of a student's health, wellbeing, and welfare. Student Support and Wellbeing Service regularly plays a critical part in supporting students to succeed in their studies. Most students are supported through a combination of email, telephone, virtual and in-person appointments.

However, there may be times where a student's circumstances prevent them from engaging with support services. This policy facilitates staff members conducting home visits where it is deemed appropriate and safe to do so. The Home Visit procedure aims to minimise risks to the health and safety of employees undertaking home visits. This is in accordance with King's College London's duty to ensure the safety of its employees so far as is reasonably practicable.

Examples of where a home visit might be carried out include:

- A student has fled domestic violence and does not feel safe to visit campus. They have indicated they will be more comfortable to discuss their situation in-person.
- A student has recently received a serious diagnosis, they are too unwell to attend campus but has requested an in-person appointment to discuss progression on course.
- A student has a diagnosis of Asperger's, they have anxiety about attending campus but struggle to engage over the telephone or via TEAMS.
- A student, who lives in private accommodation in London, has been referred to SOC as prolonged lack of contact. All efforts to contact the student have been exhausted and the Police are unwilling/unable to carry out a Welfare check. Where there are reasonable grounds to have concerns for the student's welfare and where it has been assessed safe to do so, a home visit can be considered.

2. Pre visit risk assessment and planning

- 2.1 All staff planning a visit to a student in their homes must undertake a pre visit risk assessment in relation to the person, the home environment, and the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 2.2 A pre visit risk assessment form and supplementary notes are presented in Annex A.
- 2.3 All staff must review the home pre visit risk assessment with their line manager and/or Safeguarding Lead before undertaking any visit.
- 2.4 Home visits should normally be planned with sufficient time to ensure the line manager and/or Safeguarding lead is available to review and sign the pre visit risk assessment. However, if a home visit has become critical due to welfare concerns but the line manager is off site, then the line manager can facilitate the review over the telephone/via TEAMS. The line manager must record this adjustment on the risk assessment form.

2.5 If the line manager is uncontactable or unavailable the review can be undertaken with another manager of similar seniority and experience, who will assume the role and responsibilities of the line manager. The line manager reviewing a home pre visit risk assessment must consider the risk factors and proposed control measures and either: -

- authorise the visit, (subject to the control measures recorded in the assessment),
- authorise the visit (subject to further additional measures) or
- refuse the visit. The reasons for a refused visit should be clearly recorded to assist any future consideration of home visiting.

2.6 The Line Manager should also make an entry on the record of contact within the case file that a home visit will not be made (and cross referenced on the risk assessment pro-forma).

2.7 Where a visit has been authorised the staff member should communicate this intention either in writing, email, or text, to the person being visited clarifying the date, time, and purpose of the visit and where relevant include specific restrictions for the visit e.g., that the visit will only last for a specified period, that the student notify staff of other people who may be present etc.

2.8 There should be two members of staff in attendance during a home visit and line managers must ensure sufficient staff resources be made available.

3. Mandatory Conduct requirements

3.1 The following are mandatory conduct requirements of staff conducting a home visit:

- 3.1.1 the mandatory requirement to confirm the start of a visit immediately prior to entering the home
- 3.1.2 the mandatory requirement to confirm the safe conclusion of a visit immediately after leaving the home
- 3.1.3 the mandatory requirement of having read and understood the emergency response procedures

3.2 The following are mandatory actions required from managers:

- 3.2.1 Managers must ensure that home visits only take place during office hours.
- 3.2.2 Managers must ensure that staff undertaking a home visit receive appropriate information, instruction, or training relevant to their roles.

4. Undertaking a home visit

- 4.1 Staff must ensure that before making a home visit: -
 - 4.1.1 the pre visit risk assessment has been completed, reviewed, and authorised by their line manager (or if unavailable another manager of similar seniority).
 - 4.1.2 they have recorded on Advice Pro and in their shared Outlook Diary the names, address, and start/end times of the intended visit.

5. When leaving for a home visit staff must ensure that: -

- 5.1 Staff have a charged and working mobile phone and that this number has been shared with relevant colleague who has been nominated as the home visit contact.
- 5.2 Staff must not deviate from the planned visits and route recorded in the home visits itinerary diary.
- 5.3 Where a change is unavoidable and necessary these must be communicated to the local home visit contact and the itinerary diary appropriately updated.
- 5.4 On arrival at the location of the visit, staff must contact the nominated home visit contact to confirm arrival and the expected duration of the visit.
- 5.5 After the visit, staff must immediately contact the nominated home visit contact and confirm the visit has concluded and they have safely left the location.

6. During a home visit

- 6.1 During the visit staff should keep alert to changes in circumstances of the visit that may affect their safety, such as changes in the behaviour of the person being visited, entry of unexpected persons into the home setting etc.
- 6.2 Where staff feel threatened or concerned for their safety or for any other reason, feel uncomfortable about the visit, they must terminate the visit and leave the home as quickly as possible. All staff have a legal right to leave their place of work if they believe that otherwise they may be in serious and imminent danger. In such circumstances they will not be subject to any detriment.
- 6.3 Should the threat escalate, or staff members are prevented from leaving, staff must call 999 for emergency assistance.
- 6.4 If a staff member has not made contact at the planned visit completion time, the nominated home visit contact must immediately attempt to call the staff member and check all is well.
- 6.5 If the staff member responds and the visit has been extended the nominated home visit, contact must update the local itinerary diary and await a confirmatory call for the revised time.

- 6.6 If the staff member fails to answer, the nominated home visit contact must immediately alert the staff member's line manager (or in their absence the senior person on site.)
- 6.7 The staff member's line manager (or in their absence the senior person on site or the line manager's manager) must then make two further attempts to contact the staff member.
- 6.8 If no response is received, the staff members line manager (or in their absence the senior person on site or the line manager's manager) must then immediately contact the police. They should report that there is concern about the safety of staff members: that it has not been possible to contact them during a home visit. The Police should be provided with all relevant contact details.
- 6.9 Managers must ensure that, following any incident where staff experience threats or intimidation during a home visit, that staff involved receive the appropriate support. This may include providing reassurance, de-briefing and/or allowing an immediate short period of time away from the workplace to recover.
- 6.10 For more serious incidents, including anywhere the police were involved, the support should include more formal debriefing or arranging access to formal counselling available via the [King's Employee Assistance Programme](#).

HOME VISIT RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

This form MUST be completed whenever a home visit is planned and then signed by the relevant staff member and their Line Manager before any visit can proceed.

Visit details

Date (of planned visit)		Time (of planned visit)	
Expected length of Visit		Estimated time of return to office/place of work	
Name of staff member carrying out home visit		Mobile number	
Name of 2nd person		Mobile number	
Name of nominated contact		Nominated contact number	
Car registration (if applicable)		Make / model / colour of vehicle	

Details of person to be visited

Name	
Student ID:	
Address	
Telephone number	
Purpose of visit	
Why is a home visit appropriate rather than a welfare check by the emergency	

services, or a TEAMS meeting?	
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Assessment of risks

Is the person already known to visiting staff members: - YES/NO If yes is there any pre-identified risks regarding the visit? Specify: -

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Initial visit / repeat visit (delete as applicable)

If a repeat visit has there been any issues on previous visits: -

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Known risk to staff? YES / NO

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Known relevant information regarding the address/area: -

e.g., other residents, smoking, pets, location of the home etc

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Overall assessment of risk

The overall risk of this visit is: - LOW / MEDIUM / HIGH (delete as applicable)

- In my view the visit can take place, subject to the following control measures: -

Minimum compulsory controls for all home visits: -

- Completion of the office home visit itinerary diary.
- Notifying the nominated contact point immediately the visit is due to start and the estimated visit.
- Confirming to nominated contact point immediately once the visit has been safely completed and the location left.
- A mobile phone will be carried during the home visit (including when travelling).

Additional controls: -

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- In my view it would be unsafe to visit under the present circumstances due to: -

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Staff signature:		Date:
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Line Manager / Safeguarding lead review:

- Home visit approved with the following additional control measures: -

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Home visit declined for the following reasons: -

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Further additional comments

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Managers signature:		Date:
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This completed assessment should be left with the office based nominated contact for the visit.

When the visit is completed, the form should be added to the appropriate case file.

Supplementary notes for completing the home visit risk assessment form

Visit details

Time of the visit

The visit should be arranged to occur during office and during daylight hours

Time of return to office

If the visit is the last action of the day and the staff member will be returning home afterwards this should be clearly recorded in the box.

Assessment of risks

A risk assessment should be, as far as possible, informed by previous contact with the student or discussion with other staff members who have previously met the student.

Factors to consider when assessing the risk include: -

Factor	Consideration
Purpose of the visit	Is the purpose of the visit one which is likely to provoke hostility, e.g., student facing disciplinary actions, VISA concerns?
Gender	The gender of the person being visited will need careful consideration, particularly where the visit involves staff visiting a person of a different gender. Important to keep in mind any cultural/religious implications.
Cultural issues	Are there cultural concerns to be considered? Does the person being visited have religious or cultural sensibilities which we should be mindful of?
Specific factors known about the person being visited	History of aggressive behaviour, domestic violence, or child protection issues? History of sexual offences? History of substance abuse and dependency? History of psychotic disorders? Is the person prescribed antipsychotic medication, are they using their medication?
Premises being visited	Other occupants known/likely to be present? What impact could the visit and nature of the conversation have on other persons living in the premises?

	Does the person being visited/other occupants smoke? Are pets likely to be present?
Surrounding local area	What is the access to the premises e.g., local car parking available or bus stop; both within a short walk to the premises? Premise type e.g., house, flats, tower block (with lifts), sub-let rooms within the property? Is there a good mobile signal in the area being visited?