1. OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF POLICY

The Student Address Policy (“the policy”) sets out the University’s approach towards the management of postal address information for all its students. The policy establishes clear definitions for different types of addresses and ensures that the University is able both to retain appropriate and accurate address data to enable contact with students at relevant times and to meet its legal and external obligations, particularly regarding Tier 4 (students) of the Points-Based Immigration System and the provision of data to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

2. TYPES OF ADDRESSES

The University holds different types of addresses for students, which are described below:

2.1 Contact Address is the local, term-time address of the accommodation used by a student during his or her period of study. It is the primary address that the University uses to contact a student during the period of study.

2.2 Permanent Address is the address of a student’s permanent home as determined by the student, which is often but not always where s/he returns during vacation periods and (particularly for undergraduate students) is usually but not always the address of a student’s parents or guardians.

2.3 Emergency Contact Address is required to enable the University to request and hold contact information for a student’s next of kin. The information is used to contact the next of kin in the event of an emergency and is accessible by relevant University authorities for this purpose.

The University recognises that, depending on the student’s individual circumstances, one or more of these addresses may be the same.

3. RECORDING AND MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT ADDRESSES

3.1 All student addresses are recorded on the University’s Student Records Database (SRDB) on the basis of information provided during the application and subsequent registration processes. Addresses are managed in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and University policy in this area.

3.2 The management of student addresses is the overall responsibility of the Academic Section in conjunction with Management Information Systems (MIS) team within the Information Systems Services (ISS) Section.

3.3 Address information is monitored regularly throughout the year and appropriate steps taken to ensure it is accurate and the University is able to meet its operational and legal requirements. Departments, Schools and Centres and other relevant units are required to report concerns about address data relating to individual students to the Registry so that relevant action may be taken.

3.4 Contact address information remains unchanged unless the student updates or amends it via the myEssex student portal. Where a contact address is changed or amended, the student is required to ensure the address is a valid UK address.
3.5 Where contact address information is deleted or amended, the SRDB retains previously held information and holds a record of who made the change and when. The previously held information is not retained permanently and is deleted in line with current contact address information (see section 5.2).

3.6 Regular checks are undertaken to ensure all students have a valid UK address recorded on the SRDB. A formal process exists for cases where no address is recorded (see section 4).

3.7 Where it comes to light that a student is subletting his or her University accommodation, which results in inaccurate address data being held on the SRDB or elsewhere for one or more students, the relevant member of staff is required to report the case to the Registry to ensure the relevant record(s) may be amended.

3.8 While it is not a legal requirement for all students to provide an accurate and up to date contact address, this policy requires students to provide a contact address and to ensure that University records remain accurate and up to date.

3.9 For students registered on a Tier 4 visa under the Points-Based Immigration System, the University has a legal obligation to ensure accurate and up to date address data are held. The University reserves the right to report to the UK Border Agency any student that fails to provide accurate information that prevents the University from fulfilling this obligation.

3.10 The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action against any student who provides invalid or inaccurate address information.

3.11 Student address data held on the SRDB are used for all other University systems. Where a member of staff is registered as a student or a registered student is employed as a member of staff, where a contact address is provided within the context of employment or study that differs from existing address data, the University accepts the most recently provided contact address and all systems are amended accordingly so that one contact address is held.

4. PROCESS WHERE NO ADDRESS IS RECORDED

4.1 Where a student has not provided a contact address or removes the existing address information and does not replace it, the following process is used to ensure that relevant individuals are identified and contacted and appropriate address data recorded:

1. At least once a term, an email is sent from the Registry to all students with a blank contact address requesting that the relevant address information is provided via the myEssex student portal.

2. Fourteen days after the initial email, any student who has failed to provide a contact address since the initial email is sent a second email by the Registry, again requesting that the address information is provided.

3. Seven days after the second email, a report is produced of all students with a Tier 4 visa whose record does not include a viable contact address. The Registry investigates each case individually until the University holds relevant address data in accordance with its obligations under Tier 4 (students) of the Points-Based Immigration System.

5. RETENTION OF ADDRESS DATA

5.1 When a student completes his or her programme of study, the SRDB retains the permanent address as recorded at the point of graduation for six years. Students are provided with an opportunity to amend the permanent address during the graduation period, after which it is transferred to the Alumni database from where individual Alumni may update their contact details through the Alumni portal. Students applying for further study are required to verify or amend the permanent
address (where it is still held) as part of the application and registration process for the new programme of study.

5.2 Contact addresses are not retained once a student has completed his or her period of study. Students applying for further study are required to supply a new contact address as part of the application and registration process for the new programme of study.

5.3 Emergency contact addresses are not retained once a student has completed his or her period of study. Students applying for further study are required to supply new emergency contact information as part of the application and registration process for the new programme of study.

6. POLICY REVIEW

6.1 The Policy is reviewed regularly at least every three years to ensure it continues to meet the University's legal and operational requirements.

Richard Stock
Deputy Academic Registrar
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