



University of  
Chester

## University Safeguarding Policy and Protocols

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# SAFEGUARDING POLICY [AND ASSOCIATED PROTOCOLS]

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain the measures that form the basis of the University's approach to safeguarding and protecting the wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk who come into contact with the University of Chester and its activities. The University is committed to upholding a culture of dignity and respect: safeguarding is a shared responsibility for all members of the University community.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with guidance on the procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or adult at risk may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

The associated Safeguarding Protocols outline the steps staff should take to ensure that safeguarding protocols are followed. It is intended to support compliance with the legal duties placed on the University by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended) and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2017 creates a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism – the 'Prevent Duty'. The Safeguarding Protocols are intended to align with the [Prevent Duty Guidance for higher education institutions](#).

Every member of staff should make themselves familiar with this Safeguarding Policy, the associated Protocols and the support which exists within the University and utilise these as appropriate if there is a cause for concern.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- activities which take place on University premises and off-site activities for which the University is responsible, including the delivery of apprenticeships and activities that operate as part of collaborative provision and off-site placements;
- all University students, on and off the University's premises and/or during all University-related activities;
- all University staff, however appointed or engaged;
- consultants and contractors engaged by the University or associated with University activities.

It is recognised and appropriate that individual safeguarding policies and practices will be developed in specific parts of the University in response to local requirements. These areas include University Nurseries; the Faculty of Health, Medicine & Society and the School of Education. Links to these policies are included in section 6 of this document. These specific policies will take precedence in the event of a safeguarding issue which needs to be reported. However, they will be in line with the principles set out in this University policy.

Students on some professional programmes (e.g. in Law, Education, Social Work, Nursing) and some members of staff are required to be registered with or accredited by their professional bodies, which impose their own professional standards or professional suitability regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy is complementary to, and does not replace, those standards and regulations or professional

misconduct policies. Misconduct by a student studying on such a professional programme could therefore result in disciplinary action by both the professional body and the University.

### **3. POLICY**

The University's Safeguarding Policy aims to:

- Appoint a University Senior Lead to take strategic responsibility for safeguarding;
- Appoint a Prevent Lead who will take responsibility for compliance with the Prevent Duty;
- Appoint Operational Leads to provide day-to-day oversight of institutional policy and protocols, and to act as central points of contact for concerns related to a child, young person or adult at risk;
- Promote a culture of listening, taking account of a person's wishes and feelings, and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk in line with good practice and legal requirements;
- Provide clear links with multi-agency departments, in order to deliver assurance to parents, carers and other parties that the University takes reasonable steps to manage risks and keep children, young people and adults at risk safe.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken to prevent and report any safeguarding concerns (Appendix 1(a)) where necessary;
- Ensure that approaches to safeguarding are aligned to those adopted by statutory agencies;
- Ensure that all University staff, students, contractors and visitors understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and Prevent;
- Ensure appropriate governance and oversight of safeguarding arrangements, including through establishment of a University Safeguarding and Prevent Steering Group (as a standing committee) and Safeguarding Panel (to be convened as required to consider specific cases);
- Identify staff with clear safeguarding responsibilities, to ensure that individuals working with children, young people and adults at risk are deemed not to pose an unacceptable risk to vulnerable groups;
- Provide identified safeguarding staff with up-to-date and relevant training, to support the application of the Safeguarding Policy and Protocols;
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in the event of any allegations or suspicions regarding harm of children, young people or adults at risk arising from contact with University staff, students or volunteers, whether the harm has taken place on University premises or not;
- Provide up-to-date, good quality advice and information about support and services to help protect adults and children from abuse and harm or respond to identified needs. This includes specialist safeguarding responses, general support and targeted support that will help reduce vulnerability and safeguarding incidents;
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are followed by preventing unsuitable people from working

with children, young people and adults at risk;

- Pay due regard to all relevant legislation measures including the Children’s Act (2004); Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006); Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018), and Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015), regarding the duty to have due regard to the need to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism;
- By doing all the above, ensure that our legal duty of care to safeguarding is undertaken, and that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that children, young people and adults who may be at risk are safe, and that policies and processes are in place to reduce the risk of harm.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

Throughout this Policy and associated Protocols, the following definitions will apply:

- **Children and young people** – people under 18 years of age.
- **Adults at risk** – as defined by section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Care Act 2014) and/or those persons aged over 18 who by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness are (or may be) unable to take care of themselves or are (or may be) unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This can include adults experiencing domestic violence, exploitation and sexual abuse.
- **Prevent** – part of the Government’s Anti-Terrorism Strategy. Higher Education has been identified as a sector where young people may be radicalised. This strand of the anti- terrorism strategy aims to prevent young people getting involved in terrorism.
- **Channel** – this process is a key part of Prevent and adopts a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- **Radicalisation** – the process by which an individual comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
- **Extremism** – the UK Government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism also includes calls for death of members of the armed forces.
- **Terrorism** – summarised in the Terrorism Act 2000 as an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- **Safeguarding** – protecting children, young people and adults at risk from maltreatment and harm. Maltreatment and harm can take many forms, including physical abuse; sexual abuse (including rape, sexual assault and any adult sexual acts without consent); psychological and emotional abuse; modern slavery and human trafficking; financial or material abuse (such as theft, fraud and misuse of property); neglect and acts of omission (such as ignoring medical or

physical care needs); self-neglect (such as failure to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surrounding); domestic violence; discriminatory abuse (such as abuse on the grounds of race, disability or other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010) and organisational abuse (such as neglect and poor care practice within an institution or care setting) Safeguarding includes protection from involvement with crime and/or terrorism.

- **Regulated activity** – regulated activities are those that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) can bar people from doing. It is a criminal offence for a barred person to seek to work, or work in, activities from which they are barred. It is also a criminal offence for employers or voluntary organisations to knowingly employ a barred person in regulated activity.
- **University premises** – all buildings and land owned or operated by the University and Chester Students' Union, including University managed accommodation.

Further definitions are given in the associated Safeguarding Protocols.

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As part of its commitment to safeguarding, the University expects all staff, students and contractors and those contributing to its activities to behave in an acceptable manner, report any safeguarding concerns they may have and follow the Safeguarding Policy and Protocols, in order to promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. Failure to follow this may lead to disciplinary action.

There are also a number of specific safeguarding roles at the University, as outlined below. Contact information for named roles are annexed to this Policy (Appendix 2). Where possible, named individuals should ensure that a trained deputy is available to act as an alternate for them when they are on annual leave or otherwise absent.

### 5.0. Strategic Safeguarding Lead

- Accountable for safeguarding arrangements at the University of Chester;
- Provides senior leadership for safeguarding, reporting to the Vice-Chancellor and Council when required;
- Chairs a University Steering Group to ensure effective implementation, communication, monitoring and review of the Safeguarding Policy and Protocols;
- Acts as a point of escalation for Operational Safeguarding Leads, including the chairing of a Safeguarding Panel when required;
- Oversees an institutional network of key safeguarding contacts across the University, and ensures that those involved in safeguarding are provided with information, advice and training on the identification and protection of children, young people and adults at risk;
- Liaises with the University's Prevent Lead to ensure that Safeguarding Policy and Protocols are compliant with the University's responsibilities under the statutory Prevent duty, including liaison with the Regional Prevent Coordinator as required.
- **Named person: Director Student Services Dr Delyth Hughes**

### 5.1. Prevent Lead

- Executive accountable for overall Prevent arrangements at the University of Chester;
- Oversees and supports the University's Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure that Safeguarding Policy and Protocols are compliant with the University's responsibilities under the statutory Prevent duty, including liaison with the Regional Prevent Coordinator as required;
- Ensures the development and review of the University's Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan, in alignment with local and regional Prevent themes and strategies;
- Ensures the annual submission of required Prevent compliance information to the Office for Students.
- **Named person: Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer, Dr Helen Galbraith**

### 5.2. Operational Safeguarding Lead (Students)

- Responsible for operational safeguarding provision at the University at Chester, and particularly as it relates to students;
- Deputises for the Strategic Safeguarding Lead as necessary;
- Acts as a member or chair of Safeguarding Panels as required;
- Coordinates, communicates with and supports a network of University Safeguarding Coordinators;
- Acts as an initial central contact for student-related concerns raised by Safeguarding Coordinators **(Appendix 1(a))**;
- Ensures effective liaison with local Children's and Adult Social Care Services, Channel, Police and other relevant, authorised local and regional agencies;
- Ensures that central, confidential records are maintained of relevant cases and actions taken **(Appendix 1(b))**;
- Ensures that the University Safeguarding Policy and Protocols are kept up to date.
- **Named persons: Deputy Director Student Services, Kelsey Norkett/Kara Joynson**

### 5.3. Operational Safeguarding Lead (Staff)

- Works alongside the Strategic Safeguarding Lead and Operational Safeguarding Lead(Students) to provide HR advice and guidance for the University's safeguarding provision;
- Acts as an initial central contact for staff-related concerns raised by Safeguarding Coordinators **(Appendix 1(a))**;
- Acts as a member or chair of Safeguarding Panels as required;
- Ensures that central, confidential records are maintained of relevant cases and actions taken **(Appendix 1(b))**;
- Ensures appropriate processes are followed according to HR standards;

- Supports other members of HR to work directly with staff connected with safeguarding issues, as required.
- **Named person: Director of Human Resources, Rashmi Patel/Deputy Director of Human Resources Vicki Durr**

#### 5.4. Faculty/Service Safeguarding Coordinators

- Provide a visible point of contact in Faculties and relevant Professional Services to support staff to manage safeguarding issues;
- Provide and disseminate consistent and accurate safeguarding advice, training and support to University staff and students;
- Act as role models in order to ensure a culture of safeguarding is adopted across the University;
- Ensure information and advice is accurate and reflects current best practice;
- Ensure alignment between University Safeguarding Policy and Protocols and any local policy/practice;
- Attend and contribute to an institutional safeguarding network;
- Act as a member of Safeguarding Panels where required;
- Work directly with staff and students where safeguarding issues are presented, liaising with other Safeguarding Coordinators and the Safeguarding Leads as required;
- Complete, or support staff to complete, safeguarding referrals (**Appendix 1(a)**) and **Appendix 1(b)**) and ensure they are sent to the relevant Operational Safeguarding Lead to facilitate appropriate record keeping;
- Attend training events to ensure practice is current.
- **Named persons for each Faculty and relevant Service are annexed to this Policy (Appendix 2).**

#### 5.5. Safeguarding and Prevent Steering Group

- Chaired by the Strategic Safeguarding Lead, or by the Operational Safeguarding Lead (Students), as the designated deputy;
- Meets at least twice per year to monitor compliance with and review the University Safeguarding Policy and Protocols; to monitor training needs and organise training as required; and to plan associated communications;
- Also acts as the Steering Group to monitor and oversee the University's compliance with the statutory Prevent duty, liaising with the executive Prevent Lead;
- Membership to include: Strategic Safeguarding Lead; Operational Safeguarding Leads; at least one Faculty and one Service Safeguarding Coordinator; an executive representative from the Students' Union.

## 5.6. Safeguarding Panel

- To be convened as required during the Student Services Weekly Meeting where critical student cases are discussed with Student Services managers (this relates to student cases only);
- In cases which require a more urgent response / which cannot wait until the Monday meeting, a Safeguarding Panel will be convened as follows;
- Chaired by a Safeguarding Lead (Strategic or Operational);
- Convenes (physically or online) as required to consider specific cases that require an institutional response, and to advise the Safeguarding Leads on the appropriate response;
- Includes at least three members, one of who must be a Safeguarding Lead (Strategic or Operational);
- Does not share the identity of the subject beyond those who need to know, including members of the panel (i.e. cases should be discussed without disclosure of identity if possible);
- Makes recommendations and/or referrals regarding specific safeguarding cases, including both internal referrals to Safeguarding Coordinators and external referrals to relevant agencies as appropriate, including referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Membership to be drawn from: Strategic Safeguarding Lead; Operational Safeguarding Leads; Safeguarding Coordinators; an executive representative from the Students' Union.

## 6. RELATED POLICIES, INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

The following related policies, information and guidance should be consulted as appropriate alongside the University Safeguarding Policy and Protocols:

- [Safeguarding Policy Faculty of Health, Medicine & Society](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy - School of Education](#)
- [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Dignity and Respect Policy](#)
- [Personal Relationships Policy](#)
- [Employee DBS Checks and Criminal Convictions Policy](#)
- [Disclosure and Barring Service Checks \(DBS\) Student Screening Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#)
- [Public Interest Disclosure Policy \(Whistleblowing\)](#)
- [Protocol Regarding Babies or Children on University Premises](#)



## **7. OPERATIVE DATE**

This policy was last reviewed in September 2024, with changes approved by Senate on 11 September 2024. Changes took immediate effect from the last date of approval. The policy and protocols are subject to minor ongoing changes to appendices (e.g., updated contact information) with the approval of the Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Student Services as Strategic Safeguarding Lead, to ensure they remain up to date.

The Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Student Services as University Strategic Safeguarding Lead, in conjunction with Operational Leads (Students and Staff) have the responsibility for ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy. They will ensure that changes and amendments are ratified by the appropriate University committees.

# SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOLS

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

These Protocols should be read alongside the University Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every member of staff should make themselves familiar with these Safeguarding Protocols, the associated Policy and the support which exists within the University and utilise these Protocols as appropriate if there is a cause for concern.

The purpose of these Protocols is to set out the operational steps for managing suspicions and allegations, and to ensure that staff understand their responsibilities in safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

The Protocols are intended to support a culture of prevention and early action, which are important elements of any response to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. The Protocols are designed to support staff in taking steps to stop or reduce issues or concerns which could lead to abuse or harm taking place.

The Protocols provide both general guidance and guidance on various categories of safeguarding issues which may arise.

Any member of staff requiring advice or guidance on the application of these Protocols should liaise with their local Safeguarding Coordinator in the first instance (see Safeguarding Policy and Appendix 2 for role details, named persons and contact information).

## 2. WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

It is the responsibility of the relevant supervisor/ line manager to ensure that a [risk assessment](#) is carried out for all school work experience placements and apprenticeships at the University where the apprentice is under 18. This would complement their education providers' own risk assessment (see *Support for Students Aged Under 18: Code of Practice*). This must be done prior to the commencement of the placement or apprenticeship.

It is the responsibility of the relevant supervisor/line manager to ensure that a risk assessment is carried out for any UoC work placement/experience student aged under 18 or who is considered to be at risk.

## 3. PROGRAMMES WHICH HAVE STUDENTS WHO ARE UNDER 18

It is the responsibility of Executive Deans of Faculty/Heads of Department to ensure that modules or programmes which may present a risk to young people, or which contain material unsuitable for under-18s are clearly identified as part of the module and programme approval process, and communicated to the Admissions teams.

It is the responsibility of Executive Deans of Faculty/Heads of Department and the Head of Commercial Operations to ensure that an individual risk assessment is completed for any student who is under 18 (see *Support for Students Aged Under 18: Code of Practice*). The risk assessment process should encompass all aspects of health and safety, e.g. fire, security etc. A [Risk Assessment template and guidance](#) can be found on the Health and Safety page on Portal. Additional risks pertinent to students under 18 should be added as

an addendum.

#### **4. EVENTS RUN BY EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

Safeguarding responsibility for children, young people or adults at risk who are on courses or are attending events run by external agencies, such as schools, using University property and facilities, lies with the external agency. Where the University identifies any concerns, these should be raised immediately with the external agency and reported to the relevant Operational Safeguarding Lead.

#### **5. RESEARCH INVOLVING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK**

All staff and postgraduate research proposals that involve children, young people or adults at risk as subjects are scrutinised by the University's Faculty Research Ethics Committees to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the subjects. Without the approval of the relevant Faculty Research Ethics Committee the research cannot go ahead. Any proposals relating to undergraduate research must be discussed with and presented by a sponsoring member of staff. Local Safeguarding Coordinators may be used as an initial point of contact for any queries or concerns.

#### **6. USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO**

Making, storing, publishing and distributing photographic and video images of any individual requires consideration of privacy and Data Protection issues.

The University will seek to avoid situations where images can be inappropriately misused, adapted or circulated.

Organisers of any event involving children, young people or adults at risk need to:

- Obtain written consent from parents or carers prior to the event.
- Ensure the information for parents, children and schools states that the University is not responsible for any photography/filming taken on individual mobile phones or digital cameras.
- Include photography and video in the risk assessment for any event.
- Make sure that they do not publish personal details alongside an image.
- Give young people guidance on expectations regarding their own taking of images.
- Treat images as confidential information, store them appropriately and delete once they are no longer required.

#### **7. RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST**

In broad terms a relationship of trust will arise where one party, through their work or activity whether paid or unpaid, has responsibility for the care of a child, young person or adult at risk in a way that gives them power or influence over that individual.

Where there is also a personal, particularly romantic or sexual, aspect to that relationship, particular issues arise and must be addressed.

Please see Appendix 3 for further information and requirements relating to relationships between students and members of staff.

## **8. GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITY MEMBERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK**

All staff and/or students who intend to, or may be put in a position of, working with children, young people or adults at risk should ensure that they understand this policy and its implications prior to commencing any programme, event, visit or other activity.

The following guidelines apply to all University staff working with children, young people or adults at risk:

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Avoid taking a child, young person or adult at risk alone in a vehicle on journeys, however short.
- Unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, do not take a child, young person or adult at risk to the toilet unless another adult is present, or another adult is aware.
- If you find that you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, young person or adult at risk, wherever practicable make sure that others can clearly observe you.
- Avoid close personal relationships with a child, young person or adult at risk in relation to whom you are in a position of trust.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks, even in jest, to or about a child, young person or adult at risk.
- Care must also be taken when communicating with a child, young person or adult at risk via virtual conferencing (telephone or video). Staff participating in interactions with children, young people or at-risk adults organised by external agencies should discuss their approach with the agencies first to ensure that their procedures are compatible with University protocols.
- Where a child, young person or adult at risk wishes or is required to take part in an activity off campus, the lead for that activity must carry out a risk assessment.

## **9. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO A SUSPICION OR ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE**

All members of the University must seek to actively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and be alert to the possibility that some children may have suffered or be at risk of suffering significant harm, including forms of child abuse. All complaints/allegations of significant harm to children – including historical abuse of a student over the age of 18 - must be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance with the following procedure.

Where a detailed Faculty or Departmental policy is in place, staff should refer to the reporting procedure in accordance with that policy. However, if no Faculty or Departmental policy exists, the guidance below should be followed.

- If a University Member has a suspicion that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, no matter what the cause, they should seek the advice and assistance of the Safeguarding Coordinator or relevant Operational Safeguarding Lead, setting out the basis of the suspicion as clearly as possible. This should be done immediately without awaiting confirmation of concerns. Where there is a possibility that an alleged perpetrator of historic or ongoing abuse has current access to children, this must also be reported immediately.

- If a University Member receives, from a child or young person, an allegation that they or another child or young person is being abused, has been abused or is at risk of abuse, they should:
- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Ensure that they do not 'quiz' the child or young person. However, if necessary, they may seek to clarify, using open questions and without putting words into the child's mouth but only to the extent that they understand what the child is telling them.
- Reassure the child or young person that by telling them they have done the right thing.
- Inform the child or young person that they (the staff member) must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told.
- Inform the child or young person to whom they will report the matter.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child or young person said and did, and the questions asked by the staff member, and store this note securely and confidentially. This note should avoid any personal opinions or paraphrasing.
- University Members should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves but should report them immediately to the Safeguarding Coordinator (or Operational Safeguarding Lead in the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator).
- University Members should not generally make referrals to Children's Social Care Services or other authorities themselves.
- On receipt of a report of suspicion/allegation of significant harm to a child or young person by a University Member, the Safeguarding Coordinator (or Operational Safeguarding Lead) will make a referral to the local Children's Social Care Services department and/or the Police and take steps to initiate the appropriate staff or student disciplinary procedure when appropriate.
- In the event of absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator, the Operational Safeguarding Lead, and the Strategic Safeguarding Lead, University Members should discuss any suspicion or allegation of harm with the local Children's Social Care Services department or the Police where there appears to be a significant risk to a child or young person.

## **10. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OF TRUST BY A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON OR ADULT AT RISK AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF OR AGAINST A CURRENT STUDENT**

A flow chart summary of the process described below is included at **Appendix 1**.

- An allegation of an abuse of trust made by a young person or adult at risk against a member of staff or a current student should be reported to the relevant Faculty/Service Safeguarding Coordinator, to ensure that appropriate investigation takes place and correct processes are followed.
- The Safeguarding Coordinator will make preliminary enquiries to establish whether there is substance to the allegation, and then refer the matter to the relevant Operational Safeguarding Lead (Staff or Students).
- The Operational Safeguarding Lead will ensure that central, confidential records are maintained of

relevant cases and actions taken. These records should be stored securely by Student Services (student cases) or securely by HR (staff cases).

- For serious concerns, the Operational Safeguarding Lead will inform the Strategic Safeguarding Lead of the matter as soon as practically possible.
- If deemed necessary by the Operational or Strategic Safeguarding Lead, a Safeguarding Panel will then be convened, as early as is practicable, to consider the matter, as per the approach and membership outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

The Safeguarding Panel will consider:

- Whether a criminal offence may have been committed, in which case the police will be informed;
- Whether a referral/s is/are required to other relevant external agencies. Including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- Whether the allegation requires further action being taken under the University's Disciplinary (staff or student) Procedures. Only if the allegation were trivial or demonstrably false would further action not be warranted. The Panel would then refer the matter as appropriate in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures, liaising with the Vice-Chancellor and University Secretary as required.
- In accordance with the provisions of the Disciplinary Procedures, the Vice-Chancellor (or PVC) may decide to suspend the member of staff/student whilst an investigation into the matter is carried out.
- The Strategic Safeguarding Lead or nominee will be appointed to conduct the investigation and will act as Invoking Officer at any disciplinary proceedings.
- If the member of staff is dismissed or resigns OR the student withdraws or is excluded, before the conclusion of the investigation the University will comply with its obligations in reporting any relevant matters to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Anyone wishing to make a complaint about action relating to safeguarding concerning the Vice-Chancellor or the Director of Student Services as Strategic Safeguarding Lead, should contact Laura Gittins, University Secretary and Director of Legal Services, telephone (01244 512982) who will refer the matter to the President of the University Council, Dr Meredydd David.

## **11. ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT CARRIED OUT ON INDIVIDUALS OVER THE AGE OF 18**

Individuals over the age of 18 who wish to report an incident of sexual misconduct are advised to contact the [Wellbeing and Mental Health](#) team in Student Services to access support and discuss report [Information about our Sexual Violence Liaison Officer service](#) is available on the Student Services Portal (intranet) pages.

Should the individual wish to make a formal report or complaint, any allegations against a student will be dealt with by the Proctor's Office. Allegations against a member of staff will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the University's [Dignity and Respect Policy](#).

## **12. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO A SUSPICION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The University takes seriously all issues of [sexual misconduct](#) and [domestic abuse](#). These may overlap with but do not always constitute safeguarding issues. The Wellbeing and Mental Health Team, the Proctor's Office, or Human Resources may, on becoming aware of such a case, refer the matter to a Safeguarding Lead (Strategic or Operational) for advice, and to determine whether a Safeguarding Panel may be required.

Please see Appendix 4 for relevant guidelines.

## **13. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF/DBS CHECKS OF STAFF AND STUDENTS**

The University is registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service and will ensure that any University members who engage in regulated activity with children, young people or adults at risk will be checked for relevant criminal convictions upon appointment. Please refer to the [Employee DBS Checks and Criminal Convictions Policy](#) and the Student Screening Policy for further details.

## **14. DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT RADICALISATION**

The duty to protect children, young people and adults from harm extends to protecting them from involvement in groups which set out to radicalise individuals.

Radicalisation, in this context, refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism which may lead to terrorism.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 creates a statutory duty for universities (alongside many other sectors) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the 'Prevent Duty'. Prevent is one of four strands of the government's strategy and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The University undertakes a risk assessment relating to Prevent which is updated annually, with an associated action plan. The University has also adopted a [Code of Practice on Freedom of Expression and External Speakers](#) to support compliance with the Prevent Duty.

If a member of staff is concerned that an individual may be becoming radicalised, they should speak to his/her line manager who should contact either the Operational Safeguarding Lead (Students) or the Strategic Safeguarding Lead (who is also the University's Prevent Lead).

If a student is concerned that an individual may be becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the Head of Department or other senior member of staff who will follow the above process.

The University takes a safeguarding approach to radicalisation issues. This will enable relevant services within and outside the University to identify an individual's needs and vulnerabilities.

## **15. DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT RADICALISATION – OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES**

Safeguarding responsibilities extend to activity off campus. Where staff or students are delivering an activity or event within another organisation, it is that external organisation's responsibility to ensure that their own safeguarding policy and guidelines are followed.

It is not unreasonable for an organisation to assume that the University's safeguarding policy and guidelines have been followed before staff or students work with them. Departments should, therefore, carry out a risk assessment relating to the activity and personnel involved.

Any safeguarding risk relating to staff/students engaging with external events and activities should be identified by the lead University contact for that activity.

Any significant concerns should be raised with the relevant Faculty/Service Safeguarding Coordinator or with a University Safeguarding Lead (Strategic or Operational).

Staff or students making informal arrangements not led by a University department must seek support from their head of department or Student Services if cross departmental. The Head of Department/Student Services should identify any safeguarding concerns and raise those with a Safeguarding Lead.

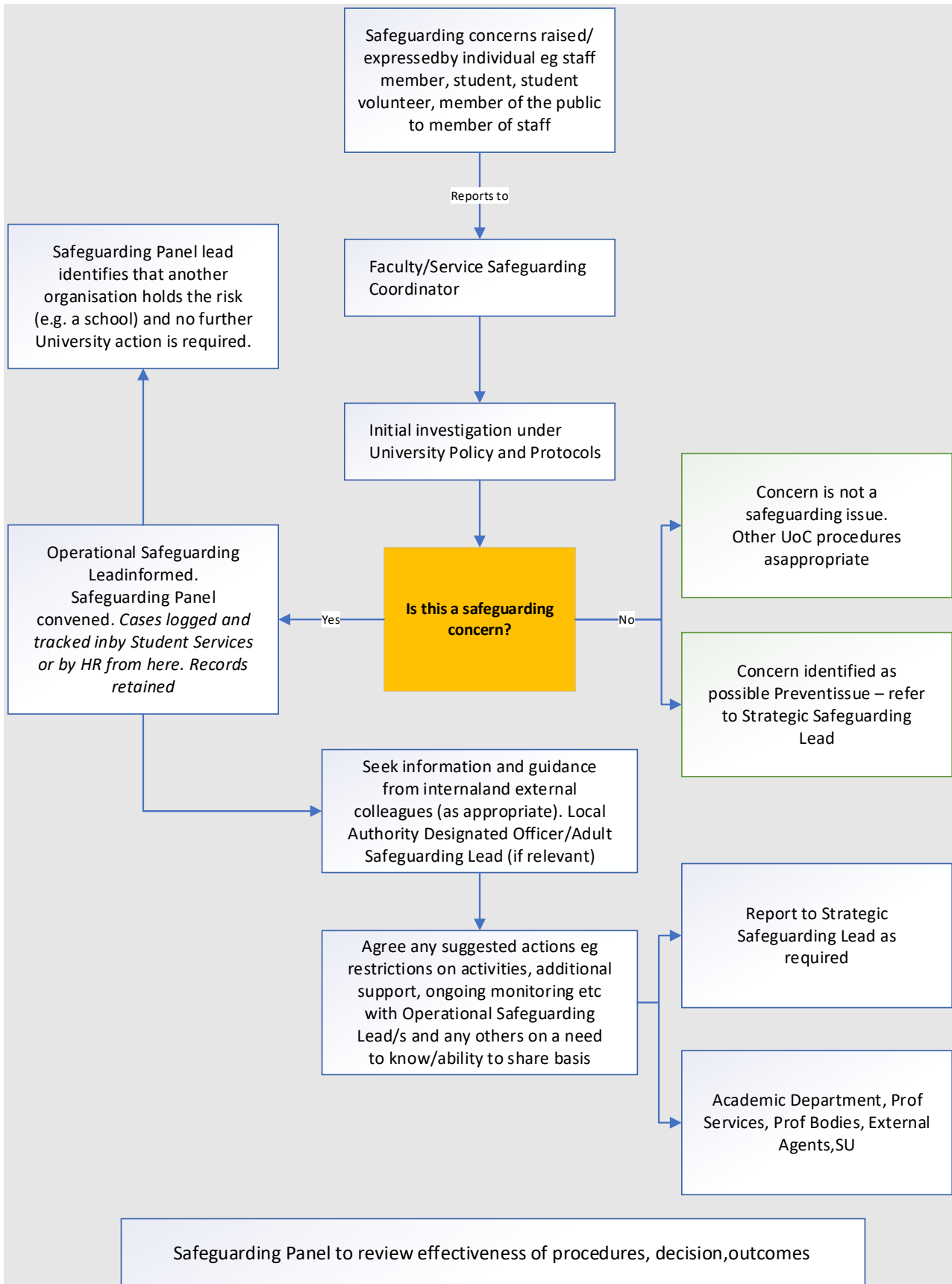
## **16. VICTIMISATION AND DELIBERATELY FALSE OR MALICIOUS ACCUSATIONS**

Taking any action which could be seen as retaliatory against someone making a report under this policy could be construed as victimisation. This is potentially unlawful and will be regarded as a disciplinary offence.

However, an important issue for the University, in conducting an investigation, is the need to protect the welfare of an individual who may be wrongly accused of serious offences. Persons making deliberately false or malicious complaints may themselves become subject to disciplinary action.



# Appendix 1: Safeguarding Referral Process



## Appendix 1(a) Safeguarding Concern Form

This form can be used as a template for recording your notes if you have a safeguarding concern. Please send to your Safeguarding Coordinator when completed.

Ref: (to be completed by Safeguarding Lead)	
Date of referral:	
Name and role of referrer:	
Contact details of referrer:	
Name of student (if applicable)	
Name(s) of Safeguarding concern (if not student)	
Gender of safeguarding concern:	
Age of safeguarding concern:	
Address of safeguarding concern:	
Contact details of safeguarding concern	
Relationship to student (if applicable)	
Details of incident e.g., what occurred factually, date of incident, location, names of those involved, witnesses, any comments.	

What are your concerns?	
Any other observations or information:	
Action taken:	

## Appendix 1(b) Safeguarding Action Form

This form can be used as a template by Safeguarding Coordinators and Leads when taking action after receiving a Safeguarding Concern form.

Ref (same as concern form)		
Date Concern Form received		
Chair of Panel Name & Role		
Panel attendees Name & Role		
Date of first Panel		
Brief overview of panel discussion		
Does the panel require more information before a decision can be made? If yes please detail info required in actions and schedule new panel, please continue using this existing action plan once more information has been received)		
	Yes	No
If the student is on a professional programme of study or is a degree apprentice, have you informed the relevant faculty/apprentice head?	Yes	No
Proceed as Safeguarding Concern?	Yes	No
Please explain how the panel reached this decision		

If referring to local safeguarding board please provide their contact details and person you spoke to	
Action (add initials and date)	
Action complete? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Update:
Action (add initials and date)	
Action complete? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Update:
Action (add initials and date)	
Action complete? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Update:
Date of next meeting:	
Date of next meeting:	
Date of next meeting:	
Date Safeguarding referral closed (agreed by all panel members)	
Reason for closing referral	

## Appendix 2: Key Contacts

Email addresses are provided for named leads and coordinators below. Alternatively, contact can be made via Microsoft Teams, or you can view phone and office information in the [Staff Directory](#).

All faculties and relevant services have nominated at least one Safeguarding Coordinator; some areas have more than one listed coordinator/lead role, due to the nature of activities in that area.

If a local Safeguarding Coordinator is not listed for a particular service area, a local contact is not considered to be necessary given the nature of service activity. Please raise any queries directly with the relevant Operational Safeguarding Lead.

### Safeguarding Leads

**Strategic Safeguarding Lead:** Dr Delyth Hughes, Director Student Services, [delyth.hughes@chester.ac.uk](mailto:delyth.hughes@chester.ac.uk)

#### Operational Safeguarding Lead (Students):

- Kelsey Norkett, Deputy Director Student Services, [k.norkett@chester.ac.uk](mailto:k.norkett@chester.ac.uk)
- Kara Joynson, Deputy Director Student Services, [k.joynson@chester.ac.uk](mailto:k.joynson@chester.ac.uk)

#### Operational Safeguarding Lead (Staff):

- Rashmi Patel, Director of Human Resources, [r.patel@chester.ac.uk](mailto:r.patel@chester.ac.uk)
- Vicki Durr, Deputy Director of Human Resources, [v.durr@chester.ac.uk](mailto:v.durr@chester.ac.uk)

### Safeguarding Coordinators – Faculties

#### Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

##### Chester School of Education:

- David Cumberland, Dean of the School of Education (Faculty Strategic Lead), [d.cumberland@chester.ac.uk](mailto:d.cumberland@chester.ac.uk)
- James Holt, Associate Professor, Initial Teacher Education (Department Lead – ITE and Faculty Prevent Lead), [james.holt@chester.ac.uk](mailto:james.holt@chester.ac.uk)
- Debbie Ravenscroft, Senior Lecturer, Childhood, Education and Professional Development (Department Lead – CEPD), [d.ravenscroft@chester.ac.uk](mailto:d.ravenscroft@chester.ac.uk)

### **School for the Creative Industries**

- Bernadine Murray, Head of School for the Creative Industries, (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator), [b.murray@chester.ac.uk](mailto:b.murray@chester.ac.uk)

### **Institute of Policing**

- Paul Beauchamp, Lecturer in Policing (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator), [p.beauchamp@chester.ac.uk](mailto:p.beauchamp@chester.ac.uk)

### **Centre for Student Exchange and Language Development**

- Candida Darling, Overseas Learning & Studies Abroad Lead (Safeguarding Coordinator – Student Exchange and Language Development) [c.darling@chester.ac.uk](mailto:c.darling@chester.ac.uk)

### **Faculty of Health, Medicine and Society**

#### **School of Nursing and Midwifery/School of Allied and Public Health/School of Society**

- Bex Bailey-Mchale, Deputy Head, Practice Education and Simulated Learning (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator)
- Jo Edgerley, Deputy Head, Practice Education and Simulated Learning (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator)
- Veronique Oldfield, Deputy Head, Nursing and Healthcare Education (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator)
- Jenny Devine, Senior Lecturer, Practice Education and Simulated Learning (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator)
- All referrals and queries should be submitted to [fhmssafeguarding@chester.ac.uk](mailto:fhmssafeguarding@chester.ac.uk) (for students within the School of Nursing and Midwifery, School of Allied and Public Health or School of Society)

### **Chester Medical School**

- Kate Knight, Associate Dean, Chester Medical School (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator)
- Wendi Heathcock, Senior Lecturer, Chester Medical School, (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator)
- All referrals and queries should be submitted to [fhmssafeguarding@chester.ac.uk](mailto:fhmssafeguarding@chester.ac.uk) (for students in Chester Medical School)

## **Faculty of Science, Business and Enterprise**

- Maeve Marmion, Associate Dean Education and Student Success (Faculty Safeguarding Coordinator), [m.marmion@chester.ac.uk](mailto:m.marmion@chester.ac.uk)

## **Centre for Foundation Studies**

- Gerard Turner, Senior Lecturer, Centre for Foundation Studies (Centre Safeguarding Coordinator), [g.turner@chester.ac.uk](mailto:g.turner@chester.ac.uk)

## **Safeguarding Coordinators – Services**

### **Student Services**

- Kelsey Norkett/Kara Joynson (Safeguarding Operational Lead – Students) – see above
- Emily Jones, Head of Disability Services (Safeguarding Coordinator – Disability Services), [e.jones@chester.ac.uk](mailto:e.jones@chester.ac.uk)
- Joanne Rowe, Disability & Inclusion Team Manager (Safeguarding Coordinator – Disability Services), [j.rowe@chester.ac.uk](mailto:j.rowe@chester.ac.uk)
- Georgina Peel, Head of Wellbeing & Mental Health (Safeguarding Coordinator – Wellbeing & Mental Health), [g.peel@chester.ac.uk](mailto:g.peel@chester.ac.uk)
- Shaunagh Moss, Head of Student Experience – Induction, Transition and Retention. (Safeguarding Coordinator – Student Experience), [shaunagh.moss@chester.ac.uk](mailto:shaunagh.moss@chester.ac.uk)

### **Human Resources (HR)**

- Rashmi Patel (Safeguarding Operational Lead – Staff) – see above
- Vicki Durr, Deputy Director (*Safeguarding Operational Lead – Staff HR*) [v.durr@chester.ac.uk](mailto:v.durr@chester.ac.uk)
- Sue Fisher, HR Manager (Safeguarding Coordinator – HR), [sue.fisher@chester.ac.uk](mailto:sue.fisher@chester.ac.uk)
- Claire Blair, HR Manager (Safeguarding Coordinator – HR) [c.blair@chester.ac.uk](mailto:c.blair@chester.ac.uk)

### **International Centre (IC)**

- Kristen De Los Reyes (Safeguarding Coordinator – IC), [k.delosreyes@chester.ac.uk](mailto:k.delosreyes@chester.ac.uk)

### **Academic Services (AS)**

- Detta Palin, Assistant Manager (Qa D&S) (Safeguarding Coordinator – AS), [d.palin@chester.ac.uk](mailto:d.palin@chester.ac.uk)



### **Learning & Information Services (LIS)**

- Jon Hardisty, LIS Operational Lead, Library, (Safeguarding Coordinator – LIS), [j.hardisty@chester.ac.uk](mailto:j.hardisty@chester.ac.uk)

### **Directorate of Access, Skills and Apprenticeships (DASA)**

- Sean Williamson, Head of Outreach & Access, (Safeguarding Coordinator– Outreach / Access (DASA)), [sean.williamson@chester.ac.uk](mailto:sean.williamson@chester.ac.uk)
- Kate McKay, Monitoring and Compliance Officer, (Safeguarding Coordinator – Apprenticeship Office), [k.mckay@chester.ac.uk](mailto:k.mckay@chester.ac.uk)
- Karen Rees, Head of Degree Apprenticeships (Safeguarding Coordinator – Apprenticeships Office) [karen.roberts@chester.ac.uk](mailto:karen.roberts@chester.ac.uk)

### **Commercial Operations**

- Martin Morlidge, Director of Campus & Commercial Services, (Safeguarding Coordinator – Commercial Operations), [m.morlidge@chester.ac.uk](mailto:m.morlidge@chester.ac.uk)

### **Sport & Active Lifestyle**

- Ali Cutler, Head of Sport and Active Campus (Safeguarding Coordinator– Sport & Active Campus), [a.cutler@chester.ac.uk](mailto:a.cutler@chester.ac.uk)

### **Registry Services**

- Katie Cunningham, Senior Assistant Registrar (Safeguarding Coordinator – Registry Services), [k.cunningham@chester.ac.uk](mailto:k.cunningham@chester.ac.uk)

### **Nursery**

- Rashmi Patel, Director of Human Resources (Safeguarding Coordinator – Nursery), [r.patel@chester.ac.uk](mailto:r.patel@chester.ac.uk)

### **Marketing, Recruitment & Admissions (MRA)**

- Vicki Riley, Widening Participation Officer (Safeguarding Coordinator –Admissions), [v.riley@chester.ac.uk](mailto:v.riley@chester.ac.uk)

### **University Centre Warrington, University Centre Birkenhead and Students Based in Shrewsbury**

- Shaunagh Moss, Head of Student Experience – Induction, Transition and Retention., (Safeguarding

Coordinator – Student Experience [shaunagh.moss@chester.ac.uk](mailto:shaunagh.moss@chester.ac.uk)

#### **Research & Innovation Office**

- Claire Irving, Workload and Data Manager, Research & Innovation Office, (Safeguarding Coordinator – RIO), [claire.irving@chester.ac.uk](mailto:claire.irving@chester.ac.uk)

#### **Chaplaincy**

- Rev Gill Reeve, (Safeguarding Coordinator – Chaplaincy), [g.reeve@chester.ac.uk](mailto:g.reeve@chester.ac.uk)

#### **Chester Students' Union (CSU)**

- Jamie Morris, CEO Students' Union (and CSU Strategic Safeguarding Lead) (Safeguarding Coordinator – Students' Union), [jamie.morris@chester.ac.uk](mailto:jamie.morris@chester.ac.uk)
- Kim Lloyd, Student Opportunities Manager (and CSU Operational Safeguarding Lead) (Safeguarding Coordinator – Students' Union), [kim.lloyd@chester.ac.uk](mailto:kim.lloyd@chester.ac.uk)

## Appendix 3: Relationships of Trust – Consensual relationships between staff and students

1. A close professional relationship between student and staff member, including staff who are also postgraduate students or postdoctoral researchers, is an integral part of the educational development of the student. This relationship should be a supportive one, characterised by good communications, trust and confidence. Any abuse by staff of such a relationship is made more serious by the unequal power of the two parties.
2. A professional relationship is defined as:
  - A teaching, assessing, tutoring, mentoring or supervising role;
  - a pastoral role;
  - an administrative or technical support role; or
  - a coaching role.
3. The University regards relationships between staff and students for whom they have, or are likely to have, some specific academic or other related responsibility as an important professional issue. This is particularly true where the relationships are romantic or sexual. They raise serious questions of conflict of interest, trust, confidence and dependency in working relations and of equal treatment in supervision, assessment and examination of the student or any decisions relating to academic progress, personal or financial support, allocation or accommodation or access to facilities or services.
4. The University regards it as the unquestionable responsibility of members of staff to recognise and respect the boundaries and moral obligations of their professional role. To enter into a romantic/sexual relationship with any student who the staff member has a professional relationship with, could compromise the fundamental relationship of trust between student and staff or could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of other students or staff. Such relationships may also damage the integrity of the staff member and the reputation of the University. Staff are therefore strongly advised to avoid such relationships.
5. The University recognises that a ban on all such relationships would be unsustainable in practice as it would encourage secrecy and offer less protection to the student. Instead, it has drawn up the following Code of Conduct. Further details can also be found in the [Personal Relationships Policy](#) .

### Code of Conduct

6. It is the University's view that the conduct of staff should be based on the following principles:
7. That staff recognise their professional and ethical responsibility to protect the interests of students, to respect the trust involved in the staff/student relationship and to accept the constraints and obligations inherent in that responsibility.
8. That to embark on a romantic/sexual relationship with a student will always involve serious risks and may involve serious difficulties rooted in the unequal power of the two parties concerned. It is likely to create real problems in maintaining the boundaries of professional and personal life. Such

relationships can also disrupt the teaching and learning environment for other students and colleagues.

9. That the establishment of a professional relationship with family members, or with friends or associates who become students also raises ethical and professional issues.
10. In the event of involvement in a close personal relationship with a student, particularly where it is a romantic or sexual one, it is the duty of the member of staff to immediately declare it to their Line Manager so that consideration can be given to how any potential conflict of interest can be prevented. The relationship should still be declared whether or not the member of staff has a professional relationship with the student at the time.  
Further details regarding any measures that will be taken are provided in the [Personal Relationships Policy](#).
11. Failure to disclose a close personal relationship with a student or failure to comply with any reasonable measures to prevent a conflict of interest will be investigated in accordance with the University's Disciplinary Procedure and may result in dismissal for gross misconduct.
12. Students who are, or who have been, involved in romantic/sexual relationships with staff and who do not consider their involvement to be truly consensual are advised to contact Student Services to seek further advice and support and also have the right of complaint under the University's [Dignity and Respect Policy](#).

## Appendix 4: Guidelines for managing reports of sexual misconduct or domestic abuse

1. Sexual Misconduct is a term used within the University to describe any deliberate sexual contactor behaviour that occurs online or offline without explicit consent. It can happen in any place and be experienced or perpetrated by any person regardless of gender, sexual orientation, and position of power or other defining characteristic. It includes but is not limited to:
  - Unwanted sexually degrading comments or gestures, including ‘jokes’ and name calling;
  - Unwanted deliberate touching;
  - Unwelcomed sexual advances;
  - Tugging, pulling or lifting up someone’s clothing;
  - Demands for sexual acts/favours;
  - Unwanted letters, calls or messages of a sexual nature;
  - Unwanted looks or gestures;
  - Taking of and/or sharing of private images without consent;
  - Someone displaying sexually explicit pictures in your shared space (e.g. a communal kitchen);
  - Wolf whistling, cat calling or making offensive sexual noises;
  - Stalking and cyber stalking;
  - Using derogatory or insulting language about a person’s gender, gender identity, gender express or sexual orientation;
  - Rape and sexual assault.
2. Domestic violence and abuse can be defined as any incident or patterns of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or above who are, or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse can encompass, but is not limited to, the:
  - Psychological;
  - Physical;
  - Sexual;
  - Financial;
  - Emotional.
3. Signs and symptoms that sexual misconduct and/ or domestic abuse might have occurred, include, but are not limited to:
  - Arriving to work late or very early;
  - Unplanned or increased use of annual leave;

- Decreased productivity;
  - Tension around receiving repeated personal phone calls;
  - Wearing long sleeves on a hot day or sunglasses inside;
  - Difficulty making decisions alone;
  - Difficulty concentrating on tasks;
  - Avoiding windows and main entrance of office;
  - Repeated discussion of marital or relationship problems;
  - Flowers or gifts sent to the employee at work for no apparent reason;
  - Bruises, chronic headaches, abdominal pains, muscle aches;
  - Vague, non-specific medical complaints;
  - Sleeping or eating disorders;
  - Signs of fear, anxiety, depression;
  - Fatigue;
  - Intense startle reactions;
  - Suicidal or homicidal thoughts;
  - Nightmares or flashbacks.
4. University members, *i.e.* staff and/ or students, who suspect that a student is subjected to domestic abuse or sexual misconduct should raise their concerns with the Wellbeing and Mental Health Team or Proctor's Office in the first instance. University staff who suspect that another member of staff is subjected to domestic abuse or sexual misconduct should raise their concerns with Human Resources.
5. If a University member receives, from a student or staff member, an allegation that they or another student or staff member is being subjected to domestic abuse or sexual misconduct, they should:
- Listen carefully and stay calm.
  - Ensure that they do not 'quiz' the person. However, if necessary, they may seek to clarify, using open questions and without putting words into the person's mouth but only to the extent that they understand what they are being told.
  - Reassure the person that by telling them they have done the right thing.
  - You should never give an assurance of confidentiality. Instead, you should explain that you are worried about a risk of harm/abuse and would like the person's consent to talk to a Designated Safeguarding Contact. Where this consent is not given, you should inform the person that because you have a duty to protect wellbeing and safety of others, you will talk to a Designated Safeguarding Contact to seek advice.
  - Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the person said and did, and the questions asked by the staff member, and store this note securely and confidentially. This note should avoid any personal opinions or paraphrasing. The Safeguarding Concern form at Appendix 1(a) of this

Policy provides a template which can be used.

- University Members should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves but should report them immediately to their departmental Safeguarding Coordinator (or Operational Safeguarding Lead in the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator).
  - University Members should not generally make referrals to external services or other authorities themselves.
  - On receipt of a report of suspicion/allegation of significant harm to a student or staff member by another University Member, the Safeguarding Coordinator (or Operational Safeguarding Lead) will make a referral to the relevant external services and/or the Police and take steps to initiate the appropriate staff or student disciplinary procedure when appropriate.
6. Where the Wellbeing and Mental Health Team, Proctor's Office or Human Resources consider there is a potential safeguarding issue relating to any concerns raised, they may refer these concerns to the Operational or Strategic Safeguarding Lead for advice and to consider whether a Safeguarding Panel should be convened.