

Guidance on Safeguarding

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Procedures for Safeguarding Referrals and Risk Assessment (Students)

Initial Action

If you consider that a student is at *immediate* risk of harm, and senior staff in Student Services are not available to respond, call the Police on 999 as a top priority.

For advice on safeguarding referrals where there is no immediate risk, call the Student Policy team in Student Services on extension 85667 or by email to safeguard@uwe.ac.uk

This guidance is to be read in conjunction with the UWE Safeguarding Policy available at <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/aboutus/policies>. It outlines the principles and procedures to be used when there is a concern that an individual is considered vulnerable (for whatever reason) and at possible risk of exploitation, abuse or harm, and there is a connection with the University. The connection to the University maybe that the student is themselves vulnerable; or, that they have concerns about a vulnerable individual known to them; or, that they may be considered a potential perpetrator of exploitation, harm or abuse against a vulnerable individual. All job titles mentioned in this document also reference his/her nominee.

Procedures

1. Safeguarding concerns involving students are managed by the Student Policy Team in Student Services, on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Students), who is the Director of Student Services. Concerns can be raised by completing the Safeguarding Referral Form and sending it to safeguard@uwe.ac.uk or by discussion in person or on the telephone on extension 85667.
2. The Student Casework Manager will make an initial assessment of the situation to ascertain whether the concerns raised are legitimate. This assessment might include reference to publicly available information about the individual, e.g. through social media. If the concerns are deemed legitimate, a case conference will normally be called if appropriate.
3. Any case conference will normally be held no more than 5 working days from the concern being raised. Staff will be asked to prioritise such meetings. It is expected

that the case conference will comprise a senior member of staff from the Faculty, the student's Academic Personal Tutor, plus one member of staff from the relevant Support Service, e.g. Wellbeing. These staff members will be required to keep information relating to the case strictly confidential.

4. The purpose of the case conference will be to share information about the individual and the situation, and to conduct an assessment to ascertain whether the risk is serious enough to warrant a referral to the relevant statutory authority. The case conference will be chaired by a senior member of staff from Student Services. He/she will seek to achieve a consensus of opinion on the nature of the risk and whether a referral should be made.
5. On the basis of the information collected, a risk assessment will be completed. Any recommendation for external referral will be made to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Director of Student Services) for approval.
6. Any action identified as a result of the concern being raised will be managed by the Student Policy Team, with reference to the Director of Student Services.
7. The completed risk assessment will usually be shared with the relevant external authority if any recommendation to refer is approved, unless that authority requires its own referral documentation to be completed. This information is shared on the basis that the risk, and the legal duty to refer, outweighs the need to protect the personal information of the individual concerned.
8. Safeguarding cases will be considered closed once internal procedures have been exhausted and once an outcome has been reached as a result of any external referral. Cases for individuals who are referred to the Channel process will remain open by the University until the intervention has ceased and/or the student ceases to be a member of the University, whichever is soonest.

Procedures for Safeguarding Referrals and Risk Assessment (Staff)

Initial Action

If you consider that a member of staff is at *immediate* risk of harm, and senior staff in HR are not available to respond, call the Police on 999 as a top priority.

For advice on safeguarding referrals where there is no immediate risk, call the HR Director on extension 82299 or by email to debbie.england@uwe.ac.uk.

This guidance is to be read in conjunction with the UWE Safeguarding Policy available at <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/aboutus/policies>. It outlines the principles and procedures to be used when there is a concern that an individual is considered vulnerable (for whatever reason) and at possible risk of exploitation, abuse or harm, and there is a connection with the University. The connection to the University maybe that the student is themselves vulnerable; or, that they have concerns about a vulnerable individual known to them; or, that they may be considered a potential perpetrator of exploitation, harm or abuse against a vulnerable individual. All job titles mentioned in this document also reference his/her nominee.

Procedures

1. Safeguarding concerns involving staff are managed by the Director of HR&OD. Concerns can be raised by completing the Safeguarding Referral Form and sending it to debbie.england@uwe.ac.uk or by discussion in person or on the telephone on extension 82299.
2. The Director of HR&OD (or nominee) will make an initial assessment of the situation to ascertain whether the concerns raised are legitimate. This assessment might include reference to publicly available information about the individual, e.g. through social media. If the concerns are deemed legitimate, a case conference will normally be called if appropriate.
3. Any case conference will normally be held no more than 5 working days from the concern being raised. Staff will be asked to prioritise such meetings. It is expected that the case conference will comprise a senior member of staff from the Faculty or Service and HR. These staff members will be required to keep information relating to the case strictly confidential.
4. The purpose of the case conference will be to share information about the individual and the situation, and to conduct an assessment to ascertain whether the risk is serious enough to warrant a referral to the relevant statutory authority. The case conference will be chaired by a senior member of staff from HR. He/she will seek to achieve a consensus of opinion on the nature of the risk and whether a referral should be made.

5. On the basis of the information collected, the “Risk Assessment Form” will be completed. Any recommendation for external referral will be made to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Director of HR&OD) for approval.
6. Any action identified as a result of the concern being raised will be managed by HR, with reference to the Director of HR&OD.
7. The completed Risk Assessment Form will usually be shared with the relevant external authority if any recommendation to refer is approved, unless that authority requires its own referral documentation to be completed. This information is shared on the basis that the risk, and the legal duty to refer, outweighs the need to protect the personal information of the individual concerned.
8. Safeguarding cases will be considered closed once internal procedures have been exhausted and once an outcome has been reached as a result of any external referral. Cases for individuals who are referred to the Channel process will remain open by the University until the intervention has ceased and/or the member of staff ceases to be a member of the University, whichever is soonest.

Safeguarding Safety Concern Form

Use this form to outline the nature of your concern. If you cannot complete a section, or feel a section is not relevant then leave it blank. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will treat your disclosure sensitively. It is better to refer any safeguarding concern and enable a risk assessment to take place, than not to make one because you are not yet certain.

Name of child/vulnerable adult (if known):	
Date of birth or age (of child):	Gender: (M/F)
Description of the safeguarding issue (see appendix 3 for more information). Your description might include a factual account of something you have witnessed or an account of something a third party has reported to you.	
Time, location, date of the incident/s: (if known)	
The child's/vulnerable adult's account: (if known)	
Any other observations/information:	
Any action you may have taken:	
Signed:	
Name(print):	
Position:	
Your Preferred Contact Method (Tel: mobile: Email)	
Date:	

Please continue onto another page if necessary, ensuring it is securely attached to the safety concern form.

Please send this information to a Designated Safeguarding Officer as a matter of urgency:

- **For staff** - Director of HR and OD on ext 82299 or by email to Debbie.England@uwe.ac.uk
- For students** - Student Policy team in Student Services on extension 85667 or by email to safeguard@uwe.ac.uk.

You have a Safeguarding Concern

Immediate Risk Out of Office Hours

If you are on placement, raise your concern with the placement provider

If you remain concerned

Complete the Safeguarding Safety Concern Form

Designated Safeguarding Officer will Assess Risk

Referral to Statutory Agency, e.g., Social Services, the Police

Immediate action to mitigate risk and provide appropriate support

Note Sure? Talk to a Designated Officer, Line Manager, Academic Lead

The following list of useful dos and don'ts is based on those included in the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults: Guidance for English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) – Department for Innovation Universities and Skills (December 2007)*

If a child or adult discloses that they are experiencing abuse or harm or if there are suspicions a child or adult is at risk of abuse or harm consider the following:

DO	DO NOT
Be supportive.	Panic
Take what the child or vulnerable adult says seriously	Delay
Remain calm.	Promise to keep secrets.
Reassure them that it was right to tell someone.	Ask leading questions
Use language they understand.	Ask them to repeat the story unnecessarily.
Explain what will happen next i.e. that disclosure of relevant information may need to be made to the Designated Safeguarding Officer	Express any opinions about what you are told.
Write down verbatim immediately afterwards what was said, including the time, place and any other observations: sign and date the record.	Discuss the disclosure with anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Officer and other relevant personnel.
Pass the report to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.	Start to investigate.
Remember that you may need support. Seek advice and support for yourself from the Designated Safeguarding Officer.	Do not contact the alleged abuser

Guidance for staff working with students under the age of 18 years

All staff who have regular one-to-one contact with students who are under the age of 18 should adhere to the following guidance to ensure safety both for themselves and the young person.

If you have any concerns or queries arising from reading this guidance please contact Head of Student Support and Wellbeing who is responsible for matters relating to safeguarding vulnerable groups.

General Guidelines

- Respect all individuals whatever their age
- Place the safety and wellbeing of the young person first. It must be placed before any personal or organisational goals and before loyalty to friends and colleagues
- Form appropriate relationships with young people. These should be based on mutual trust and respect.
- Be aware of the relative powerlessness of young people compared to staff members
- Be committed to actively preventing the exploitation and abuse of children and young people.

Guidelines for working with students under the age of 18 years

- Conduct meetings with the student either with another staff member present or in an open environment (e.g. leave office door open and do not hold meetings when lone working)
- Academic staff should follow guidance on signposting, consultation and referral to appropriate services if they have concerns about individual students.
- If physical contact is necessary e.g. for demonstration purposes, ensure it takes place only with the full consent of the student and that its purpose is clear
- Do not use touch as a form of communication, even to comfort a student who is distressed.
- Consider implications of transporting students in your own vehicle, offer alternatives where ever possible so the student travels with peers.
- Consider your expected behaviour in certain situations and what might be considered unacceptable, e.g. sexually suggestive comments, inappropriate language
- Be mindful that it is a criminal offence for any person in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with someone who is under 18
- Remember that it is not legal for students who are under 18 to buy alcohol, and that it would not be appropriate to offer them alcohol. Planning and organisation of events involving students should take this into account.

Types of Abuse or Harm

"Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons" and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to the abuse.¹

The following list is an example of the types of abuse or harm that individuals may encounter whether in a domestic setting or otherwise. This is not an exhaustive list:

physical abuse or violence, including hitting, shaking, throwing, slapping, pushing, kicking, poisoning or the giving or supply of illegal drugs, misuse of medication, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, restraint or otherwise causing physical harm, or inappropriate sanctions;

sexual abuse, including grooming², rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the individual has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting; the activities may be physical or non-physical for example involving vulnerable individuals in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images.

psychological abuse, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;

financial abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;

radicalisation, including grooming vulnerable individuals into a particular ideology to instil views that promote "us-and-them thinking", potentially to justify offending and the use of harm or violence against others to achieve an ideological goal

physical or emotional neglect and acts of omission, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to protect a vulnerable individual from physical or emotional danger or to ensure adequate supervision, failure to provide access to social care health, or educational services, the withholding of necessities such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating; and benefits.

discriminatory abuse, including racist, sexist, ageist abuse based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Internet/electronic abuse, the use of modern communication technologies (e.g. Internet, text or video messaging, e-mail, chatrooms, social media

¹ Department of Health: No Secrets 2000: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect Vulnerable Adults from abuse

² Grooming can occur when a child is drawn into a sexual relationship with an adult and the adult shrouds the relationship in secrecy.

networking sites) to embarrass, humiliate, threaten, intimidate, bully or radicalise an individual in an attempt to gain power and control over them or make them commit acts they would not otherwise have committed.

It is important to note that abuse can:

- consist of a single act or repeated acts;
- be intentional or unintentional or result from a lack of knowledge;
- be an act of neglect, an omission or a failure to act;
- cause harm temporarily or over a period of time;
- occur in any relationship;
- be perpetrated by anyone, individually or as part of a group or organisation;
- often constitute a crime, i.e. physical, sexual abuse for example, downloading or using pornographic images of children or vulnerable adults and/or storing them on University computers or equipment.

The following may indicate that abuse is taking place (this list is not exhaustive and not all may be present):

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, particularly if such an injury is unlikely to have occurred accidentally;
- An injury for which the child or adult's or carer's explanation appears inconsistent;
- The child or adult describes an abusive act or situation;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour, attitude or attire;
- Expression of extremist views or attitudes;
- The display of inappropriate behaviour (sexual or otherwise);
- Apparent mistrust of others, appearing secretive;
- The child or adult appears increasingly unkempt.

Prevent and Universities

Higher education institutions have a duty of care to students, staff and visitors. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a new statutory duty for higher education institutions to have "due regard to the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism". This means that institutions now have a statutory duty to engage with the government's Prevent agenda. The government has published guidance setting out what steps higher education institutions are expected to take to meet this duty. This is available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf

Further information on the UWE's approach to its implementation of the Prevent Duty in respect of safeguarding individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation is available at:

<http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/students/healthandwellbeing/safeguardingandpreventduty.aspx>.

Any individual the University considers at risk of radicalisation and for whom an external referral is made will be assessed for their suitability for the Channel process.

Channel

Channel is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremist or terrorist behaviour. Channel works in a similar way to existing safeguarding partnerships aimed at protecting vulnerable people.

- **Who does Channel work with?** Channel is designed to work with individuals of any age who are at risk of being exploited by extremist or terrorist ideologues. The process is shaped around the circumstances of each person and can provide support for any form of radicalisation or personal vulnerabilities.
- **How does Channel work?** Each Channel Panel is chaired by a local authority and brings together a range of multi-agency partners to collectively assess the risk and can decide whether a support package is needed. The group may include statutory and non-statutory partners, as well as lead safeguarding professionals. If the group feels the person would be suitable for Channel, it will look to develop a package of support that is bespoke to the person. The partnership approach ensures those with specific knowledge and expertise around the vulnerabilities of those at risk are able to work together to provide the best support.
- **What does Channel support look like?** Channel interventions are delivered through local partners and specialist agencies. The support may focus on a person's vulnerabilities around health, education, employment or housing, as well as specialist mentoring or faith guidance and broader diversionary activities

such as sport. Each support package is tailored to the person and their particular circumstances.

- **How will the person be involved in this process?** A person will always be informed first if it's felt that they would benefit from Channel support. The process is voluntary and their consent would be needed before taking part in the process. This process is managed carefully by the Channel Panel.

