

The Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Policy Statement

1. The University is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students, staff and individual visitors who access its facilities and services.
2. The University recognises its particular responsibility to safeguard the wellbeing of children, young persons and vulnerable adults engaged in the breadth of the University's activities, by ensuring that there are appropriate arrangements in place to enable it to discharge its duty to provide a safe and secure environment and to deal with issues concerned with suspected or reported abuse of children, young persons and vulnerable adults.
3. The University seeks to ensure that its policy and procedures comply with statutory duties and reflect available guidance on good practice in safeguarding children, young persons and vulnerable adults, and that safeguarding arrangements are proportionate to the risks involved.
4. The University recognises that it has a duty to help staff and students (through guidance, support and training), to promote safe working practices in order to minimise risk to vulnerable individuals and protect staff and the institution from the possibility of false allegations. It is not intended that staff should be restricted from normal ways of working, but staff are advised to consider how an action may be misperceived.

Safeguarding Structure

5. The University has an organisational structure in place for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults. Key staff with safeguarding responsibilities are members of the Safeguarding Group, which meets regularly and on an as-needs basis in order to monitor, review and develop the work of the University in delivering its duty of care.

Roles and Responsibilities

6. All staff and students of the University are required to take shared responsibility for the safeguarding and safety of any young people and vulnerable adults. They must be aware of and abide by the University's codes of practice.
7. All University staff are in a position of trust, in particular those staff who teach, support, or guide students, young people and vulnerable adults visiting the College.
8. The University **Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)**, who will be a member of the Executive Board, will have overall accountability and strategic responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable groups within the University. The Lead Safeguarding Officer will chair the Safeguarding Steering Group (which will meet annually and be attended by the Principal Safeguarding Officers and Nominated Safeguarding Officers).
9. The **Principal Safeguarding Officers (PSO)**, who have operational responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable groups within the University and carry out a leadership and co-ordination role, are the Director of Human Resources in respect of staff and the Dean of Students in respect of students. Both Directors may be supported in this role by deputies to whom responsibility may be delegated from time to time.
10. Where there are courses or activities where staff and students work with children, young people or vulnerable adults as part of their roles, one or more **Nominated Safeguarding Officers (NSO)** may be appointed to take responsibility for safeguarding within that course or

activity. The NSO will normally be the organiser or co-ordinator of the programme.

Responsibilities on the part of the University

11. All University staff are in a position of trust, in particular those staff who teach, support, guide or in any way interact with students, children and vulnerable adults. All staff should be aware of this and act accordingly at all times.
12. The University already has processes in place to check the suitability of some staff and students working directly with children and young people. Some staff across the University will be in regular or significant occasional contact with under-18s or vulnerable adults in the course of their teaching or other work. The University is committed to ensuring that all such staff has satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) enhanced checks.
13. The University will additionally ensure that all student helpers, mentors, etc who are in regular or significant occasional contact with under-18s or vulnerable adults must have had a satisfactory enhanced CRB check undertaken by the University before allowing them to work with children or vulnerable adults.
14. All staff or student helpers employed to look after children must report any subsequent criminal convictions to the Director of Human Resources.
15. If staff in the course of their work at the University have a safeguarding issue brought to their notice, this must be treated as a priority over all work.

Child Safeguarding Procedures

16. Where under-18s are concerned there are statutory responsibilities for any organisation to follow regarding the safety of young people.

17. The University has a Principal Safeguarding Officer to be the lead person with regard to child safeguarding issues. The Principal Safeguarding Officer is the Dean of Students.
18. All staff must contact the Principal Safeguarding Officer if they have any cause to believe the student or young person involved in any activity in the University is in any way at risk. The Principal Safeguarding Officer will follow the relevant procedures.
19. Records will be kept of all such incidents and their outcomes and held by the Principal Safeguarding Officer in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
20. All staff should be aware that in accordance with statutory requirements where child safeguarding issues are involved, it is not possible to offer confidentiality to a person under 18 as any disclosures must be reported.

Vulnerable Adults

21. Within the HE context there are not the same statutory provisions which can be easily adopted with regard to vulnerable adults. However, the same principles apply, as above.
22. The University will identify vulnerable adults and ensure that there are appropriate support measures in place. This is most likely to be when the student presents to, or is referred to, Student Services and has mental health difficulties or a disability that puts them into the legal definition of vulnerable.
23. Any member of staff of the University who has concerns regarding an adult student whom they believe or know to be vulnerable must contact the Principal Safeguarding Officer.

Reporting and Monitoring Procedures

24. All members of staff working closely with children, young people or vulnerable adults have to be alert to possibilities of abuse and any concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult should be

reported to the Principal Safeguarding Officer who will decide what further action to take.

25. It is the duty of staff to inform only, **not** to investigate – this is the role of the Police and Social Services.
26. If staff, in the course of their work at the University, have a safeguarding issue brought to their notice, this must be treated as a priority over all other work.
27. An oral, and then written report should be provided to the Principal Safeguarding Officer who will keep a confidential record of any such incidents.

Allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour involving staff

28. Allegations involving a member of staff and a person under-18 or a vulnerable adult should be reported to the Director of Human Resources.

Working With Vulnerable Groups in Research

29. There are important issues to consider when working with vulnerable groups on a research project:
 - The Dean must consider whether anyone working with vulnerable groups as part of a research project (whether staff or student within the School) requires a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.
 - The researcher should ensure that informed consent has been obtained from parents of children under 18. Children should be given the opportunity also to consent to participation, but parental consent is essential.
 - Any research activity will respect the vulnerable person's right to confidentiality, and comply with any relevant code of ethics applicable

to the type of research being conducted. Ethical issues are considered by the University Research Ethics Committee.

- The researcher should monitor the effect of the research on the vulnerable person to ensure that they feel comfortable with continuing with the research.
- Wherever possible, a same sex chaperone should always be present during the research.
- Staff or students who work with vulnerable groups should be provided with appropriate training.

Training

30. In accordance with good practice the University will ensure that the Principal Safeguarding Officer, officers deputed to act on their behalf and other staff likely to be in regular contact with under-18s and vulnerable adults receive appropriate training. This will also include student staff employed as ambassadors and in similar roles.

31. The following topics must be covered:

- Health and safety issues
- Handling a disclosure
- Reporting an allegation
- Confidentiality

32. The University will also provide information to raise awareness to ensure that all staff understand what to do if a student or visitor covered by this policy discloses abuse or any other safeguarding issue.

Relationships with young people aged 16-18

33. It should be noted that whilst a young person can consent to sexual activity once they reach the age of 16, the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 makes it a criminal offence for a person to engage in any kind of sexual activity with a person under 18 where the adult is in a position of trust.

External Relations

34. For any University activity involving young people, parents or guardians must be given the opportunity to refuse permission for photographs, videos or other images to be made of their children and for the children to be interviewed by press, broadcasters or other media.

Health and Safety

35. All users of the University Services must be made aware of Health and Safety requirements and be prepared to abide by them.
36. All staff must be familiar with the University's Code of Practice for Staff.

Review

37. This policy and procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed:
- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults or any changes within the University
 - Following any issues or concerns raised about the safeguarding of young people or vulnerable adults within the University
 - In all other circumstances, at least annually.

Key Contacts

Lead Safeguarding Officer

Deputy Rector Academic

Principal Safeguarding Officer

For student-related issues:

Dean of Students

For staff-related issues:

Director of Human Resources