



Staffordshire University Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

Purpose and Aim

- 1.1 The University recognises its pastoral duty to safeguard children and adults at risk who may participate in any activity or research, organised or managed by the University, or come into contact with University staff or students on or off campus. This policy supports this; along with specific policies related to specialised areas, adhering to safeguarding legislation in their field. Examples of these include (but are not limited to) the Staffordshire University Woodland Nursery and Forest School; School of Health Science and Wellbeing; School of Justice, Security and Sustainability; School Digital, Technology and Arts; the Institute of Education; and Staffordshire University London. It is also noted that the University's Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding service work to multi-disciplinary professional codes of practice which align with this policy.
- 1.2 The University has a Prevent Policy which sets out the University duty to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.' This is known as the Prevent Duty.
- 1.3 The University recognises that within the course of their activities, its staff and students may come into contact with children or adults at risk. Additionally, staff and students supervising or undertaking professional placements in clinical settings, health care, teaching, policing and social care will come into regular contact with children and adults at risk.
- 1.4 This policy sets out how the University will deal with concerns that are raised that an individual may be at risk of exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation), and the type of action that the University may take to manage such matters and provide support.
- 1.5 For the purposes of this Policy the term "the University" is deemed to include all of those participating in any University business and representing the University. It also includes the Student Union. The University and the Student Union are committed to working together and sharing information in order to safeguard the interests and wellbeing of children and adults at risk,

e.g., in relation to individuals and activities with student societies and volunteering.

- 1.6 The University wishes to ensure that it maintains the highest possible standards to meet its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk. In order to ensure adherence to legal responsibilities the University is committed to practice that protects children and those adults identified as at risk; working in partnership with organisations as appropriate to facilitate this. We are committed to taking appropriate prompt action to protect individuals from harm and to respond to any allegations or suspicions.

Due Regard

- 1.7 This policy is developed in due regard to the following:

- The Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- Co-operating where appropriate with those bodies that have duties under the Children Act 1989, 2004 & 2006

Scope

- 1.8 This Policy is designed to assist the University to achieve the commitments set out above and to take reasonable steps to safeguard those who are vulnerable by ensuring there are clear guidelines and procedures for identifying risk, reporting concerns and taking action.
- 1.9 Examples of areas where the University may have contact with children and adults who may be at risk may include (this is not an exhaustive list):
- Admission, teaching, supervision and support of students who are under 18 years of age or who are adults at risk;
 - Summer schools, school visits, and other events such as work experience;
 - Apprenticeships;
 - On-site nursery (which has its own safeguarding policies in place);
 - Outreach or access participation plan activities taking place on or off campus;
 - Student residences and the conference office for residential events;
 - Visits to the Staffordshire University Stanley Matthews Sports Centre
 - Placements in professional and clinical settings;
 - Field trips, excursions and other activities such as volunteering and other social activities;
 - The activities of student societies and networks.

Definitions

1.9 **Adult at Risk**

The University defines an adult (aged 18 or over) to be at risk if they are, or may be, in need of additional support services as they are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves from significant harm, abuse or exploitation, including being drawn into terrorism.

An adult at risk may:

- Have needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs or not)
- Be experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- Be, as a result of those care and support needs, unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

An adult with care and support needs may be

- An older person
- A person with inclusion needs, such as a physical disability, communication differences, a learning disability or a sensory impairment
- Someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder
- A person with long term-term health conditions
- Someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living

1.10 **Child**

The University defines a child as a person who is under the age of 18 ("Child"). The fact that a Child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in Further/Higher education does not change his or her status for the purpose of this Policy.

2 Identifying Safeguarding Concerns

Key Principles

- 2.1 The University will take all safeguarding concerns including suspicions and allegations of exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation) seriously and will report concerns promptly, in accordance with paragraph 3 of the Policy.
- 2.2 The University will ensure that processes are in place to check the suitability of staff and students whose duties and responsibilities involve regular contact or supervision of children or adults who may be at risk. The University will ensure that appropriate suitability checks are carried out in relation to staff and

students including criminal record checks and other checks where appropriate. Details of these processes and checks can be found in the University's Fitness to Practise Procedure Including Disclosure Screening for Applicants and the Recruitment and Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy.

- 2.3 Safeguarding referrals to the relevant statutory authority will be made on the basis of identified and considered risk.
- 2.4 University staff supporting students or staff with safeguarding concerns will consider what support may be offered to them both from within the University (e.g. Right Management Workplace Wellness for staff and support from Student Support and Wellbeing for students) and externally (e.g. signposting to local GPs, mental health services or Occupational Health).
- 2.5 Research which involves children or adults at risk must comply with the Staffordshire University Research Ethics Procedure. DBS checks will be conducted in relation to individuals involved in such research where permitted by law. Guidance on this may be sought from the relevant Chair of the School Research Ethics Committees.

It is not possible to guarantee confidentiality when a safeguarding concern is reported because the University owes a duty of care toward its staff, students or visitors and the University may need to take action on receipt of a report of a safeguarding concern that may result in the same being reported to an external third party. However, any reports will be dealt with sensitively and only disclosed to those people who need to be made aware of an incident or concern, whether internal or external to the University.

What is a Safeguarding Concern? (see Appendix 2)

- 2.6 Appendix 2 provides a list of safeguarding concerns and characteristics. Some examples of which include:
- 2.7 There are significant concerns regarding the child or adult's mental health, wellbeing and safety.
- 2.8 A child or adult raises an allegation of abuse, harm or other inappropriate behaviour.
- 2.9 A student or staff member discloses information involving themselves or others which gives rise to possible concerns that a potential perpetrator may be harming or abusing vulnerable individuals or children involved in University activities.
- 2.10 There are suspicions or indicators that a child or adult is being abused or harmed or is at risk of exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation). The indicators of abuse or harm or risk of abuse or harm or radicalisation can be very difficult to recognise and it is not a staff member's responsibility to decide whether a child or adult has been abused or harmed or subjected to abuse or harm, but to raise concerns that they may have.

- 2.11 There are observable changes in a child or adult's appearance or behaviour that may be related to exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation).
- 2.12 A concern is raised that an individual presents a risk of abuse or harm towards a child or adult in relation to, for example, their criminal convictions, or downloading, possession or distribution of inappropriate images or extremist material.
- 2.13 Concerns arise that a student or member of staff is vulnerable to radicalisation and there is an identifiable risk of being drawn into terrorism.

3. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Designated Safeguarding Officers

- 3.1 For any safeguarding concerns involving staff members, the appropriate people to report concerns to is either of the Senior HR Business Partners.

For any safeguarding concerns involving students, the appropriate person to report concerns to is the Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding Manager, or the Head of Student Support and Wellbeing or the Director of Student Development Services.

The Senior HR Business Partners, the Director of Student Development Services, Head of Student Support and Wellbeing and the Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding Manager are the University's Designated Safeguarding Officers. The Designated Safeguarding Officers may delegate responsibility under this Policy to an appropriate nominee.

In a placement or work-based learning environment (such as a professional or clinical setting) a member of staff or student should normally report any safeguarding concern in the first instance to the relevant Council Safeguarding Team in accordance with the Health and Social Care Practice Learning Handbook. Additionally, staff working in the Staffordshire University Woodland Nursery and Forest School will be made aware of their own local safeguarding procedure.

If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is not available, or the safeguarding concern involves a concern against them, then the referral should be made to the Chief Operating Officer.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Officers

- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officers to:
- 3.3 Undertake relevant training in safeguarding procedures and ensure their knowledge is kept up to date;
- 3.4 Act as a point of contact for those who have safeguarding concerns, receiving information and recording those concerns;

- 3.5 Act upon concerns as appropriate in the circumstances, for example, by carrying out a risk assessment in accordance with this Policy and acting in accordance with the outcomes. This may range from taking no further action to making external referrals for example to Social Services or Police; and making referrals to Human Resources and Organisational Development or School to consider the appropriateness of a precautionary suspension.
- 3.6 Monitoring the implementation of this Policy and procedure.
- 3.7 In addition to the explicit responsibilities set out above, the established management structures within each School and relevant service area have a responsibility to ensure staff and students are aware of the University's safeguarding principles and procedures (including this Policy) and are able to refer concerns appropriately. Furthermore, managers and staff in faculties and services will promote awareness of safeguarding to reduce the potential for abuse and to promote wellbeing.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- 3.8 A safeguarding concern is reported by completing Section 1 of the Safeguarding Incident Referral Report Form (appended to this procedure). The form should be submitted by email to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Officer as promptly as possible, but generally within 24 hours of the incident giving rise to the concern. In circumstances where a School or Service has a local Safeguarding Officer (such as in the School of Health, Science and Wellbeing and in the Staffordshire University Woodland Nursery and Forest School) the localised procedure should be followed. It is better to refer any safeguarding concern and enable a risk assessment to take place, than not to make one due to uncertainty. Staff must discuss safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer should they be in any doubt as to whether to make a report.

4. Taking Action

- 4.1 Upon receipt of a report of a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or an appropriate nominee acting on their behalf) will undertake a risk assessment to determine the appropriate course of action.

The risk assessment will be carried out by the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or their nominee) in howsoever the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or their nominee) considers appropriate. This may include the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or their nominee) speaking to the individual making the report and the individual who is the subject of the report. This process may include a discussion with relevant University staff and external agencies.

- 4.2 The Designated Safeguarding Officer (or their nominee) is responsible for ensuring that a detailed record of the risk assessment process and the outcome of the assessment is made, and any appropriate follow up action is undertaken. The risk assessment will be undertaken by the Designated

Safeguarding Officer (or their nominee) completing Section 2 of the Safeguarding Incident Report Form.

When completing the form, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will decide:

- a) That no further action is required.
- b) To refer the concerns to the School or Human Resources & Organisational Development Department, for them to decide whether a precautionary suspension is required.
- c) To refer the matter to an alternative University policy or procedure, such as the Staff or Student Disciplinary Procedure or the Fitness to Study or Practise procedure.
- d) To report the matter to the local Safeguarding Team.
- e) To report the matter to the Police, Social Services or alternative appropriate external agency.

If a member of the University, staff or student, has any immediate safeguarding concerns (including outside normal University hours) they may refer directly to the Police or Social Services, but otherwise they should follow the internal referral process described in this Policy or their local policy. If a direct referral is made, the member of staff or student should inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer at the earliest opportunity.

- 4.3 The Designated Safeguarding Officer (or their nominee) will liaise with other partner agencies as appropriate in order to address the safeguarding concerns identified.
- 4.4 The University reserves the right to take action under its disciplinary procedures and/or its fitness to practise procedures and/or fitness to study procedures should it later receive information that suggests that its conduct standards may have been breached and/or that reported safeguarding concerns give rise to an allegation that a student is not fit to practise/study. Staff or students who are dismissed from the University and/or found unfit to practise/study as a result of safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service and any relevant professional body.
- 4.5 Support from internal or external services, such as the local safeguarding authority, will be provided as appropriate for any individuals, staff or students, impacted by safeguarding issues.

5 Retention of Information

- 5.1 The University complies with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 in the way that it retains and disposes of personal information.
- 5.2 Written records of any safeguarding concerns will be retained for as long as is necessary for the purpose for which it was obtained or as legally required or lawfully permitted.

- 5.3 Such written records will be held centrally and separately from a member of staff or student's personal records.

6. Training

- 6.1 All staff and students whose roles and responsibilities include regular contact with children and potentially vulnerable individuals will receive training and guidance appropriate to their role. All staff will be made aware of this Policy and procedure and related guidance.

7 Review of Policy and Procedure

- 7.1 The Academic Board will normally review this procedure on an annual basis and is responsible for overseeing and updating this policy and procedure particularly with respect to the legal obligations and other external requirements.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion have been considered during the development of this policy and all protected characteristics have been considered as part of the Equality Analysis undertaken.

Key Contacts

Timothy Hamlett, Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding Manager, (07341867676)
Timothy.Hamlett@staffs.ac.uk , Student-wellbeing@staffs.ac.uk

Safeguarding Referral Team (SRT) (01782 235100) or Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) 5.00pm-8.30am (01782 234234) **If the concerns require immediate action to safeguard a child/young person then contact the SRT team**

Joanna Blaiklock, Head of Student Services and Wellbeing
joanna.blaiklock@staffs.ac.uk

Rumnique Gill, Director of Student Development Services
rumnique.gill@staffs.ac.uk

HR & OD Safeguarding Officers, (01782 292700) or askhr@staffs.ac.uk

Ian Blachford Lead Prevent Officer Chief Operating Officer (01785 353299)
I.Blachford@staffs.ac.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (07881332762)

Appendix 1



Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Section 1 to be completed by individual reporting the concern

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| Name of child/vulnerable adult (if known): | |
| Date of birth or age (of child): | Gender: (M/F) |
| Description of the safeguarding issue. 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) | |
| Any other observations/information: | |
| Name of individual reporting the concern: | |
| Position: | |
| Action undertaken by person reporting the concern: | |
| Date concern reported: | |

Section 2 to be completed by the Safeguarding Officer

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| Is the child or vulnerable adult who is the subject of the concern at immediate risk? | Yes /No Details: |
| Does the incident relate to an allegation about a student or member of staff? | |
| Should the staff or student be referred to HR or School for consideration of a precautionary suspension? | |
| Does the reported incident require referral to a local safeguarding team? | |
| Does the reported incident constitute a criminal offence requiring referral to the police. | |
| Actions to be Undertaken: f) No further action g) Referral to the School or HR & OD Dept for consideration of a precautionary suspension. h) Referral to an alternative University policy or procedure such as the Staff or Student Disciplinary Procedure. i) Report the matter to the local Safeguarding Team j) Report the matter to the police | |
| Signed: | |
| Date: | |

Appendix 2

| Safeguarding concern | Characteristics |
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| Physical abuse and violence | May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm, including by fabricating the symptoms, or deliberately causing, ill health to another. |
| Verbal abuse and insult | Verbal abuse most commonly included abusive behaviour such as name calling, put down and discounting feelings. As well as using words, verbal abuse can include using silence to exert abuse. |
| Sexual violence and abuse | Acts of physical, psychological, and emotional violation in the form of a sexual act, inflicted on someone without their consent. It can involve forcing or manipulating someone to witness or participate in any sexual acts. Sexual violence and abuse are any behaviour of a sexual nature which is unwanted and take place without consent or understanding. Not all cases of sexual assault involve violence, cause physical injury or leave visible marks. Sexual assault can cause severe distress, emotional harm and injuries which can't be seen – all of which can take a long time to recover from. It can include forcing or enticing a child, young or vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the individual is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including rape or sexual assault or non-penetrative acts. It would also include individuals in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children, young or vulnerable individuals to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. |
| Emotional and psychological abuse | Emotional or psychological abuse can be verbal or nonverbal. It is ill treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on an individual's emotional wellbeing and includes verbal abuse such as yelling, name-calling, blaming and shaming or isolation, intimidation, threats of violence and controlling behaviour. It may involve conveying to individuals that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It would also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children and adults at risk, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or |

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| | the exploitation or corruption of children or adults at risk. |
| Neglect | The persistent failure to meet a child, or adults at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to results in the serious impairment of the individual's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or adults at risk's basis emotional needs. |
| Financial exploitation or control of children, adults at risk or as a form of domestic violence | In relation to childing or adults at risk, may include having money or other property stolen, being defrauded, being put under pressure in relation to money or other property and having money or other property misused. It may also be defined in intimate relationships as a way of controlling a person's ability to acquire, use and maintain their own money and financial resources, particularly in terms of domestic violence. |
| Exposing childing / adults at risk to inappropriate situations | Such as drug taking or heave drinking and/or inappropriate materials such as pornography, violent films, and cruelty. |
| Domestic violence including coercion, financial and emotional abuse | <p>Domestic abuse, or domestic violence, can be defined as any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender of sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological • Physical • Sexual • Financial • Emotional <p>The definition includes so-called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. Victims are not confined to one gender or ethic group. Family members included mother, farther, son, daughter, brother, sister, and grandparents, whether directly related, in laws or stepfamily.</p> <p>Definitions: Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploring their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means</p> |

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| | <p>needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.</p> <p>Coercive behaviour is an act or pattern of acts of assaults, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.</p> <p>Forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. An arranged marriage becomes a safeguarding issue where the person concerned is a child or is an adult who lacks the capacity to provide valid consent.</p> |
| Female Genital Mutilation | <p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – a collective term for a range of procedures which involved partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is sometimes referred to as female circumcision, or female genital cutting.</p> <p><u>There is a duty to notify police as a professional if you suspect or have been told of FGM. This is the only abuse that holds a prison sentence if you withhold such information.</u></p> |
| Honour based violence including forced marriage (see Domestic violence) | <p>‘Honour- based’ violence is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and / or community.</p> |
| Modern slavery and human trafficking | <p>Modern slavery is the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children or adults using force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation. Individuals may be trafficked into, out of or within the UK, and they may be trafficked for several reasons including sexual exploration, forced labour, domestic servitude and organ harvesting.</p> |
| Upskirting | <p>Upskirting is a highly intrusive practice, which typically involves someone taking a picture under another person’s clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear). It is now a specific criminal offence in England and Wales. The new law will capture instances where the purpose of the behaviour is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm.</p> |

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| | Anyone, and any gender, can be a victim and this behaviour is completely unacceptable. |
| Stalking | <p>Stalking can be defined as persistent and unwanted attention that makes someone feel pestered and harassed. It includes behaviour that happens two or more times, directed at or towards a person by another person, which causes someone to feel alarmed or distressed or to fear that violence might be used against that person. It can go on for long periods of time. The problem is not always 'physical' – stalking can be psychologically as well.</p> <p>Social media and the internet are often used for stalking and harassment, and 'cyber-stalking' or online threats can be just as intimidating.</p> |
| Sexual Exploitation | A type of sexual abuse in which children and adults at risk are sexually abused for money, power, or status. Some children or adults at risk may be trafficked into or within the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs. |
| Digital Abuse | <p>The use of technology to harass or intimidate someone. It can occur at any stage of a relationship and to people of all ages, though it is especially common among teens and young adults. It can also occur outside of intimate partner relationships, such as experiencing harassment from someone on a dating website. Signs of digital abuse may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online bullying and harassment • Sexual exploitation and grooming online • Discrimination and abuse on the grounds of any protected characteristics • Sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery • Cyberstalking • Impersonation and hacking • Disinformation and misinformation • The oversharing of personal information |