



Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

Document control table

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2. Approved by	This version will be Audit and Risk Committee and Council (this process is subject to proposed changes).

Policy development steps

3. Legal implications of this policy area.	See 4.1
4. Consultation for this policy	Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Subcommittee, SELT, SU, and Education Committee for the original iteration. For this revision – Academic Registrar, and Institutional Prevent Lead, Education Committee, Safeguarding and Prevent Working Group
5. Related procedures/guidance	See appendix C
6. Version history	V1 of the revised policy
7. Monitoring	Safeguarding and Prevent Working Group, and Council (this process is subject to proposed Governance changes).
8. Date of issue	November 2023 November 2025
9. Next Review date	November 2027

1. Purpose

1.1 Duty of Care

The University of Leicester recognises its legal and ethical responsibility to safeguard the welfare and safety of children and adults at risk who engage in University activities, whether conducted in person or online. The University's activities involving children and adults at risk include, but are not limited to, teaching, research, outreach, and community engagement.

1.2 Commitment to Safeguarding

The University is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding practice and will take all reasonable measures to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from harm. The University seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment in which individuals can benefit from educational opportunities and achieve their full potential.

1.3 Institutional Obligations

In accordance with statutory and common law duties, the University will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to protect children and adults at risk from foreseeable harm, including harm arising from acts of negligence, deliberate actions, or omissions. These safeguarding measures are complementary to, and not a substitute for, obligations arising under health and safety law and associated regulations.

1.4 Compliance with the Prevent Duty

The University complies with its statutory obligations under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, specifically the Prevent Duty, which requires higher education institutions to have due regard to the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

1.5 Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty

The Prevent Duty is implemented within the University's broader safeguarding framework. The University recognises that radicalisation and involvement in terrorism can constitute forms of abuse and exploitation, and therefore adopts a safeguarding approach in discharging its responsibilities under this legislation.

1.6 Relationship with Other University Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other University of Leicester policies, procedures, and guidance documents relevant to safeguarding. A comprehensive list of such documents is provided in Appendix C.

1.7 Freedom of Speech

In all safeguarding and Prevent matters, the University will have full due regard to its obligations under the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 and associated Office for Students guidance, provided that compliance does not conflict with the University's statutory and common law duties to safeguard its community and to prevent abuse and radicalisation.

2. Scope of Policy

2.1 Applicability to the University Community

This policy applies to all members of the University community, including but not limited to:

- Employees (academic and professional services staff)
- Volunteers
- Workers and contractors

- Apprentices
- Students

2.2 Applicability to Activities

This policy applies to all University-led or University-affiliated activities, whether conducted on University premises, in University-managed accommodation, online, or at external locations. Such activities include, but are not limited to:

- Recruitment to new or existing posts involving direct contact with children and/or adults at risk.
- Teaching, supervision, and student support, including access to and use of libraries and sports centres.
- Summer schools, school visits, and similar programmes.
- Outreach, widening participation, and community engagement activities conducted on or off campus.
- Activities taking place in University-owned or managed residential accommodation.
- Research activities, in conjunction with the University's Research Ethics Policy.
- University-hosted events, including internal and external events, public lectures, and conferences, where external speakers are present (including events organised by student societies or the Students' Union).
- Placements, internships, and other professional or work-based learning activities.
- Field trips, volunteering, and related extra-curricular activities.

2.3 Institutional Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students, and associated individuals, irrespective of the geographical location of their work, study, or associated activity.

2.4 Additional Professional Requirements

Certain Schools or Departments may be subject to additional safeguarding obligations imposed by professional or regulatory bodies. In such cases, those Schools or Departments must maintain supplementary safeguarding policies and protocols tailored to their specific activities (e.g., the Leicester Medical School and the School of Education). These requirements are to be applied alongside this overarching University policy.

All other academic and professional service areas are required to complete the Safeguarding Protocol Template (Appendix C) to ensure that risks are appropriately identified, managed, and mitigated.

2.5 External Organisations

External organisations making use of University premises or facilities for events are required to have in place their own safeguarding policies and procedures. They bear full responsibility for safeguarding individuals participating in their activities. In addition, while on University premises, external organisations must read, understand, and comply with the University's relevant safeguarding requirements.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the University of Leicester takes reasonable, proportionate, and effective measures to safeguard children and adults at risk who come into contact with University staff, workers, volunteers, apprentices, or students.

3.2 Prevent Duty

In accordance with the statutory Prevent Duty, the University also commits to taking reasonable and effective steps to safeguard students and other members of its community from the risk of radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.

3.3 Safeguarding and Prevent Commitments

The University will meet its safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities through the following actions:

Safe Environment: Taking all reasonable steps to provide a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment, free from harm, prejudice, harassment, discrimination, and bullying. (Refer to the Dignity and Respect Policy for further detail.)

Training and Guidance: Delivering mandatory safeguarding and Prevent training for all staff, and providing role-specific guidance where appropriate. Training will include recognising potential harm, responding appropriately, and reporting concerns.

Reporting Mechanisms: Ensuring that all members of the University community are able to raise safeguarding concerns relating to any child or adult at risk involved in University activities, and that anyone may raise a Prevent concern regarding staff, students, workers, apprentices, or volunteers.

Roles and Responsibilities: Ensuring that all members of staff and students understand their safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities through management, designating trained Safeguarding Leads and training, to respond to concerns and disclosures.

Safe Recruitment: Implementing appropriate safeguarding measures in recruitment, including the prevention of employment in roles involving children or adults at risk where individuals have been barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), or are otherwise deemed by the University to pose an unacceptable safeguarding risk.

Responding to Allegations: Taking proportionate and appropriate action in response to any allegation or suspicion of harm to children or adults at risk involving University staff, students, apprentices, or volunteers, whether the incident occurred on University premises or elsewhere.

Referral to Statutory Services: Operating a robust referral process for serious safeguarding or Prevent incidents, including referral to the relevant statutory authorities, such as the Local Authority Safeguarding Board, the Police, or the Prevent Channel.

Support Services: Providing accessible and appropriate support services to staff, students, and others affected by safeguarding or Prevent-related concerns.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

4.1 Statutory and Regulatory Context

This policy is informed by, and operates within the scope of, relevant legislation, statutory duties, and sector guidance, including but not limited to:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Education Act 2011
- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education, 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018)
- Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023

4.2 Specific References

- **Safeguarding Children:** This policy is consistent with the principles and requirements of the Children Act 2004.
- **Safeguarding Adults at Risk:** This policy adopts the definitions and recommendations set out in the Care Act 2014.
- **Disclosure and Barring Service:** The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 is central to this policy. Decisions regarding the barring of individuals from working with children or adults at risk are determined by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with this legislation.
- **Sector Guidance:** Due regard is given to best practice guidance, including the Department for Education's *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2022).
- **Prevent Duty:** The University fulfils its statutory responsibilities under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and associated guidance, ensuring compliance with the Prevent Duty in safeguarding students from radicalisation.

5. Definitions

5.1 Safeguarding

For the purposes of this policy, safeguarding is defined as the process of taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm—particularly sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment—from occurring; protecting children and adults at risk from harm; and responding appropriately where harm has occurred.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across all University activities. It requires proactive identification, prevention, and mitigation of risks of harm, exploitation, or abuse, supported by accountable and transparent systems for reporting, response, and organisational learning when risks materialise.

5.2 Child

A *child* is defined, in line with statutory guidance, as any individual under the age of 18 years.

5.3 Adult at Risk

In accordance with the Care Act 2014, an *adult at risk* is defined as an individual aged 18 years or over who:

- Has needs for care and support arising from mental and/or physical health conditions (whether or not those needs are being met by the local authority); and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- Is unable, or may be unable, to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

5.4 Types of Abuse

For the purpose of this policy, abuse refers to acts or omissions that cause harm, potential harm, or exploitation. Children and adults at risk may require safeguarding against (but not limited to) the following forms of abuse:

- Financial exploitation
- Sexual harassment and/or sexual violence
- Physical, emotional, or psychological abuse
- Exploitation and/or recruitment into extremist organisations or enticement into illegal activities
- Domestic abuse and/or domestic violence
- Cyber abuse, including online grooming or harassment
- Modern slavery, human trafficking, or exploitation through forced labour
- Bullying or harassment, including peer-on-peer abuse
- Forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Discrimination, including harassment or victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Institutional Responsibility

The University of Leicester has overarching responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding principles and duties are embedded across all of its activities. This includes communicating safeguarding requirements through University policies, procedures, and training, and ensuring appropriate action is taken when concerns are raised. Operational responsibility for safeguarding is delegated to Heads of Schools, Professional Services Directors, and designated safeguarding roles.

6.2 Responsibility of Staff Members

It is not the responsibility of individual staff members to determine whether a child or adult at risk has been abused or harmed. Staff are, however, required to raise safeguarding concerns promptly through the appropriate reporting mechanisms.

6.3 Students Under 18 Years

Students admitted to the University under the age of 18 are subject to the *Under 18s Admissions Policy (link in Appendix A)*. The University is an adult environment; responsibility rests with the student and their parent/guardian to ensure readiness for independent living. The University recognises that students under 18 may have specific support needs and accepts its responsibility to provide appropriate support through collaborative work between Student Support Services, Accommodation, Centre for Academic Achievement and academic schools.

- It is the responsibility of the admitting academic school to ensure they are aware of any student who is under 18 at point of entry, and that appropriate measures have been put in place for that student for the time period they are under 18.
- A safeguarding support plan must be created for any student who is under 18 at point of entry, and will remain so throughout their studies. This is the responsibility of the admitting academic school in collaboration with Student Support Services and Accommodation.
- Where an applicant under the age of 16 seeks admission, a case meeting must be convened with relevant departments, Student Support Services, Accommodation, the parent/guardian, and other stakeholders. A personalised safeguarding and support plan must then be developed.

6.4 External Providers

The lead member of staff commissioning or inviting an external provider onto campus is responsible for ensuring that the provider has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place, and that they comply with this policy and, where relevant, the Prevent Duty.

6.5 Governance

Ultimate accountability for safeguarding rests with University Council.

6.6 Specific Safeguarding Roles

6.6.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSL, and Prevent Lead

These roles are responsible for:

- Maintaining and implementing the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.
- Overseeing investigations into safeguarding and Prevent disclosures.
- Addressing and remedying instances of non-compliance with this Policy.
- Ensuring effective mechanisms for recording and reporting safeguarding incidents in line with the Data Protection Policy.
- Determining the central location for safeguarding and Prevent records and overseeing record management.
- Undertaking role-specific training.
- Co-chairing the Safeguarding and Prevent Working Group.
- Communicating safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities across the University.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate and up-to-date training.
- Overseeing safeguarding risk assessments and ensuring action is taken.
- Advising Schools, Departments, and Services on risk management.
- Embedding sector best practice into University safeguarding processes.

6.6.2 Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)

Each academic or professional service area should appoint a DSO. DSOs are responsible for:

- Acting as the primary contact for safeguarding concerns within their area.
- Ensuring all staff, students, volunteers, and apprentices in their area are aware of this Policy.
- Recording and reporting safeguarding concerns via *concerned@le.ac.uk*, or to statutory services where appropriate.
- Referring Prevent concerns to the Prevent Lead and/or Head of Security.
- Ensuring local safeguarding protocols align with University policy.
- Managing safeguarding incidents where appropriate, including referrals.
- Advising on local safeguarding processes.
- Promoting safeguarding awareness in their area.
- Completing and delivering training if required.
- Ensuring DBS checks are conducted as appropriate.
- Responding to safeguarding concerns when delegated by the DSL.

6.6.3 Heads of Schools, Departments, and Professional Services Directors

Responsible for:

- Appointing a DSO for their area.
- Ensuring DSOs and staff complete mandatory safeguarding training.
- Establishing local safeguarding policies and protocols where required by professional bodies (e.g., Medicine, Sport).

- Ensuring safeguarding processes are clearly communicated to all staff.

6.6.4 All Staff, Students, and Associated Personnel

This includes staff, students, student ambassadors, volunteers, freelance practitioners, alumni engaged in activity on behalf of the university, and others representing the University.

Responsibilities include:

- Supporting a safe environment free from prejudice, discrimination, bullying, or harassment.
- Understanding this Policy and knowing how to raise concerns.
- Completing safeguarding and Prevent training as required.
- Including safeguarding considerations in planning and risk assessments.
- Cooperating fully with safeguarding investigations.
- Reporting safeguarding concerns or suspicions promptly.
- Respecting confidentiality and only sharing safeguarding information with designated staff or statutory services.
- Understanding their duty to report safeguarding concerns, and that confidentiality cannot be promised in disclosures.
- Being aware of safeguarding policies at external sites when representing the University (e.g., in schools).

6.6.5 Safeguarding and Prevent Working Group

Co-chaired by the DSL and Prevent Lead, the Group is responsible for:

- Reviewing and updating the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.
- Developing and monitoring the Safeguarding and Prevent action plan.
- Escalating barriers to implementation to the appropriate authority.
- Reviewing related University policies and procedures to ensure compliance.
- Annually reviewing the Prevent risk assessment and action plan.
- Reviewing Prevent and Counter-Terrorism training and recommending updates.
- Reviewing cases and ensuring lessons learned inform policy and process improvements.
- Monitoring the regulatory environment, including government legislation and Office for Students requirements.
- Overseeing data collection and reporting to demonstrate compliance.
- Ensuring effective collaboration with external partners and statutory authorities.

7. Responding to Safeguarding and Prevent Concerns

7.1 Duty to Report

All staff are required to raise safeguarding and Prevent concerns appropriately and without delay. It is recognised that identifying abuse or exploitation is not always straightforward; staff are not expected to determine whether abuse has occurred, only to report concerns or disclosures.

It is always preferable to raise a concern that proves unfounded than to ignore a potentially unsafe situation.

7.2 Receiving a Disclosure or Concern

When receiving a disclosure or concern, staff must:

- Listen carefully and respectfully, without interruption.
- Avoid making judgments or expressing disbelief.
- Refrain from offering personal opinions or attempting to investigate.

- Assure the individual that their concern will be taken seriously.
- Avoid promising confidentiality, as safeguarding concerns must be reported.

Many individuals experiencing abuse may fear they will not be believed or may have been told this by the perpetrator. It is therefore essential that disclosures are handled sensitively and appropriately.

7.3 Indicators of Abuse

Abuse or exploitation may come to light in various ways, including but not limited to:

- **Direct Disclosure:** An individual self-discloses, or a third party discloses on their behalf. This may be full or partial disclosure.
- **Physical Signs:** Injuries or other signs of harm for which there is no satisfactory explanation.
- **Behavioural Indicators:** Actions, conduct, or changes in behaviour that raise suspicion of abuse or exploitation. (Designated Safeguarding Officers receive training to recognise such signs.)

7.4 Reporting Process

Where a staff member becomes aware of a possible safeguarding or Prevent concern, or receives a disclosure or allegation, they must:

1. **Record the Details** – Complete a written report of all relevant details in line with University reporting procedures (*see Appendix B*).
2. **Urgent Concerns** – If there is immediate risk to life or safety, call **999** without delay. After contacting emergency services, the incident must also be reported via **concerned@le.ac.uk**.
3. **Non-Urgent Concerns** – Send the written report to **concerned@le.ac.uk** for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will coordinate appropriate safeguarding action and, where relevant, refer Prevent concerns to the Prevent Lead for action.

This process applies equally to current and historical safeguarding or Prevent concerns. A process flow is provided (*Appendix E*).

7.5 Concerns Relating to Non-University Individuals

Where a safeguarding concern relates to a child or adult at risk who is not a member of the University, the concern should be reported to the relevant external organisation (e.g., their school, care agency, or healthcare provider).

7.6 Guidance on publishing images of children

The University is committed to safeguarding children and young people by ensuring that their images are not published in any format without the appropriate safeguards in place.

No photographs, videos, or other identifiable images of children can be used in university materials or digital assets without prior written explicit consent from a parent, guardian, or carer *only* and by using the University consent [form](#). This consent must include where the photographs can be used and for how long.

Even with explicit consent no image should include personal details or any other identifiable information that may be a risk to the safety of the child.

Where children may be photographed as part of a larger school group or whilst attending a public event this is covered in separate guidance owned by the External Relations Division.

This requirement is essential to protect the privacy, safety and wellbeing of children, and to ensure the University meets its statutory, common law and ethical responsibilities.

8. Reporting and Record Keeping

8.1 Record Management

The University is responsible for maintaining accurate and secure records of all safeguarding and Prevent concerns, allegations, and disclosures. Records must be managed in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy and relevant data protection legislation.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Prevent Lead are responsible for ensuring appropriate mechanisms for recording are in place, and for coordinating onward reporting (including anonymised reporting) where required.

8.2 Information Sharing

In order to safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk, information may be shared with relevant external organisations involved in managing the safeguarding concern. These may include:

- Educational institutions
- Local authority safeguarding services
- NHS services
- Police and other law enforcement agencies

Where possible, the University will seek the consent of the individual concerned before sharing safeguarding information. However, information may be shared without consent where it is necessary to protect the individual's vital interests, or where statutory obligations apply.

Where information is shared, the University's records must include:

- The details of the information shared
- The organisation(s) or individual(s) with whom it was shared
- The reason(s) for sharing.

Individuals will be informed that their information is being shared unless doing so would place them or others at greater risk of harm.

8.3 Prevent Concerns

Where a Prevent-related concern arises, it must first be considered through the appropriate University support point:

- **Students:** Cause for Concern process
- **Staff:** Human Resources.

If, following assessment, a Prevent referral is considered appropriate, this will be made in conjunction with relevant support for the individual.

8.4 Prevent Referrals to External Agencies

A Prevent referral may involve onward referral to external statutory agencies, including:

- The Department for Education
- The Police Prevent Team
- The Office for Students (OfS).

8.5 Outcomes of Prevent Referrals

Following a Prevent referral, a range of outcomes are possible, including no further action. Regardless of outcome, the University will ensure that the individual continues to have access to appropriate support.

8.6 Channel Process

A Prevent referral may lead to a referral into *Channel*, a multi-agency safeguarding programme aimed at providing tailored support to individuals at risk of radicalisation. Channel is voluntary, and individuals must provide informed consent before engaging with the process.

Appendix A: Related Policies

Please find below a list of associated policies to Safeguarding and Prevent. This is not an exhaustive list but contains those most closely aligned.

- [Safety of Children and Young Persons](#)
- [Health and Safety](#)
- [Dignity and Respect Policy](#)
- [Sexual Violence Policy](#)
- [Personal Relationship Policy](#)
- [Under 18s Admissions Policy](#)
- [Insurance](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Image Capture](#)
- [Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#)
- [Support to Study Policy](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Code of Practice](#)
- [Research and Ethics Policy](#)
- [Policy on researching and handling extreme or radical material](#)
- [IT Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [Senate Regulation 11](#)

Appendix B: Template structure to support a safeguarding conversation, and referral

Supportive Safeguarding Conversation Template	
<i>Please remember you may not be able to promise confidentiality</i>	
Name and contacts details of person referring:	
Student's name:	
Student number:	
Does the student have a disclosed disability (if known):	
Is the student aware of this referral?	
Date of disclosure and made by (student themselves or third party):	
Context in which disclosure/concern was raised e.g. in email, in call, in a form, in person:	
Location details of where incident/concern took place (if known):	
Details of concern/incident of referral:	
Are you aware of any internal or external support involvement e.g. GP, NHS, Social Services etc:	
Detail of actions already taken by the referrer:	
Name of DSL/DSO you have consulted (if applicable):	
Any other notes, or information pertinent to the report	
Date of referral: Send to: Concerned@le.ac.uk	

Appendix C: Local Safeguarding Protocol Template

Safeguarding Protocol

The following is a guidance tool for departments to use to create their local level safeguarding processes in line with the University's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) contact name and details: _____

If your area has no DSO then one needs to be approved by the Head of School/Director of Services through the PDD process.

DSO has attended Safeguarding training: Yes No

All staff have completed the Online Mandatory Safeguarding Training: Yes No

	Activity:	Safeguards in place:
<p>Analysis of activities: Please list all activities that involve children and/or adults at risk in your area and outline safeguards in place for each activity</p>		

Relevant DBS checks and Insurance in place: Yes No

Staff working with children and adults at risk need to have the relevant DBS checks in place – check with your HR rep for details. Speak to the University's Insurance department for information about whether the activity you have planned is covered by the University's insurance

Key contacts:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: _____ Angela Truby (Director of Student Services and Belonging) _____ Ab13@le.ac.uk _____

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: _____ Claire Heggs (Head of Student Support Services) _____ _____

Raising a concern that is not urgent: concerned@le.ac.uk

Appendix E Referral Flow Chart:

