Safeguarding Policy

Adapted from the University of Hertfordshire Policy & Regulations
Safeguarding Policy – V01.0 UPR HS10 - Effective: 1 July 2021

Summary of significant changes to the previous version

This is the first version of this document and should be read in its entirety.

Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in **UPR GV08**.

Table of contents

1   Introduction

1.1   This Safeguarding Policy (the "**Policy**") sets out the University Campus St Albans strategy for the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

1.2   It is important to note that UCSA is not subject to legal safeguarding duties regarding

children and adults at risk in the same way that schools, further education colleges, local authorities, and care providers are.

1.3   However, UCSA is committed to providing a safe environment in which children and adults at risk can live, learn and develop within the context of a university environment and in relation to University-led activities.

1.4   Therefore, this Policy sets out our responsibilities, processes and procedures and outlines how we will:

    a   provide a safe and supportive environment for children and adults at risk who engage with our staff, students and volunteers in the course of our work and University-led activities;

    b   ensure that all staff and students engaging with children and adults at risk receive relevant safeguarding training and understand their role and responsibilities; and

    c   ensure that there is a clear reporting and escalation route should staff or students become aware of a safeguarding concern.

1.5   This Policy applies to all staff, students, contractors and volunteers engaging in UCSA-led activity whether on the University campus or elsewhere (e.g. placements) and covers our interaction with children and adults at risk who are current students, prospective students or who are otherwise participating in University-related activities including core activities of teaching and research, or for example are taking part in University-led sports, holiday schemes, volunteering projects, outreach and widening participation.

1.6   Staff, students and others who have contact with children or adults at risk directly in UCSA-led activities have a responsibility to be alert to the possibility that an individual may be at risk of, or has experienced, abuse or neglect, and report any concerns accordingly. However, it is not the responsibility of individual students or members of staff to investigate or establish that abuse or neglect has taken place.

2   Key definitions

For the purposes of this document the following definitions will apply:

2.1   '**child'**: references to "child" or "children" in this Policy means anyone under 18 years of age; and

2.2   '**adult at risk'**: UCSA bases its definition of an "adult at risk" on that used within the Data Protection Act 2018 and defines an adult at risk as someone over 18 years of age who (i) has needs for care and support; and (ii) is experiencing, or is at risk of, neglect, or physical, mental or emotional harm; and (iii) as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against neglect or harm, or the risk of it.

3 Responsibilities

3.1 Members of UCSA

All members of UCSA are to:

a undertake appropriate training before engaging in any University-led activity involving children and adults at risk;

b understand and apply this Policy and any such training to their University-led activities with children and adults at risk;

c act appropriately at all times and be able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in others;

d be able to recognise abuse (see UPR HS10 Appendix 1[1] for information on different types of abuse and recognising it); and

e know how to report any concerns in a timely and appropriate way.

3.2 UCSA Directorate and Programme Leads

3.3 In addition, UCSA Directorate and Programme Leads shall:

a ensure all members of staff undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks and ensure that the necessary arrangements are made for this to be carried out and that the required checks have been completed;

b ensure that all appropriate staff are notified when there are children or adults at risk within the student cohort;

c be responsible for ensuring that any programme or activity involving children or adults at risk is risk assessed, planned, organised and delivered in accordance with this Policy;

d ensure all staff, volunteers and anyone else working with children and adults at risk for University-led activities within their Strategic Business Unit understands this Policy;

e signpost and ensure that appropriate safeguarding training and refresher training is undertaken;

f ensure that the Policy is adhered to and undertake regular compliance audits; and maintain training records for staff.

g ensure that the Whistleblowing Policy (UPR GV16) is communicated to all such staff, volunteers and anyone else working with children and adults at risk.

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[1] UPR HS10, Appendix I 'Safeguarding definitions, legislation and resources'

3.4   UH Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

3.4.1   The role and responsibilities of UH Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) are

to: a   be available to any employee, student, child or adult at risk to discuss any safeguarding or poor practice concerns - this includes a concern raised by students in the context of their placement;

b   ensure all staff, volunteers and anyone else working with children and adults at risk for University-led activities are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they have a safeguarding concern;

c   ensure that appropriate safeguarding training is available on demand/as needed for members of the University who work with children and adults at risk, whether directly in the course of their work, or indirectly by being involved in the selection process of staff who do work directly with children and adults at risk;

d   ensure that appropriate processes and procedures are in place for relevant recruitment checks and that any issues arising from these checks are resolved before engagement with children or adults at risk commences;

e   ensure that this Policy is fit for purpose and sufficient to ensure that the University meets its statutory obligations and complies generally with good practice and, where reasonably possible, with safeguarding guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies concerned with such matters

f   ensure that all relevant stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities under this Policy and receive any assistance that they may require and provide advice and guidance as necessary to the University more generally;

g   receive referrals or reports of safeguarding concerns;

h   ensure that any concerns reported about a child/ adult at risk are looked into where appropriate and escalated to the relevant external agency/authority for investigation, clearly recorded, specialist guidance is sought where necessary and appropriate action taken to escalate internally and/or to the relevant external agency within statutory time frames;

i   maintain an accurate record of any reported incidents in relation to a children and adults at risk or breaches of this Policy, which will be retained in accordance with data protection legislation and the University's policies in respect of records retention;

j   establish contact with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and relevant Local Authority Children and Adults Safeguarding Board and prepare and submit referrals to them as appropriate; and

k   signpost support mechanisms for anyone affected by the issues set out in this Policy.

3.4.2   The role of the Assistant Safeguarding Officer (ASO) is to carry out the operational functions of the DSO in their absence.

4   Reporting

4.1   Should any member of UCSA, volunteer, consultant or contractor have safeguarding concerns about a child or adult at risk in the course of a UCSA-led activity, they should immediately complete the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (see UPR HS10 appendices 4^2 and 5^3), providing as much detail as possible, and send it to the UH DSO and the ASO.

4.2   It is not the reporting individual's responsibility to investigate the suspected abuse, as this is a matter which is outside their expertise. The Policy requires them to report their concerns, not to make judgments as to whether abuse is occurring. Reports should be factual and contain as much information and should state that staff cannot guarantee confidentiality.

4.3   On receipt of the report, the DSO/ASO will review it, may request further information and investigate or escalate it to the relevant external agency/authority accordingly.

4.4   The Policy provides guidance on our internal procedures, but acknowledges that it will be appropriate in certain circumstances to report safeguarding concerns to a range of external agencies.

4.5   Any individual reporting a matter under this Policy shall keep any information they receive confidential unless otherwise directed by the DSO/ASO.

4.6   Allegation or complaint against a member of UCSA, volunteer, consultant or contractor

4.6.1   Any allegation against a member of staff, student, volunteer, consultant or contractor will be treated seriously and investigated immediately. The UH DSO/ ASO will report to the Oaklands College Director of Human Resources (in the case of a member of staff or a contractor) and appropriate action will be taken to safeguard the welfare of the child or adult at risk. Any allegations concerning students will be handled by the Dean of Students' Office. All staff should reassure students that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A student should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should the student ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. (KCSIE 2021)

4.6.2   All concerns should still be reported using the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (see UPR HS10 appendices 4^2 and 5^3).

4.6.3   Disciplinary action will be taken against any persons making allegations that are found to be malicious, mischievous, vexatious or spurious. Any allegations made in good faith that turn out to be unfounded will not be the subject of any disciplinary or other similar action. It is important that genuine concerns are reported.

4.7   Emergency

4.7.1   In an emergency, where there is an immediate risk of harm, incidents should be reported to the police.

4.7.1   All details should then be recorded on a Safeguarding Incident Report Form (see UPR HS10 appendices 4^2 and 5^3). and sent to the DSO to follow-up.

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[2]   UPR HS10, Appendix IV 'Safeguarding Incident Report Form – adults'

[3]   UPR HS10, Appendix V 'Safeguarding Incident Report Form – children'

4.8   Any other potential safeguarding issues

These should be discussed with An UCSA Director (if appropriate or the DSO/ ASO (if preferred) without delay, who will advise whether to complete and submit the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (see UPR HS10 appendices 4[2] and 5[3]).

5   Recruitment, training and support

5.1   Oaklands College as UCSA's Human Resources Lead will take all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable people are working with children and adults at risk, through its recruitment practices, mandatory enhanced DBS checks, reference-checking and induction procedures.

5.2   In parts of the University where staff regularly work with children or adults at risk, their induction into the organisation should include relevant safeguarding training (as appropriate) and a briefing on this Policy.

5.3   UCSA will be able to signpost support to anyone affected by concerns raised under this Policy, including those to whom a report is made.

6   External organisations using the University's facilities

6.1   Many of the University's facilities are hired by external organisations and under these arrangements the University has no control over, and assumes no liability for, the conduct of individuals from these organisations.

6.2   However, the University wishes to ensure, as far as it is able, that these organisations are safeguarding children and adults at risk, and that they are able to deal with any such disclosures appropriately. Therefore, all external organisations requesting use of University facilities for activities with children and/or adults at risk will be required to sign a declaration to confirm that the organisation has obtained the appropriate checks on their staff and volunteers before permitting such individuals to have access to children and/or adults at risk.

6.3   The organisation will also be asked to confirm that they have a safeguarding policy in place. If an organisation that works with children and/or adults at risk does not have a safeguarding policy, then they will not be permitted to use University facilities. The external organisation shall be required to provide the University with a copy of their safeguarding policy on request.

6.4   In the event that the University-led activity is hosted by another organisation within their own facilities, the host organisation's safeguarding policy and related procedures will normally take precedence, but members of the University engaging in those programmes must also take note of, and act in accordance with the University's Safeguarding Policy to the extent that this is possible in the particular circumstances.

7   Data protection

7.1   The University will comply with UK data protection legislation including the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. Such legislation is based on specific principles, rights and responsibilities which govern the management and processing of personal data by organisations.

7.2   The University's Data Protection Policy sets out what the University does in practice to meet and comply with those principles.

7.3   Those taking video recordings and using images of children and adults at risk in University-led activities must pay due regard to the University's Privacy Statements for staff, students and visitors (as relevant)**.**

8   Prevent

UCSA recognises that young people can be at risk of being drawn into extremist ideologies which can lead to a risk of radicalisation. Where there is a suspicion that this may be the case, this will be considered to be a significant safeguarding concern which is of equal weight alongside other forms of abuse and mistreatment of children and adults at risk. A safeguarding concern of this nature would also fall within the scope of other University policies.

9   Review

The Policy will be reviewed annually, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance; or
- as required by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership/ Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board; or
- as a result of any other significant associated change or event.

10   Key contacts

10.1   The **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** for the University is:

Geri Ward, Dean of Students
Email: G.1.ward@herts.ac.uk
Tel: 01707 284450 (ext: 4450)
Mobile 07950633496
Room: Student Wellbeing, Hutton Hub, first floor

10.2   The **Assistant Safeguarding Officer (ASO)** is:

Email: k.v.conroy@herts.ac.uk
Tel: 01707 289401 (Ext: 8601)
Mobile: 07754858210
Room: University Day Nursery

10.3   Either of the above can be contacted for advice and will be able to guide staff through the above Policy and processes referred to in it.

10.4   The Executive Director of UCSA is

Celeste Jones, Executive Director of Higher Education
Oaklands College, St Albans Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0JA
Celeste.Jones@oaklands.ac.uk | 01727737448 |

10.5   The Assistant Director of UCSA is
Helen Pokorny, Assistant Director, Academic Development
Oaklands College, St Albans Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0JA
helen.pokorny@oaklands.ac.uk | 01727 737277

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