

University of Westminster

Safeguarding Framework

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University of Westminster Safeguarding Framework

Introduction

The University of Westminster recognises its responsibility to ensure a duty of care for vulnerable adults who work, study or are involved in any activities with the University. The University is dedicated to keeping adults and young people safe and this is of paramount importance to its day-to-day activities. This is reflected in the policies, procedures and practices at the University.

This framework applies to all colleagues, senior managers, committee members, volunteers, employees of contracted services and partner organisations, students, apprentices and any member of the University's alumni who represent the University in an official capacity. References in this policy to 'colleagues' or 'students' will be representing these groups.

Key Principles

The University of Westminster's Safeguarding Framework aims to safeguard, protect and promote the wellbeing of children and adults at the University and to ensure the University embodies a caring, open, nurturing environment for students, colleagues and anyone who comes into contact with the University's business.

- To ensure our processes and procedures support and promote safeguarding
- To ensure our colleagues and students understand how to report any concerns
- To ensure our teaching encourages respectful debate amongst the student body
- To share information about concerns with agencies who need to know in a timely fashion
- To ensure relevant legislation is taken into account e.g., Safety, health and wellbeing, Prevent Duty

This framework seeks to underpin the University's compliance with:

- [Prevent Duty](#) (Department for Education, June 2015)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (Department for Education, March 2015)
- *Safety, Health and Wellbeing legislation*
- [The Equality Act](#)

Definition of a Vulnerable Adult

- A student who is prevented from engaging with the course/support as well as they could because of adverse external factors (such as financial/family difficulties, visa/immigration problems/etc.),
- A student who has difficulties with their course despite all reasonable adjustments and support deployed and reviewed;¹
- A student with thoughts of suicide but no plans to act on them and/or with access to "protective measures" (important ties with families and friends, important life plans); somebody who uses self-harm behaviour as a coping mechanism with no intention to end their life.
- A student whose mental health is deteriorating and thus is becoming a risk to themselves or a risk to others; or somebody who is at risk from others or from neglect (neglect to self,

¹ "difficulty with the course" can be defined as regular non-attendance, persistent non-submission of work and repeated deferral requests.

- to dependent, from other people such as carers)²
- A student with thoughts of suicide, means to act upon that plan and, possibly, a past history of suicide attempts;
- A student who is at risk from others or from abuse or neglect;
- A student identified as at risk of radicalisation;
- A student who is being harassed or bullied.
- A student under the age of 18 with limited consent

Designated Safeguarding Officers

- The Head of Student Support and Residential Life (or designate) is the University's Principal Designated Safeguarding Officer for Students
- The Director of Human Resources (or designate) is the University's Designated Safeguarding Officer for matters specifically related to colleagues and training
- Concerns about students should be reported via the Student Wellbeing Link form.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

The University has a "Safeguarding of Students at Risk" process map. This includes internal reporting concerns through a 'Wellbeing Link' reporting form. External reports can be made via safeguarding@westminster.ac.uk. Those identified will be assessed by the Student Wellbeing Service and, in more complex cases, discussed by a multi-disciplinary Coordinated Case Panel.

Onward referral may be made to a number of agencies which may include but is not limited to:

- National Health Services (NHS)
- Social Services
- Specialist support agencies
- SO15

Records kept on Safeguarding referrals will be confidential to the Student Wellbeing Service and Coordinated Casework Panel and shared in line with data protection protocols. It may be required in specific cases to inform outside agencies.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are built into university procedures and processes to take account of students who are vulnerable or who may become vulnerable. These are particularly relevant to:

- Placements
- Outward Mobility. Ensuring that students with known issues are able to access support and healthcare abroad.
- Accommodation - with regard to PEEPS and arrangements for Under 18s
- [Radicalisation](#). Guidance on the Channel Process.

² "Risk to themselves" can be defined as somebody presenting excessive risk-taking behaviour which could endanger life. "Risk to others" can be defined as somebody being overtly threatening to other people or having thoughts of hurting people with the intention of carrying these out.

Colleague Training/Screening

- Colleagues receive mandatory health and safety training which includes issues around safeguarding.
- Colleagues dealing 1:1 with vulnerable students are DBS checked as are University students who are in contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- Third Party Users (e.g., Language Schools) are contractually required to ensure that they conduct their business in line with safeguarding legislation.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

- The University has a Safety Health & Wellbeing Committee which receives reports on the related issues and can initiate and commission University policy in this area
- The University Apprenticeships Board receives updates on apprentice wellbeing and safeguarding matters.

Data Protection Issues

- The confidentiality of students with regard to liaison with parents, carers or guardians is carefully considered in terms of data protection.
- Guidance is available on the use of Emergency Contact information and Prevent referrals.

Relevant Policies and Procedures

This document is a 'Framework' directing colleagues to the relevant policies and procedures listed and hyperlinked below:

- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy](#)
- [Student Charter](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Framework](#)
- [Student Crisis Intervention and Emergency Contact Procedure](#)
- [Wellbeing Link Referral form \(internal access\)](#)
- [Policy for Recruiting Students Under 18](#)
- [Personal Tutor Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Study Procedure](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Guidelines on Working with Children & Vulnerable Adults \(internal access\)](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Diversity and Dignity at Work and Study Policy](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Code of Practice](#)

Updated by:
Carmel Hendricks
Sally Olohan
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