

## Document Details

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1.2	September 2023	Revised to include: safeguarding in relation to research activity; change of provider or pre-sessional courses from International Study Group to INTO; updated safeguarding report forms to be provided separately online; review procedure following external safeguarding referrals
1.3	October 2024	Revised to include: Code of Practice on Free Speech; link to online 'Safeguarding at Lancaster University' course for staff; updated web links
1.4	August 2025	Revised to reflect responsibility for review of annual safeguarding reports and the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance moving from Council Safety Health and Wellbeing Committee to Audit and Risk Committee
1.5	September 2025	Revised to move to one Designated Safeguarding Lead for the University, supported by Deputies in relevant areas

## **Referenced policies and documents**

Lancaster University [Commitment to Safeguarding](#)

Lancaster University [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy](#)

[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) at Lancaster University

[Human Resources Recruitment Guidelines \(including Disclosure and Barring procedure\)](#)

[Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy - Staff](#)

[Personal Relationships at Work Policy - Staff](#)

[Code of Practice: Freedom of Speech](#)

[Student Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)

[Student Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

Lancaster University [Disabled Student Policy](#)

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Raising Serious Concerns and Disclosing Public Interest Matters \(Whistleblowing\)](#)

[Policy for the Admission of Students Under the Age of 18](#)

[Supported Study and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures](#)

Fitness to Practise Procedures (available on demand)

[Student Discipline Regulations](#)

[Staff Disciplinary Procedure](#)

[Students' Charter](#)

[Computer User Agreement](#)

[Research Integrity, Ethics & Governance](#)

[Commitment to Safeguarding in Research](#) and the [Safeguarding in Research Framework](#)

[Prevent Guidance](#)

[Staff Grievance Procedure](#)

[Student Complaints Procedure](#)

## **Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Procedures and Guidance**

The procedures, guidance, information and templates included in this document are provided to support the University's [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy](#) and the [Commitment to Safeguarding in Research](#), and are intended to help staff perform their duties.

### **What do we mean by legal Safeguarding?**

- Safeguarding is about preventing harm caused by abuse and neglect.
- The legal duties focus on certain vulnerable groups, namely 'children' and 'adults at risk' (sometimes called "vulnerable adults") who are experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect.

These children and adults at risk may be a student, a staff member or anyone connected with the University community (e.g., a research participant, a child on campus as part of a school group).

### **Defining a 'child' and an 'adult at risk'**

#### *Child*

A child is anyone under 18 years of age.

#### *Adult at risk*

An adult at risk is 18 years of age or over, and:

- has needs for care and support (even if those needs are not being met); and
- as a result, is unable to protect themselves against risks of abuse/neglect; and
- is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

Assessing whether someone meets these criteria should involve understanding their personal characteristics (e.g. a disability) and their life circumstances (e.g. in a domestic violence situation). It is also recognised that the process of being abused or neglected can make someone, normally over time, more vulnerable and therefore more likely to meet these criteria.

# Lancaster University Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Procedures

## 1. What incidents should be reported?

A common-sense approach should be taken when dealing with incidents involving groups or individuals at risk and any concern can be discussed informally with a Local Safeguarding Officer or Deputy, or the relevant Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead if students/staff are uncertain on how to proceed.

### *High/medium risk concerns*

The following provides a list of high/medium risk incidents that **must** be reported to ensure the safety of a child or adult at risk and may need to be reported to relevant external agencies:

- if a child/adult at risk is accidentally hurt;
- if you are concerned that a relationship is developing that could represent an abuse of trust;
- if you are concerned that the child/adult at risk is becoming attracted to you or a colleague who cares for them;
- if you are concerned that a colleague is becoming attracted to someone in his/her care;
- if a child/adult at risk misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done;
- if you have had to use reasonable physical restraint to prevent a child/adult at risk harming themselves, or another, or from causing significant damage to property;
- if a child/adult at risk makes an allegation of abuse;
- if a student or member of staff makes an allegation of abuse taking place to a child or adult at risk external to the university;
- if you see any suspicious marks on a child/adult at risk;
- if you notice sudden changes in behaviour;
- if a student/member of staff is taking photographs of children/adults at risk on their mobile phone;
- if you feel that the child/adult at risk is being radicalised (see section on Prevent below).

A guide to recognising abuse is included as Appendix 3.

### *Low-level concerns*

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct (see guidance below), including inappropriate conduct outside of work;
- is not considered serious enough to refer to external agencies.

Examples of low-level concerns could include being:

- over-friendly with children or adult at risk;
- having favourites;
- engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

## **2. Reporting a safeguarding incident**

### **2.1 *Procedures to be followed by staff, students, alumni, research and innovation participants or partners, student ambassadors or volunteers in case of suspected or alleged abuse of children or adults at risk, or non-compliance with the guidance***

2.1.1 Any staff member, student, research and innovation participant/partner, alumni, student ambassador or volunteer who:

- (a) suspects that a child or adult at risk has been, or is at risk of being abused; or
- (b) has had a disclosure of abuse made to them; or
- (c) receives a complaint relating to child or adult at risk safeguarding issues at the University; or
- (d) is contacted by a local authority as part of its enquiries about a child or adult at risk that might be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm;

must follow the procedures detailed below.

2.1.2 First, report the matter immediately to the university by submitting an online safeguarding report via the University's [Unisafe reporting system](#) system (available through the iLancaster App or through the [university website](#)) within 24 hours, recording the child's or adult at risk's condition, including emotional state, and any observed injuries.

Next, inform your project coordinator, line manager (staff), academic tutor or supervisor (students), who will seek advice from the relevant Local Safeguarding Officer or relevant Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the University. The individual may also raise the concern directly with the relevant Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the University if preferred (see [Safeguarding concerns](#) for current contact details).

The matter should be reported without delay. If the individual has serious concerns about immediate harm, then the emergency services (police/ambulance as relevant) should be contacted via 999.

2.1.3 Students can report safeguarding concerns to any member of university staff. If a student reports an incident to a member of staff, the member of staff should follow the procedures for reporting incidents on behalf of the student.

If the University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of concern then a report should be made to the Chief Operating Officer. Alternatively, at any time a staff member, student, research and innovation participant/partner, alumni, student ambassador or volunteer, may raise any concerns directly with the police or the Local Authority Designated Officer.

- 2.1.4 Members of staff and students can also make anonymous reports of safeguarding concerns via Unisafe. The Unisafe system allows staff and students to report any event they wish the University to be aware of, including bullying, harassment, hate incidents or sexual misconduct, on behalf of themselves or someone else. When the student/member of staff makes the report they can choose whether to provide contact details or to report anonymously. If a member of staff or a student decides to make an anonymous report, the action the University can take may be limited especially if there is insufficient information or absence of evidence. However, the University will assess any University risks and take appropriate action to improve the wellbeing and safety for the University community.
- 2.1.5 All safeguarding concern reports will be received and reviewed by the relevant Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who are responsible for taking any action required. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead may request that a Safeguarding Report Form is completed in relation to the concerns raised; the template report forms are included in the appendices.
- 2.1.6 Cases of significant concern or high risk relating to students will be discussed at the weekly cross-institutional Students of Concern Review Team meeting to determine appropriate action, if appropriate. Staff cases will be discussed with the relevant HR Partner to determine appropriate action. Research related cases will be discussed with the relevant project lead, project designated safeguarding contact and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Research.
- 2.1.7 A written record will be kept by the relevant University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead of all discussions, actions and procedures carried out, including the outcome of any investigation.
- 2.1.8 The University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep the Head of Department or area and any member of staff involved in the incident suitably informed of any referral and its outcomes.
- 2.1.9 Students/members of staff must discuss matters arising from 2.1.1 above only with the Local Safeguarding Officer or relevant University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead if appropriate, and the relevant outside agencies, if required. Details must not be disclosed to any other person without appropriate permission.
- 2.2 ***If the incident involves an allegation concerning a member of staff, including a staff volunteer contributing to University activities***
  - 2.2.1 Managers considering reporting the actions of members of staff should seek advice from the People and Organisational Effectiveness Division and the University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Staff.

- 2.2.2 In the case of an allegation of misconduct the University Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Chief People Officer and the Chief Operating Officer regarding whether the matter should be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate University [Disciplinary Procedure](#).
- 2.2.3 Where there is clear actual or circumstantial evidence to support the allegation, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or nominee) will make an immediate child or adult protection referral.
- 2.2.4 It is recognised that some matters might become the subject of a criminal investigation. Where an employee is subject to an investigation by the police for an alleged criminal offence, the University is entitled to pursue its own or complementary confidential enquiries as long as these do not interfere with a criminal investigation. The University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Staff will consult where appropriate with local authority and/or Police and/or NSPCC in such cases. The Chief Operating Officer and/or Head of Security will be informed of all such cases. Where matters involve or may involve criminal proceedings the Chief Operating Officer (or nominee), following relevant consultation, can also suspend internal proceedings until such time as the criminal proceedings are complete. Where an internal procedure is suspended, the University reserves the right to undertake a risk assessment and take any subsequent action it deems reasonable, necessary and proportionate.
- 2.2.5 The person against whom an allegation has been made may be informed of the allegation on the advice of the local authority and/ or the police. While the allegation is being investigated the individual may be suspended from duty or removed from activities and duties placing him or her in contact with children or adults at risk, in line with the disciplinary process.
- 2.2.6 In order to maintain the integrity of any investigation, an individual against whom an allegation has been made may be advised to only discuss the substance of the allegation with his or her union or legal representative, immediate family or as directed by the investigating officer, on the basis that these parties agree to keep the matter confidential.
- 2.2.7 Following an appropriate internal investigation, disciplinary action may be taken as appropriate in line with the relevant University Procedure.
- 2.2.8 Should the employee leave the organisation, the investigation will continue to its conclusion as though they were still in employment.
- 2.2.9 Relevant information will be shared with external agencies as required/appropriate.
- 2.3 ***If the incident involves an allegation concerning a student, including a student volunteer contributing to University activities***
- 2.3.1 Cases involving students should be referred to the Head of Student Support and Wellbeing as the University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Students and Applicants.

- 2.3.2 In the case of an allegation of misconduct the University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Student Conduct Officer and the Chief Operating Officer.
- 2.3.3 Where there is clear actual or circumstantial evidence to support the allegation, the University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate child or adult protection referral.
- 2.3.4 Any internal disciplinary action arising from an investigation will be handled in accordance with the [Student Discipline Regulations](#) which allow for the suspension or exclusion of a student pending a criminal investigation. Where matters involve or may involve criminal proceedings the Chief Operating Officer (or nominee), as the officer with overall responsibility for the Student Discipline Regulations, following relevant consultation, can suspend internal proceedings until such time as the criminal proceedings are complete. Where an internal procedure is suspended, the University reserves the right to undertake a risk assessment and take any subsequent action it deems reasonable, necessary and proportionate.
- 2.3.5 If a safeguarding incident involves an allegation about a student who is studying for a programme requiring professional behaviour standards or fitness to practise, the academic department(s) will be informed.
- 2.3.6 Limited information may also need to be shared with academic department[s] in case of:
- reference requests relating to further training/employment in future where the safeguarding issue will need to be considered;
  - departmental activity involving children and adults at risk.
- 2.3.7 Limited information may need to be shared with People and Organisational Effectiveness and the Students' Union in case the safeguarding issue is or becomes relevant in relation to employment, volunteering or other activity.
- 2.3.8 Relevant information will be shared with external agencies as required/appropriate.
- 2.4 ***If the incident involves an allegation concerning a research participant or a concern raised during the course of a research or innovation project***
- 2.4.1 Cases involving research participants should be reported to the Project Lead and to the University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Research.
- 2.4.2 If the incident involved a research project in collaboration with a NHS Trust and the concern involves a research participant it should be reported to the Trust's safeguarding team in parallel, to seek further advice and guidance.
- 2.4.3 As with staff and student related cases, relevant information may need to be shared with external agencies (e.g. research funders) as required/appropriate.



## **2.5 Referrals under Prevent**

- 2.5.1 Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities – including relevant higher education institutions – to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This is commonly referred to as the ‘Prevent duty’. More information on Prevent guidance and supporting students at risk is available on the [Student Support Referral Guide](#).
- 2.5.2 Any suspicion or allegation under Prevent must be reported immediately so that action can be taken to safeguard the student concerned. Staff/students will need to complete a safeguarding incident report ([online via Unisafe](#)) and provide a copy of all records to the Prevent Safeguarding Officer. If staff/students have any concerns regarding the safety of a student but are uncertain how to act, they can contact the Prevent Safeguarding Officer (or in their absence, the relevant Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) for advice and guidance at any time.

## **3. Monitoring and reporting**

- 3.1 A joint annual report on safeguarding incidents and actions taken will be provided to University Executive Board and Audit and Risk Committee and reported to the University’s Council, unless changes in legislation or review of an incident requires changes to policy or procedure to be made more urgently. This report will identify key learning points for improvement and recommend actions to mitigate safeguarding risks in the future. This report will be shared with Local Safeguarding Officers and Deputies who will be responsible for ensuring that any recommendations are implemented in their area.
- 3.2 Local Safeguarding Officers will provide a regular report on safeguarding culture and any issues of concern in their local area to Faculty/Divisional leadership meetings and the termly Safeguarding Leads meeting.
- 3.3 Prevent reports will be submitted to the relevant statutory organisations as required.

## **4. Recruitment, selection and training (including DBS checks)**

The measures stated below are to be applied to staff and students undertaking courses and/or areas of work/activity/research that involve contact with children or adults at risk as part of the curriculum as well as student ambassadors, alumni and volunteers who will be responsible for, have regular access to, or will regularly work or be in unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk as part of their role on behalf of the University. All staff, students, alumni, student ambassadors and volunteers in such roles who meet the threshold of ‘regulated activity’ will be required to receive clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) via an enhanced DBS check and subscription to the update service. It is an offence for an employer to knowingly employ an individual who is disqualified from working with children or adults at risk to carry out a regulated activity. Certain other roles may also require an enhanced DBS check; this will be requested as part of the job application process.

#### 4.1 ***Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers***

- 4.1.1 The appointing procedure for staff, alumni and student volunteers will ensure that where appropriate past criminal records and pending prosecutions are identified. For staff or student volunteer roles where the employee will be working with children or adults at risk, and for all staff roles teaching on apprenticeship programmes, at least one member of the recruitment panel must have undertaken Safer Recruitment training.
- 4.1.2 Candidates should be asked appropriate questions relating to the fact that the University provides a wide-ranging programme of activities for children and adults at risk and their specific role may bring them into contact with these groups.
- 4.1.3 References will be obtained and checked by appointing managers prior to all appointments. These references may include questions relating to safeguarding issues. 'Letters of good conduct' and embassy references may be requested for staff and student volunteers who have spent time working or studying outside the UK.
- 4.1.4 All successful applicants who meet the DBS regulated activity threshold will be asked to complete an enhanced 'DBS Disclosure' application. Information on DBS checks and how to arrange these can be found on the [People and Organisational Effectiveness website](#). Where the DBS has not responded prior to the start date of a new member of staff, the HR Partner, approved by the Deputy Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness and the Head of Department (in consultation with any relevant external agencies, such as the NHS) will either agree a set of restrictions to duties or that the individual is shadowed/supervised prior to the receipt of the DBS outcome. If student ambassadors are to have contact with children and adults at risk before the DBS responds, they will be asked to sign a statement declaring that there is no reason why they should not be allowed to work with children and adults at risk and to declare any former spent, or unspent cautions or convictions that would not be filtered in line with current guidance. An example is included as Appendix 4.
- 4.1.5 There will be circumstances where changes in legislation, guidance and/or the responsibilities of an individual role holder change which mean that it is appropriate to require existing staff, students, alumni or volunteers to apply for a DBS disclosure.
- 4.1.6 People and Organisational Effectiveness will retain a list of staff, alumni and student volunteer roles which require an enhanced DBS check.
- 4.1.7 When staff change roles and move into one of the roles requiring an enhanced DBS check, line managers are responsible for reporting this to People and Organisational Effectiveness and ensuring that the DBS check takes place.
- 4.1.8 Any further advice/guidance should be sought from the relevant Human Resources Advisor regarding staff and/or the relevant Local Safeguarding Officer regarding volunteers.

#### **4.2 *Recruitment and selection of students undertaking programmes that involve contact with children or adults at risk as part of the curriculum***

- 4.2.1 The admissions procedure for students will ensure that past criminal records and pending prosecutions are identified. Departments are responsible for the implementation of these guidelines for applicants to their courses and the Admissions Tutor for the department must have completed Safer Recruitment training.
- 4.2.2 Applicants may be asked appropriate questions relating to the fact that their programme of study or the placement study component within their course may bring them into contact with children and adults at risk.
- 4.2.3 References will be obtained and checked by the departmental Admissions Tutor (or nominee) prior to all offers of a place. 'Letters of good conduct' may be requested for students who have spent time working or studying outside the UK.
- 4.2.4 All successful applicants must be given an opportunity to declare any former spent, or unspent cautions or convictions and where appropriate the Admissions Tutor will ask applicants to complete an enhanced DBS check. Where the DBS has not responded prior to the start date of a new student's course, the Head of Department (in consultation with any relevant external agencies, such as NHS, Head Teacher of a School, local authority or Children Services) will agree a set of restrictions to placement prior to the receipt of the enhanced DBS check.
- 4.2.5 Any disclosure which poses serious concern over a student's suitability and/or appropriate monitoring post-admission will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 4.2.6 Successful applicants will be required to complete the University's Safeguarding and Prevent training; the department Admissions Tutor (or nominee) is responsible for ensuring that this training is completed as part of induction.

#### **4.3 *Training***

- 4.3.1 The University will draw attention to the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy, Procedures and Guidance and the Prevent Guidance by including appropriate material in induction packs for all new staff, students, student ambassadors and volunteers. Line managers will be responsible for providing a copy of the policy, procedures and guidance to appropriate staff as part of their induction.

- 4.3.2 All staff who will come in to contact with children or adults at risk, and all staff teaching on apprenticeship programmes, must read and sign to say that they have understood the Part 1 and Annex B of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 guidance](#). This should be actioned by the member of staff's line manager as part of staff induction procedures.
- 4.3.3 The University provides training, including child and adult at risk safeguarding training, Prevent training and health and safety guidance, to all relevant staff, students, alumni student ambassadors and volunteers upon appointment and then at appropriate intervals, usually every 3 years. The '[Safeguarding at Lancaster University](#)' online training course is available to all staff. A register of staff and volunteers who have completed the training will be retained by People and Organisational Effectiveness. Line managers and Heads of Department have a duty to ensure adequate training and information is provided and updated.
- 4.3.4 The University Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies will have current higher level safeguarding training that is updated every 2 years as a minimum.
- 4.3.5 Staff, students, alumni, student ambassadors and volunteers in contact with children or adults at risk may have their activities monitored and evaluated as part of established review procedures. Additional training will be provided to meet individual needs and ensure quality of provision.

## **5. Organising University events involving children or adults at risk**

- 5.1 Procedures must be in place in respect of all activities to ensure that:
- the welfare of the child/adult at risk is paramount;
  - the safeguarding and health and safety culture of the University is upheld;
  - staff feel confident and able to participate in activities involving children and adults at risk;
  - all children and adults at risk have the opportunity to participate in activities in a safe and secure environment;
  - parents/carers have full confidence in the University;
  - unsuitable persons are prevented from working with children or adults at risk;
  - staff do not put themselves in a position where an allegation of abuse can be made against them;
  - any child or adult at risk who is harmed is identified and responded to appropriately and quickly;
  - signs of abuse are recognised and addressed;
  - any disclosures of abuse are dealt with appropriately and quickly.
- 5.2 All staff should follow the University's Risk Assessment procedure for any event or activity. Risk assessment information and documents can be found [here](#). In all cases, the risk assessment process must be completed and satisfactory control measures put in place before any activity involving children or adults at risk is undertaken.

- 5.3 An online training course on risk assessment is available to staff via [Moodle](#).
- 5.4 Local Safeguarding Officers may be able to supply template risk assessments for particular types of activity. Staff should contact the Local Safeguarding Officer for advice and support (see [Safeguarding concerns](#) for details of Local Safeguarding Officers).
- 5.5 If staff are organising an in-person event involving children or adults at risk, they are recommended to make arrangements via the conference and events team. This will ensure consideration of access and safeguarding processes as this is built into their procedures. The Conference and Events team's contact information can be found [here](#).
- 5.6 If staff choose to run in person events outside of the conference and events system on behalf of the University, they must ensure that they have undertaken all risk assessments and taken in to account safeguarding requirements and reasonable adjustments needed. A set of guidance and good practice guidelines for organising events involving children and adults at risk is included as Appendix 1. If staff are unsure whether the event or activity will involve children or adults at risk, they should assume that it will and follow the guidance as appropriate.
- 5.7 Safeguarding procedures also need to be followed when organising online events involving children or adults at risk. A set of guidance and good practice guidelines for online events is included as Appendix 2.
- 5.8 Before a work experience placement takes place involving those under the age of 18, it is the responsibility of the university member of staff supervising the placement to ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and provided to the parent/guardian of the children involved. The child should be supervised at all times (except breaks) and parental consent for the work experience placement (including emergency medical permission) must be obtained.

## **6. Registered Lancaster University students aged under 18**

- 6.1 Student Wellbeing Services will work with the Admissions team to manage the application process for Lancaster University prospective students who will be aged under 18 when they start their programme, ensuring that all of these students have signed the University's Consent Form for Students Under the Age of 18, have parental/guardian consent to attend University, and a UK based guardian.
- 6.2 Student Wellbeing Services will also make contact with all Lancaster University students aged under 18 to advise them of University support available and who to contact if they need help or advice.
- 6.3 Academic departments are responsible for identifying students aged under 18 registered on their programmes and making sure that staff involved in teaching and supporting these students are aware of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and how to identify and refer incidents and concerns.

- 6.4 College and Accommodation Managers are responsible for identifying students aged under 18 residing in their accommodation and ensuring that staff supporting these students are aware of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and how to identify and refer incidents and concerns. Welfare concerns for students aged under 18 can be referred to Student Wellbeing Services ([wellbeing@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@lancaster.ac.uk)). College Managers must ensure that any events organised by the College or JCR team which involve under 18s or adults at risk follow the guidelines for organising events below (Appendices 2 and 3).
- 6.5 The INTO group are responsible for safeguarding students aged under 18 and adults at risk registered on their courses, in line with the [INTO safeguarding policy](#) and [INTO Under 18s Policy](#), liaising with Colleges and Student Wellbeing Services if any safeguarding concerns or incidents are reported.
- 6.6 Lancaster University Students' Union (LUSU) are responsible for safeguarding students aged under 18 and adults at risk engaging with LUSU services, events and societies, in line with the [LUSU safeguarding policy and procedures](#), liaising with Colleges and Student Wellbeing Services if any safeguarding concerns or incidents are reported. LUSU must also ensure that events involving under 18s or adults at risk follow the guidelines for organising events below (Appendices 2 and 3).

## **7. External leaders'/teachers' responsibilities while visiting the University with children**

- 7.1 Lancaster University wants to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from harm while on the university's campus. In addition to the university's responsibilities, teachers/leaders of groups are required to exercise their own responsibilities. The university lead organising the event/activity is responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is in place and that all external leaders/teachers shall:
- ensure that they have read the Lancaster University Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and accompanying Procedures and Guidance;
  - Make sure they have adequate staff supervision using the ratios laid down by their institution. These are normally: 0-2 years = 1 adult to 3 children; 2-3 years = 1 adult to 4 children; 3-7 years = 1 adult to 8 children; 7 years + = 2 adults (preferably one of each gender) for up to 20 children and one additional staff member for every additional 10 children thereafter;
  - ensure they supervise the children at all times;
  - in case of an accident or emergency, contact a member of staff who will follow University procedures;
  - in the case of a lost child, contact a member of staff who will follow the University procedures;
  - refrain from having possession of or consuming alcoholic beverages or using non-prescribed drugs on the University premises;
  - refrain from either verbally or physically abusing a child;
  - ensure adequate insurance cover for the group and leaders, including no exclusions for child abuse;

- ensure that the appropriate group leaders carry any necessary medicine for the children with them at all times, with the permission of the parents/guardian;
- inform their group of behavioural expectations while at the University. We wish to remind all teachers and group leaders that the primary responsibility for the welfare of the children in their care rests with them at all times.

## **8. External safeguarding referrals: review and reflection process**

- 8.1 When a safeguarding report is made from the University to external agencies (including local authorities' services and the police), the University will undertake a review of the University's investigation into and management of the safeguarding concern, with the aim of identifying any areas for learning and improvement.
- 8.2 The safeguarding report review will be undertaken by:
1. a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy from an area without involvement in managing the safeguarding concern (for example, if the concern is raised in relation to students, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for staff or research would undertake the review of how the concern was managed); and
  2. a Local Safeguarding Officer with no former involvement in the case.
- 8.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) and Local Safeguarding Officer will review the investigation and management of the safeguarding concern and produce a report stating lessons learned and recommended actions which will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead group and the Chief Operating Officer for action if required. A report on review outcomes and actions taken will be included in the annual safeguarding report to University Executive Board and Audit and Risk Committee.

## Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Guidance

### 1. Information sharing in relation to safeguarding concerns

- 1.1 Information sharing is often deemed necessary for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. In line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 staff may share information without consent if in their judgement there is a lawful reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. The Data Protection Act includes 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows staff to share information without consent. Fears about sharing information must not stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children or adults at risk of abuse or neglect.
- 1.2 Lancaster University is one legal entity. This means that personal information *can be shared* between staff within the organisation *provided that there is a legitimate need*. There are no barriers from a data protection perspective between colleges/ academic departments/professional services. However, information shared must be proportionate to the need and level of risk. Disclosure of information should be limited to that which is relevant to the issue and should only be shared with those who have a legitimate need to know.
- 1.3 Staff should avoid giving assurances to students that information will be held in confidence – if staff make such an assurance they may be required to observe it. This could mean that the student does not get the support they require.
- If information about a student is inappropriately held in confidence by an individual member of staff this may be a barrier to the University's responsibility to act in the interests of the student. In the eyes of the law a student who has provided information to one member of staff has informed the institution.
- 1.4 There are some services such as Student Mental Health and Disability where staff are obliged to hold certain information in confidence. For example, notes relating to clinical counselling support sessions or medical information establishing a disability may not be shared; however, it would be possible to discuss adjustments or recommendations that arise from this information.
- 1.5 If information is not shared when appropriate, it will:
- impede the University's obligation to report safeguarding situations to the police or other agencies to protect individuals who may be at risk, breaching our public sector duty with potential serious consequences for both individual and institution;
  - cause difficulties (and at worst, potential tragedy) for a member of staff or student who does not get the right support;
  - cause stress for members of staff supporting a very troubled student/colleague, wrongly believing that they have to keep all information confidential.



- 1.6 If someone asks to share information about abuse, potential or alleged, it must be clearly explained that where safeguarding issues are concerned, keeping a secret may not be possible and that a promise cannot be made to do so. The information will be reported to the relevant Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may also have to talk to external agencies. The reporting person can then choose whether or not to continue with the disclosure – they may choose not to do so. If they choose not to continue with a disclosure but there is still concern about them, concerns should be reported using the procedures for reporting suspected abuse or a safeguarding above.
- 1.7 If a member of staff is unsure how to deal with a situation and what can be shared on a need-to-know basis:
- for student related concerns contact ASK ([ask@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:ask@lancaster.ac.uk)) and ask to be put in touch with someone who can advise;
  - for staff related concerns contact the relevant HR Partner.

## **2. University staff safeguarding responsibilities**

- 2.1 All University staff (including partner body/agency staff) and volunteers working on behalf of the University are regarded as being in a position of trust, including those who teach, support, guide or in any way interact with students. It is important that all staff are aware of the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy (and related policies identified above) and its supporting procedures and guidance and act accordingly at all times.
- 2.2 Staff should ensure that they are aware of the children or members of groups at risk under their care so that they may take appropriate action. This also applies to interview situations where a chaperone may be needed or arrangements made for meetings to be held in an open area.
- 2.3 All staff are expected to take responsibility for ensuring that they have relevant training to fulfil their responsibilities under this policy. Staff should discuss this with their relevant line manager if unsure.
- 2.4 Any staff member made aware of suspicions, allegations or actual abuse of a child, young person or adult at risk (including allegations against staff) is responsible for taking the appropriate action according to the safeguarding procedures. This also applies to allegations of abuse relating to children or adults at risk external to the university. If a staff member is made aware that a person is at risk and does not take appropriate action this is considered a disciplinary issue.
- 2.5 Staff should never try to deal with a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse themselves, and should always report this via the procedure recommended in the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Procedures. It may be appropriate to consult other relevant professionals or adults working with the person for additional information related to the concerns raised by/about the person at risk. A process for this may be identified as part of the local investigation procedure for the activity in which staff are involved.

- 2.6 Staff should never be afraid to ask for appropriate advice and guidance if they are unsure of what action to take. Confidential advice can be given by the relevant Local Safeguarding Officer, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Emergency Planning and Risk Manager (in respect of incidents arising under Prevent). This advice can be given confidentially without identifying the individual concern if staff members need to establish whether a report should be made.
- 2.7 Staff, students, alumni, student ambassadors and volunteers are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person to engage in a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18 in relation to whom they are in a position of trust; the University interprets this to include all children with whom staff, students, alumni, student ambassadors and volunteers come into contact through their role or University activities or while on campus.

2.8 ***Staff code of conduct in relation to safeguarding***

Stated below are the standards of behaviour which staff, students, alumni, student ambassadors, contractors and volunteers working with children or adults at risk should observe. This code should assist in the safeguarding of both children or adults at risk and staff, students, alumni and volunteers. Further instruction and training on safeguarding will be provided for individual activities by the project coordinator or line manager.

Staff, students, alumni, student ambassadors and volunteers must:

- (i) follow the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Procedures and Guidance at all times;
- (ii) put the welfare of children or adults at risk first in any situation;
- (iii) treat all children or adults at risk with respect and fairness, regardless of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, age, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, trade union membership, family circumstance, sexual orientation or other irrelevant distinction;
- (iv) avoid situations where individuals are alone with a child or adult at risk – there should always be two responsible adults leading the group or individuals should be working in an open room with other groups and adults present;
- (v) be aware that physical contact with a child or adult at risk, however well-intentioned, may be misinterpreted. If the touching is in a sporting situation, it should be in accordance with the guidelines provided by the appropriate National Governing Body;
- (vi) remove themselves from situations where a child or adult at risk is becoming overly familiar and report it to another responsible adult;
- (vii) recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children or adults at risk;
- (viii) be aware that contact with a child or adult at risk via email and/or other electronic media, may be misinterpreted;

- (ix) if it is necessary to contact a child or an adult at risk, use university email (or another official, rather than personal, means of communication). Using social media is never appropriate;
- (x) respect a child's or adult at risk's right to personal privacy, while recognising that an agreement not to pass on information or to keep secrets must never be made with children or adults at risk;
- (xi) report concerns, unacceptable behaviour and allegations or suspicions of abuse to the project coordinator, line manager or Local/Deputy Safeguarding Officer, preferably using the online safeguarding incident report system [Unisafe](#);
- (xii) remember that representatives of the University serve as role models and must act in a responsible manner.

Staff, students, alumni, student ambassadors and volunteers must not:

- (i) leave a group of children or adults at risk unsupervised;
- (ii) allow or engage in inappropriate or suggestive remarks or gestures of any kind;
- (iii) play rough physical games or sexually provocative games;
- (iv) share a bedroom with a child or adult at risk;
- (v) reduce a child or adult at risk to tears as a form of control;
- (vi) allow allegations made by a child or adult at risk to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- (vii) give a child or adult at risk a gift of any kind or accept one from a person in their care. All offers of gifts should be reported to the project coordinator, line manager or Local/Deputy Safeguarding Officer;
- (viii) allow or engage in inappropriate or unnecessary touching of any kind. The main principles of touch are:
  - touch should always be in response to the child's or adult at risk's need;
  - touch should always be appropriate to the age and understanding of the child or adult at risk;
- (ix) physically restrain a child or adult at risk unless the restraint is to prevent physical injury of the child or adult at risk or others;
- (x) arrange to meet the child or adult at risk on an individual basis outside of university business or activities;
- (xi) use social media (such as Facebook or Instagram), WhatsApp, text messages, personal email accounts, personal mobile phones or similar to communicate with children or adults at risk;
- (xii) provide personal contact details (address, email address, personal mobile or home telephone number or details of social media or similar accounts) to a child or adult at risk;
- (xiii) make or accept requests to connect with a child or adult at risk over social media;
- (xiv) do things of a personal nature for children or adults at risk that they can do for themselves or that their parent/leader/carer can do for them;
- (xv) have children or adults at risk on their own in a vehicle;

- (xvi) go into a lavatory or an enclosed space with children or adults at risk unless another adult is present (this may include a parent, teacher, group leader, project co-ordinator or line manager);
- (xvii) spend time alone with a child or adult at risk. If an individual finds they are in a situation where they are alone with a child or adult at risk, they should make sure that they can be clearly observed or seen by others.

2.9 Staff, students, alumni and volunteers should recognise that being alone with a child or adult at risk makes both parties vulnerable. However, staff, students, alumni and volunteers may need to manage risk. When, for example, there is the imminent risk of a child or adult at risk harming himself or herself, then it is common sense to intervene, even if this requires the individual to be alone with that person. Such intervention should be guided by what is in the best interests of the child or adult at risk's welfare. The member of staff/students should subsequently record their actions and the reason for them, preferably using the safeguarding incident report function of [Unisafe](#) and also share this with the event/project coordinator or their line manager.

If it is alleged that a member of staff or a student has breached the staff code of conduct, an investigation may be carried out in line with the relevant disciplinary procedure.

- 2.10 First Aid: ideally first aid should only be administered by a trained First Aider. In all circumstances, the child or adult at risk's welfare should come first and first aid should be administered if required. Staff/students should subsequently record their actions and the reason for them through the safeguarding incident report function of [Unisafe](#).
- 2.11 Detailed safeguarding guidance for in person and online interactions with children or adults at risk are included as Appendices 2 and 3.

### **3. Dealing with issues relating to mental health**

- 3.1 The team with designated responsibility for determining the severity of mental health issues is the Student Mental Health Service (SMHS) in Student and Education Services. The SMHS are not an emergency service and if there are concerns of serious risk, staff/students should call 999 immediately so that paramedics can be called to assess the situation. In situations where the risk is not immediate staff/students can contact the team for confidential advice and guidance ([mentalhealth@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:mentalhealth@lancaster.ac.uk)). Staff/students do not need to give the affected person's details if they are ascertaining whether there is a risk, however, they should always ensure that they are not accepting a level of responsibility for which they are not trained. If they try to deal with serious issues alone this could put themselves or the child/adult at risk in danger.

- 3.2 Staff/students can also always seek advice from the relevant Local Safeguarding Officer or University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (current details available on the [Safeguarding concerns webpages](#)).
- 3.3 The University's Mental Health Awareness training course is mandatory for all staff and will support staff in recognising and responding to students and colleagues with mental health problems.

### **Safeguarding guidelines for in person events or activities involving children, young people aged under-18 or adults at risk**

All interactions with young people aged under-18 or adults at risk should adhere to the University's [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy](#) and [Procedures and Guidance](#). These guidelines for online interactions provide additional advice and guidance; there are also FAQs available in the [Staff Student Support Referral Guide](#).

All University staff (including partner body/agency staff) and volunteers working on behalf of the University are regarded as being in a position of trust, in particular those who teach, support, guide or in any way interact with students and applicants. It is important that all staff are aware of the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and its supporting procedures and guidance and act accordingly at all times.

If the age/vulnerability of event participants is not known, staff should follow these guidelines to ensure that safeguarding measures are in place. In particular, interviews with and engagements with undergraduate applicants should assume that guidance for interactions with young people under-18 should be followed, unless applicants are known to be over 18.

- 1. Safeguarding requirements for in person events involving children, young people aged under-18 or adults at risk**
  - 1.1 Local Safeguarding Officer (LSO): in line with the Lancaster University safeguarding procedures, each Faculty/College/area engaged in work with under-18s/adults at risk should nominate a Local Safeguarding Officer and Deputy who are responsible for working with Heads of Department/Service to support them to identify safeguarding issues for activities in their area and ensure safeguarding guidelines are followed. The event/activity lead or organiser is responsible for ensuring effective safeguarding arrangements are in place for their event/activity and for ensuring that any visitors or volunteers are aware of their duties under this policy. Event organisers, Local Safeguarding Officers and Deputies can ask for advice from the University's Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Applicants and Students), the Head of Student Support and Wellbeing.
  - 1.2 Risk assessment: in line with the safeguarding policy, the event/activity organiser must undertake a risk assessment for all activities and events to ensure that any child or adult at risk is suitably protected. This includes reasonable adjustments relating to disability-related or other needs. In all cases, the risk assessment process must be completed and satisfactory control measures put in place before any activity involving a child or adult at risk is undertaken. The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify what, in the proposed activity, could cause harm to the child or adult at risk in order to assess whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done to prevent harm. In addition to the risks posed by the activity itself, consideration should be given to appropriate staffing in accordance with the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy. There are two distinct elements to

risk assessing activities involving children and adults at risk which are:

(a) Safeguarding; and (b) Health and Safety. There is a clear demarcation between the two elements but both are important. Safeguarding involves caring for vulnerable groups appropriately and protecting them from harm. Where appropriate, codes of conduct should be agreed with the child or adult at risk (via, if applicable, a group leader in the case of a school, etc.) and any external organisations respectively, detailing expectations of behaviour on the part of each party. In terms of Health and Safety, the risk assessment should give particular consideration to the advance provision of information, orientation and induction, and application of emergency procedures e.g. accident, fire and evacuation. The risk assessment should take into account the specific risks arising from the age of the participant, e.g. lack of experience and knowledge, perception of risk and the needs of the individual.

- 1.3 Avoiding lone interactions: staff should never meet alone with an under-18 or an adult at risk. Ideally two members of staff should be present or if this is not possible, the interaction must take place in an open space.
- 1.4 DBS check and training: at least one member of staff involved in delivery of events involving children and adults at risk should be DBS checked and properly trained in safeguarding and Prevent. If more than one member of staff is involved in delivering the event (see 'avoiding lone interactions') only one of the members of staff needs to be DBS checked and trained. All staff involved in lone/unsupervised interactions with under 18s or adults at risk should be DBS checked or trained in lone working with groups/individuals at risk. The event organiser is responsible for ensuring that any staff/volunteers involved with the event will have the relevant DBS clearance for the group concerned in advance of the activity/event.
- 1.5 Participants in the event should be asked to sign a consent form and for children and adults at risk their parent/carer should also be asked to provide consent for participation in the activity. A sample consent form is provided in Appendix 5.
- 1.6 All staff organising the event and all event participants should be made aware of who to contact if they need to report a safeguarding incident and how to make a report.
- 1.7 Personal information and contact details for staff are not to be given out to under-18s/adults at risk at any time, e.g. personal telephone/mobile numbers, addresses, e-mail address. Equally, personal contact details for any under-18 or adult at risk participating in an activity must not be taken at any time (except by the designated co-ordinator/organiser for administrative purposes).
- 1.8 Personal contact between staff and under-18s/adults at risk and vice versa can always and should always be made through the activity co-ordinator.

### **Safeguarding guidelines for online interactions with young people aged under-18 or adults at risk**

All interactions with young people aged under-18 or adults at risk should adhere to the University's [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy](#) and [Procedures and Guidance](#). These guidelines for online interactions provide additional advice and guidance; there are also FAQs available in the [Staff Student Support Referral Guide](#).

All University staff (including partner body/agency staff) and volunteers working on behalf of the University are regarded as being in a position of trust, in particular those who teach, support, guide or in any way interact with students and applicants. It is important that all staff are aware of the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and its supporting procedures and guidance and act accordingly at all times.

If the age/vulnerability of event participants is not known, staff should follow these guidelines to ensure that safeguarding measures are in place. In particular, interviews with and engagements with UG applicants should assume that guidance for interactions with young people under-18 should be followed, unless applicants are known to be over 18.

- 1. Safeguarding requirements for online interactions with young people aged under-18 or adults at risk**
  - 1.1 Local Safeguarding Officer (LSO): in line with the Lancaster University safeguarding procedures, each Faculty/College/area engaged in work with under-18s/adults at risk should nominate a Local Safeguarding Officer and Deputy who are responsible for supporting Heads of Department/Service to identify safeguarding issues for activities in their area and ensure safeguarding guidelines are followed. The event/activity organiser is responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for their event and for ensuring that any visitors or volunteers are aware of their duties under this policy. Event organisers, Local Safeguarding Officers and Deputies can ask for advice from the University's Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Applicants and Students), the Head of Student Support and Wellbeing.
  - 1.2 Risk assessment: in line with the safeguarding policy, the event organiser must undertake a risk assessment for all activities and events to ensure that any child or adult at risk is suitably protected. This includes reasonable adjustments relating to disability-related or other needs.
  - 1.3 Avoiding lone interactions: staff should never meet alone with an under-18 or an adult at risk. Ideally two members of staff should be present for the online session (one can be a silent member); if this is not possible, the young person/adult at risk should be asked to ensure a parent/guardian/other named adult is present at their end of the online session.



- 1.4 DBS check and training: at least one member of staff involved in delivery of the event should be DBS checked and properly trained in safeguarding online and managing student online behaviours. If more than one member of staff is involved in delivering the event (see 'avoiding lone interactions') only one of the members of staff needs to be DBS checked and trained. All staff involved in lone/unsupervised online interactions with under 18s or adults at risk should ideally be DBS checked or trained in lone working with groups/individuals at risk. The event organiser is responsible for ensuring that any staff/volunteers involved with the event will have the relevant DBS clearance for the group concerned in advance of the activity/event.
- 1.5 IT equipment and platform: all online meetings or interactions should be carried out using University managed software and staff IT accounts. Staff should also use University-managed devices for any interactions with young people or students; ideally personal devices and personal email accounts should not be used. Staff must also not access or store personal information about applicants or students on a personal device.

## **2. Good practice in managing online interactions with young people aged under-18 or adults at risk**

The following are not requirements, but represent good practice in online safeguarding and are strongly recommended by the University.

- 2.1 Location: for staff, online sessions should be held in a neutral area (not a bedroom). The young person/adult at risk should be asked to use a location which is not their bedroom (although we realise that they may have some practical difficulties when people live in small flats and there is no other quiet space, however this is to protect the member of staff from the young person/adult at risk feeling the member of staff has entered their personal and intimate space).
- 2.2 Backdrop: provide the Teams backdrop with University logo. Failing that, member of staff to ensure that everything that will be seen in the background is appropriate. The member of staff should think of the space for online work as the same as a classroom; it is a company/public area.
- 2.3 Recording: all unsupervised online interactions with under-18s or adults at risk should be recorded (and participants informed that the sessions will be recorded and retained for 6 months). The event organiser is responsible for checking, storing and managing retention of recordings through University OneDrive.
- 2.4 Network: ideally online sessions should be carried out from campus, over the secure University network.
- 2.5 Personal information and contact details for staff are not to be given out to under-18s/adults at risk at any time, e.g. personal telephone / mobile numbers, addresses, e-mail address. Equally, personal contact details for any under-18 or adult at risk participating in an activity must not be taken at any time (except by the designated co-ordinator/organiser for administrative purposes).

- 2.6 Personal contact between staff and under-18s/adults at risk and vice versa can always and should always be made through the activity co-ordinator.
- 2.7 Parental/guardian consent: ideally written parental/guardian consent should be obtained for an under-18 to participate in the online interaction(s) and the parent/guardian should be informed of the date and timings, in particular for individual interactions. Parents/guardians should be provided with these online safeguarding guidelines so they are aware of the procedures in place and be told who to contact (event organiser) and how to contact that person if they have any concerns about online sessions. This can be done very simply with an online form for the parent/guardian to complete (please ask the relevant LSO or University Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead if you need help with a template for this).
- 2.8 Access: ensure that only registered people can 'join' the session.
- 2.9 Chat: ensure private chat is turned off on the call.
- 2.10 Breakout rooms: avoid splitting people into breakout rooms unless a member of staff is present in each one.

### **3. Guidelines for managing online behaviour**

- 3.1 Appropriate online behaviours should be similar to one-to-one working in person, and apply to both members of staff and under-18s/students:
- switch off mobile phone;
  - always have professional appearance, i.e. the same as if in a classroom;
  - keep hands in view on table if possible;
  - be careful with casual conversation;
  - be mindful of the interpretation of verbal information – ensure it is not, nor could be interpreted as verbal abuse or as sexually or romantically provocative;
  - do not allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of young people;
  - do not allow children, young people or colleagues to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
  - recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with young people;
  - operate within the University's principles and guidance and follow the Safeguarding Policy and procedures and guidance in the event of any disclosure/concern;
  - challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations / suspicions of abuse.

- 3.2 Should the child/adult at risk begin to display inappropriate behaviour, member of staff to quickly end the session and inform line-manager and department/area safeguarding lead what has happened and why.
- 3.3 For techniques to deal with any challenging situations when interacting with students/applicants, this [Managing Difficult Conversations training](#) is available.

### Recognising abuse

#### 1. Recognising child abuse

- 1.1 Child abuse: a term to describe a range of ways in which people, usually adults, harm children. Often the adult is a person who is known and trusted by the child.

Child abuse is neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse inflicted or knowingly not prevented, which causes significant harm or death (NSPCC (1999)).

#### 1.2 *Awareness of actual or likely occurrence of abuse*

There are a number of ways in which abuse becomes apparent:

- a child discloses abuse;
- someone else discloses that a child has told him/her or that he/she strongly believes a child has been or is being abused;
- a child may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation;
- a child's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused;
- a member of staff's behaviour or the way in which he/she relates to a child, causes concern.

#### 1.3 *What to do upon suspicion or disclosure*

There are some basic principles in reacting to suspicions, allegations, and/or disclosures.

- Listen carefully to what the person is saying.
- Take seriously what the person is saying.
- Write down as soon as possible exactly what the person said.
- Tell your designated Local Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.
- Make sure the child is safe i.e. supported.
- Do tell the person it is not their fault.
- Do not panic.
- Do not immediately rush off to find someone else to listen.
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Keep the person fully informed of any action you are preparing to take.

- Do not make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Do not discuss the situation with your colleagues.

***Important Points to Remember***

- Try not to display any sign of shock or disapproval when the person is making a disclosure.
- The young person may not regard the experience as either bad or painful, they may not feel guilty or angry.
- Be aware of your own feelings which may be different from those of the young person.
- Take care of yourself by making sure that you have an opportunity to discuss your feelings with someone at a later stage.
- Do not destroy any evidence as it may be needed later.
- Initial disclosure, even if later retracted, still must be referred.

**1.4 *What to look for when identifying signs of abuse in children***

Signs of abuse may include (but are not limited to):

**Physical abuse:**

- unexplained or non-accidental injury injuries or burns;
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries;
- refusal to discuss injuries;
- injuries that are the shape of objects;
- untreated injuries;
- admission of punishment which appears excessive;
- fear of parents being contacted;
- withdrawal from physical contact;
- arms and legs kept covered in hot weather or not wanting to change in front of others;
- fear of returning home;
- fear of medical help;
- self-destruct tendencies;
- aggression toward others;
- running away;
- inappropriate medication or over/under medication;
- inappropriate administration of medication (method).

**Neglect:**

- constant hunger;
- poor personal hygiene, check nails for cleanliness;
- constant tiredness;
- poor state of clothing, inadequate clothing, or inappropriate clothing;
- emaciation, malnutrition;
- rapid or continuous weight loss;
- lack of necessary physical aids;
- frequent lateness or non-attendance at school, appointments, or day services;
- untreated medical problems;
- destructive tendencies;
- low self esteem;
- neurotic behaviour;
- no social relationships;
- running away;
- compulsive stealing or scavenging;
- home alone/lack of supervision;
- evidence of threats or fear of an authority figure (including carers) negating independent wishes of the individual;
- evidence of denial of privacy or choice;
- evidence of deprivation of social contact;
- inability to talk openly;
- unusual behaviour, anger, upset or unexpected actions such as rocking etc.

**Sexual abuse:**

- sudden changes in behaviour or academic performance;
- displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age;
- sexually explicit drawings or pictures;
- tendency to cling or need constant reassurance;
- regression to younger behaviour;
- complaints of genital itching or pain;
- distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, baby sitter or lodger;
- unexplained gifts or money;
- depression and withdrawal;
- apparent secrecy, Fear of undressing for PE;
- wetting day or night, Sleep disturbances or nightmares;
- chronic illness especially throat infections and STIs;
- anorexia or bulimia;
- self-harming, attempted suicide, frequently running away;
- unexplained pregnancy.

**Emotional abuse:**

- physical, mental and emotional development delay;
- admission of punishment which appears excessive;
- over-reaction to mistakes;
- continual self-deprecation;
- sudden speech disorders;
- fear of new situations;
- inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;
- neurotic behaviour (rocking; hair twisting; thumb-sucking);
- self-mutilation;
- urinary or faecal incontinence;
- fear of parents being contacted;
- difficulty in gaining access to the individual on their own;
- communication or phrases that sound like what the suspected perpetrator would say or language that is out of character or age inappropriate for the person;
- deference or submission to the suspected perpetrator;
- extremes of passivity or aggression;
- drug/solvent abuse/alcohol;
- running away;
- compulsive stealing, scavenging.

**Financial abuse:**

- change in spending patterns;
- unpaid bills or increasing debt;
- compulsive stealing, scavenging;
- no money for food, clothing, or medication;
- unexplained withdrawal of money or unusual or inappropriate financial transactions;
- family member or representative refuses to spend money on the person's behalf;
- possessions disappear or sudden loss of assets;
- visitors whose visits always coincide the day a person's benefits are received.

**Discriminatory abuse:**

- a person becomes overly concerned about gender, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, religion, age, health or disability of themselves or other people;
- a person starts to try to be like others;
- a person is forced to dress differently;
- discriminatory abuse may take the form of any other type of abuse.

## **2. What to look for when identifying signs of abuse in adults**

2.1 The [Care Act 2014](#) identifies 10 types of adult abuse and neglect that cause harm. These are listed below.

- Physical abuse – when an individual's body is injured or hurt.
- Domestic violence – an incident or threatening behaviour between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members.
- Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking and domestic servitude.
- Financial or material abuse – the use of a person's funds and belongings without their permission.
- Sexual abuse – when a person becomes involved in sexual relationships or activities that they do not want to be involved in.
- Neglect – a failure to meet the basic needs of the individual.
- Self-neglect – a person's failure or refusal to take care of their own basic needs.
- Psychological abuse – using emotional abuse, threats, humiliation, intimidation and other psychological tactics to make the individual feel worthless, unloved or uncared for.
- Organisational abuse – when services provided are focused on the needs of the organisation rather than the needs of the individual.
- Discriminatory abuse – when an individual or group is treated unequally because of characteristics identified in the [Equality Act 2010](#).

2.2 Signs of abuse may include (but are not limited to) the following.

### **Physical abuse:**

- observed or reported ill-treatment of an adult, which may or may not cause physical injury. Evidence of:
  - hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, inappropriate restraint, withholding or misuse of medication, squeezing or biting;
- actions which are motivated by prejudice and/or discrimination e.g. racial, homophobic or religiously motivated attacks;
- a requirement for someone to work in an unsafe environment can be construed as physical abuse;
- physical injuries, dehydration, poor skin condition or skin hygiene, untreated injuries, injuries of differing ages, weight loss;
- inappropriate use of medication, overdosing or under dosing;
- inappropriate use of alcohol or drugs.



**Domestic violence:**

- low self-esteem;
- feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not;
- physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones;
- verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others;
- fear of outside intervention;
- damage to home or property;
- isolation – not seeing friends and family;
- limited access to money.

**Modern slavery:**

- signs of physical or emotional abuse;
- appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn;
- isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others;
- living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address;
- lack of personal effects or identification documents;
- always wearing the same clothes;
- avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers;
- fear of law enforcers.

**Financial or material abuse:**

- signatures on cheques etc. that do not resemble the adult's signature or which are signed when the adult cannot write;
- any sudden changes in bank accounts including unexplained withdrawals of large sums of money;
- students who have educational funding and/or grants to support their education but who have insufficient money for travel, food and necessities;
- the inclusion of additional names on an adult's bank account;
- abrupt changes to or creation of wills;
- the sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming their rights to a person at risk's affairs or possessions;
- the unexplained sudden transfer of assets to a family member or someone outside the family;
- numerous unpaid bills, overdue accommodation payments, when someone is supposed to be paying the bills for the person at risk;
- unusual concern from someone that an excessive amount of money is being expended on the care of the person at risk;
- lack of amenities, such as study equipment, personal grooming items, appropriate clothing, that the person at risk should be able to afford;
- the unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions such as art, mobiles, laptops or jewellery;
- deliberate isolation of a person at risk from friends and family resulting in the caregiver alone having total control.

### **Sexual abuse:**

- a sexual act carried out without the informed consent of the other individual is abuse. Such behaviour includes contact and non-contact abuse;
- no one should enter into a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have professional responsibility within the University or hold a position of trust (this includes all staff);
- non-contact abuse may include sexual remarks and suggestions, introduction to indecent material, indecent exposure and harassment in the form of name calling, victimisation and ostracism, unwanted sexual attention, stalking, compromising invitations or gifts, the display of images that are racially or sexually offensive, the suggestion that sexual favours might further their educational or promotion prospects;
- contact abuse may include rape, indecent assault, being forced to touch another person, sexual intercourse or being pressurised into consenting to sexual acts or watching sexual materials/acts.

### **Neglect:**

- use of threats or fear or the power of the carer's or other adult's position to negate the person at risk's independent wishes. Such behaviour can create very real emotional or psychological stress;
- bullying, sexual and racial harassment;
- denial of privacy or choice;
- denial of dignity;
- deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation;
- making someone feel worthless;
- threats, verbal abuse, humiliation, blaming, controlling, pressurizing, coercion, fear or ignoring the person;
- public or unreasonable criticism;
- ignoring a person's wishes or point of view;
- setting unreasonable targets;
- removing areas of responsibility;
- undervaluing a person's efforts.

### **Self-neglect:**

- very poor personal hygiene;
- unkempt appearance;
- lack of essential food, clothing or shelter;
- malnutrition and/or dehydration;
- living in squalid or unsanitary conditions;
- neglecting household maintenance;
- hoarding;
- collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions;
- non-compliance with health or care services;
- inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury.

### **Psychological abuse:**

- physical, mental and emotional development delay;
- admission of punishment which appears excessive;
- over-reaction to mistakes;
- continual self-deprecation;
- sudden speech disorders;
- fear of new situations;
- inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;
- neurotic behaviour (rocking; hair twisting; thumb-sucking);
- self-mutilation;
- urinary or faecal incontinence;
- fear of parents/carers being contacted;
- difficulty in gaining access to the individual on their own;
- communication or phrases that sound like what the suspected perpetrator would say or language that is out of character or age inappropriate for the person;
- deference or submission to the suspected perpetrator;
- extremes of passivity or aggression;
- drug/solvent abuse/alcohol;
- running away;
- compulsive stealing, scavenging.

### **Organisational abuse:**

- lack of flexibility and choice for people using care services;
- inadequate staffing levels;
- people being hungry or dehydrated;
- poor standards of care;
- lack of personal clothing and possessions and communal use of personal items;
- lack of adequate procedures;
- poor record-keeping and missing documents;
- absence of visitors;
- few social, recreational and educational activities;
- public discussion of personal matters;
- unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet;
- absence of individual care plans;
- lack of management overview and support.

### **Discriminatory abuse:**

- a person becomes overly concerned about gender, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, religion, age, health or disability of themselves or other people;
- a person starts to try to be like others;
- a person is forced to dress differently;

- the person appears withdrawn and isolated;
- expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety;
- the support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic;
- discriminatory abuse may take the form of any other type of abuse.

**Example statement for use in absence of completed DBS check for student ambassadors**

This form is to be signed by all staff/students undertaking “Regulated Activity” or having significant contact with children or adults at risk in addition to the DBS procedure.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Position held in relation to proposed organised activity .....

An application has been made on my behalf for an enhanced DBS/barred list check. I confirm that I do not have any criminal convictions (spent or otherwise) which would disqualify me from working with children or adults in vulnerable circumstances.

I will notify the University with immediate effect should any factor change following the above disclosure which would prevent me from working with the group of persons referred to above. I understand that should I in any way mislead the University in relation to my suitability to work with the above group, I may be immediately dismissed from my role on the organised activity.

I acknowledge that any information received by the University which would disqualify me from working with the above groups may be passed to the DBS and to POE and action taken as deemed appropriate.

I have been provided with and have read and understood the University’s Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures and Guidance and agree to comply with requirements in so far as they apply to me.

I confirm that I am not aware of any other legal, medical or other reason which would make me unsuitable to work with the group referred to above.

Signed .....

Date .....

### Example consent form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

With regard to your forthcoming participation in an organised activity at Lancaster University, you are requested to read and sign this form and have it read and signed by your parent/carer. Participation in the organised activity will not be permitted without this signed form.

Participation in the organised Activity requires responsible behaviour from you together with respect towards other participants and members of staff. The following requirements will be in place for the duration of the organised activity.

- You will not be permitted to bring or consume alcohol, illegal or intoxicating substances or bring or use weapons of any nature.
- You are required to attend all timetabled planned activities within your designated group unless there is a valid reason for non-attendance e.g. illness.
- You are required to follow any evacuation or emergency procedures as directed by staff.
- Where there is a residential aspect to the organised activity, you will be allocated specific accommodation which must not be changed without the authority of [ ].
- You must not leave the site of the organised activity without permission from a member of staff.
- You are expected to comply with any reasonable instruction from university staff.
- You understand that the University treats all forms of abuse, bullying, intimidation, sexist and racist behaviour very seriously.
- You must not engage in any anti-social behaviour or abuse of any kind towards other participants or staff. You/your parents/carers will be held responsible for any intentional damage to university property.
- Where staff have reason to believe that you have engaged in any serious incidents in breach of the above e.g. possession of alcohol, fighting, abuse etc you will not be allowed to continue the organised activity and arrangements will be made to remove you from site to your home. In that event, your parents/carers will be responsible for collection.

- Upon commencement of the organised activity, staff may require you adhere to additional reasonable rules applying to the specific activities which you are to undertake. To ensure the health and safety of yourself, other participants and staff, you are expected to comply with such reasonable rules.

## **DECLARATION TO BE SIGNED BY PARTICIPANT OF ORGANISED ACTIVITY**

I have read the above Code of Conduct and agree to comply with the points set out. I agree to comply with additional rules requested by staff in relation to the specific activities to be undertaken. I consent to Lancaster University taking photographs or videos of me. I agree that the University may use the photographs or videos for [ ] purposes including publication on the University's website. (Please delete if you do not agree to this.) I acknowledge that I will not be allowed to continue participation in the organised activity in the event of serious misbehaviour on my part. I understand that any breach of the above rules may be reported to my parents/carers and I agree that you may speak to my parents/carers with regard to my performance and general welfare. I understand that you will inform me when you have spoken to my parents and will, upon request, tell me what you have said.

Name of participant ..... Date of Birth .....

Signature of participant ..... Date .....

## **DECLARATION TO BE SIGNED BY PARENT/CARER**

I have read the above Code of Conduct and acknowledge the necessity for the person in my care to comply with those rules. I agree to collect the participant without delay in the event of contravention amounting to serious misbehaviour. I confirm that the participant is in my care and has read the above and appears to have understood the necessity for this Code of Conduct and the requirements of it. I consent to Lancaster University taking photographs or videos of my child. I agree that the University may use the photographs or videos for [ ] purposes including publication on the University's website. (Please delete if you do not agree to this.) I agree to the participant receiving medication except as indicated below and to any emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present. Information about the participant including allergies, non-authorised medication, prescribed medication and medical conditions.

Name of parent/carers .....

Signature of parent/carers .....

Date .....