

# Policy on the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults at risk

2020-2023



Edge Hill  
University

# Policy on the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults at risk

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## Summary

This policy and associated procedures cover all the information relating to Safeguarding and outlines the principles and approach accepted by the University.

It relates to the Safeguarding of children (under 16), young people (16-18) and adults at risk (18 onwards) and those at risk of radicalisation.

This is NOT the protocol which outlines how to deal with an emergency or critical incident, or a situation where a student is unable to keep themselves safe or declaring they are suicidal. Access the website for [further information on dealing with an emergency or critical incident](#).

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Whilst there are specific lead responsibilities identified within the University, it is vital to state that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and protect children, young people, and adults at risk. All staff are responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Officer. [A list of the Designated Safeguarding Officers can be found on the website](#).

Safeguarding issues are likely to come to light through one of four main methods: direct observation, disclosure from a child or adult at risk, observation by a third party or referral from an external Public, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB)

It is important for any member of the University community to report any concern promptly and not to assume that someone else will have reported it. Even if it is understood that the authorities are already aware of a concern, it is still necessary and very important to report it to a Designated Safeguarding Officer so that this can be confirmed officially. There is no need to make a judgement on how serious a concern is, or even whether a concern is believed to be true. It is not the responsibility of the reporting person to decide whether abuse has occurred or to assess the level of risk.

Anyone wishing to report a suspicion or concern should complete the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form found in Section 10, keeping as accurate a record as possible of events or reports. If the disclosure is from the individual themselves, then care must be taken, not to lead or interrogate the individual in a way that could prejudice further action by the relevant authorities. The initial formal reporting of any incident or disclosure should be sent through a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

In all such instances once a report has been provided to, or prepared by, a Designated Safeguarding Officer, the officer will work with a Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer to determine the most appropriate course of action.

A flowchart of the procedure to report a concern can be found at Section 7. A flowchart of the procedure to report concerns of radicalisation can be found at Section 9. [The University's webpages on safeguarding hold the current policy documents and other useful information.](#)

## Glossary of Terms

Throughout this Policy the following definitions will apply:

### Adults

Adults as defined by section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and/or those persons aged over 18 who by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness are (or may be) unable to take care of themselves or are (or may be) unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

### Channel

A multi-agency process which aims to provide support to individuals at risk of being drawn into violent extremism, thereby helping to prevent radicalisation and divert children, young people and vulnerable individuals from extremist views associated with terrorism

### Child

Legally a child is a young person up to the age of 18yrs (Children Act 1989). However, in recognition of the fact that we occasionally have students who are aged 16 or 17, for the purposes of this policy, Edge Hill uses the term young people to denote 16 and 17 year olds to differentiate them from those under the age of 16.

### Data Protection Act 2018

This is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### DBS - the Disclosure and Barring Service.

This statutory body has been created out of the merger of the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

### Prevent

A part of the UK government's overall anti-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The Prevent duty aims to safeguard people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The UK government created two sets of statutory guidance to support the strategy, one of which is specifically for higher education bodies.

### Regulated activity

A term used to describe certain job functions carried out by an individual as defined by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). These requirements determine eligibility for an Enhanced Level DBS check and a check of the DBS Barred Lists. The DBS has set out eligibility guidelines which outline work that is classed as regulated activity, with regard to both children and vulnerable adults.

### Radicalisation

The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

#### Student

Any student registered on a programme of study with the University, whatever mode of delivery and location. This also includes students who have chosen to study at the University as part of an apprenticeship programme.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to highlight the measures that form the basis of the University's approach to safeguarding and protecting the wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk who come into contact with or are brought to the notice of Edge Hill University. To provide staff, students, and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event they suspect a child, young person or adult at risk may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm. Set out a series of general guidelines for all staff, students and volunteers at the University who may work with children, young people, or adults at risk.

Specifically, this policy will:

- Describe how we aim to safeguard children and adults at risk.
- Apply to all academic and service areas.
- Demonstrate cognisance of statutory requirements and good practice guidelines in the pursuance of providing a safe environment for children and those in vulnerable circumstances.
- Will be reviewed and revised as necessary.
- Identify the organisational and management structures for implementing this policy.

## Background

Edge Hill University aims to promote the highest standards in relation to the safety and welfare of children, young people and those classified as vulnerable. To this end, the University recognises that it has a responsibility to provide appropriate structures, policies, and procedures to help safeguard children and adults at risk.

There are currently no UK statutes requiring HEIs to develop a Safeguarding Policy however the University has developed this policy as part of its commitment to providing a safe environment for all who come into contact with the University.

As a major provider of education and training for key professions, Edge Hill University staff and students engage with children, young people, and adults at risk in regulated activities in a range of different settings and for a range of different purposes. Additionally, staff and students come into contact with children, young

people and adults in situations which would not be considered to be regulated activities but where the principles of safeguarding need to be observed.

## Scope

This Policy and the accompanying procedures are intended to support the safeguarding of any child or young person or adult at risk who is part of or comes into contact with the Edge Hill University community.

This Policy and the accompanying procedures will include but is not limited to:

- All staff and students at the University whatever mode of delivery and location.
- All legally contracted representatives of the University, where appropriate (e.g. agents, franchise providers, outreach providers).
- All Edge Hill University partnerships and agents thereof.
- Visitors to the University including those contracted to conduct their own business on university premises, where appropriate (e.g. building contractors, service suppliers).
- Those hiring University facilities for the provision of services or activities to individuals or groups which may be classed as vulnerable (e.g. external hire of Edge Hill Sport or The Arts Centre facilities, school groups booking summer school or residential provision).

Staff, students, and volunteers of the University who come into contact with children, young people, or adults at risk in another organisation whilst representing the University must also familiarise themselves with the host organisation's safeguarding procedures. Although the safeguarding of children, young people and adults who are involved in research is the responsibility of the Committee on Research Ethics in terms of its approval processes, this policy and associated procedures must be implemented if anyone becomes aware of safeguarding concerns within the context of research activity.

This Policy provides generic guidance for all members of the University community and for departments. This may be supplemented by additional departmental procedures in areas which have high levels of contact with children, young people, or adults at risk. For guidance in relation to the admission of students who are under the age of 18 please refer to Appendix 5 of the Admissions Policy.

## Policy

Edge Hill University wishes to adopt the highest standards and take all reasonable steps in relation to the health, safety and welfare of children, young people and adults accessing its services and facilities.

The University believes that it is unacceptable for a child, a young person, or an

adult to experience any form of harm or abuse. Their welfare is paramount, and they have the right to protection and support.

Safeguarding concerns may arise because of activities associated with the University, or a member of staff, student or volunteer acting on behalf of the University may become aware of safeguarding concerns about an individual, which are not related to the University's activities, nor within the University's control.

This policy and associated procedures cover all such instances and outlines the principles and approach accepted by the University as essential to safeguard.

Edge Hill University is predominantly an adult environment; however, it recognises it has a responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk. Whilst acknowledging that it cannot act "in loco parentis" and that ultimate responsibility will continue to rest with parents and guardians, the University will work in partnership with the individuals themselves, their parents, carers, employers, and other agencies as appropriate to promote and safeguard the welfare of individuals and to minimise the risks of harm.

### **1. Groups and individuals covered by the policy.**

The following groups are considered as part of this Safeguarding Policy:

- Children (people under the age of 16)
- Young People (people aged 16 and 17)<sup>1</sup>
- Adults at risk<sup>2</sup>
- Those at risk of radicalisation. People who are vulnerable in some way are most at risk of radicalisation into an extremist ideology which may lead an individual to commit or support terrorist acts.

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

Safeguarding is **everyone's** responsibility. Whilst there are specific lead responsibilities identified within the University, it is vital to state that it is **everyone's** responsibility to safeguard and protect children, young people, and adults at risk. Effective safeguarding requires key role holders to understand their responsibilities and ensure they are carried out. Individual role holders with responsibilities may delegate the tasks associated with these responsibilities to others, however overall responsibility remains the role holders. [Details of the individuals acting as key role holders can be found online](#). This structure aims to make it clear where responsibilities lie to enhance safeguarding procedures and to make trained staff accessible to anyone who may wish to report concerns or allegations or seek advice on processes and procedures. The rationale for each role and the reporting requirements for monitoring and evaluation purposes are outlined below.



## **2.1 The Vice Chancellor**

The Vice Chancellor has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy across the University but additionally has specific powers to oversee suspension of students or staff if necessary pending investigations and where a significant risk of harm to a vulnerable individual is considered to exist.

## **2.2 Lead Safeguarding Officer (Strategic)**

The Lead Safeguarding Officer (Strategic) will be a senior manager of the University, able to be accountable for the institution's safeguarding policy and procedures. Specifically, the Lead Safeguarding Officer (Strategic) will:

- Be accountable for developing, promoting, and implementing the institution's Safeguarding Policy and related procedures and practice
- Ensure an appropriate staffing structure is in place to fulfil Safeguarding responsibilities, including at the most senior level
- Ensure procedures are in place for managing allegations against students and staff, information sharing and safe recruitment practices (staff and students)
- Ensure the security of records concerning Safeguarding and confidentiality
- Develop University-wide policy, procedures, practice, and guidance for Safeguarding that are compliant with the most recent legislation, government and/or professional body guidelines and local Safeguarding Children Board procedures;
- Create links with local Social Services Departments, Children's Services Teams, Safeguarding Children Boards, and local Police;
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation systems are in place, produce an annual report;
- Support the Safeguarding Officer (Operational) and the network of Designated Safeguarding Officers;
- Liaise with Corporate Communications in respect of any press enquiries about Safeguarding;
- Act as a Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer when required;
- Chair or act as a Panel Member to review Disclosure & Barring Service and direct disclosures (staff and students) when required.

## **2.3 Safeguarding Officer (Operational)**

The Safeguarding Officer (Operational) will take responsibility for organising the network of Designated Safeguarding Officers and their training. This role holder will also be responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring of this policy and its procedures and for drafting the annual report. Holding a senior management role is not a prerequisite for this role. Specifically, the Safeguarding Officer (Operational) will:

- Act as a Designated Safeguarding Officer when required;
- Create and maintain a communication network for Designated Safeguarding Officers;
- Oversee the organisation requirements for the training of the Designated Safeguarding Officers;
- Oversee the monitoring and review systems, including preparation of the first draft of the annual report. All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018<sup>3</sup>
- Help create links with local Social Services Departments and Children's Services Teams.

#### **2.4 Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer (SDSOs)**

Several senior managers of the University will be designated as Senior Designated Safeguarding Officers. These staff will assist and deputise for the Lead Safeguarding Officer and undertake the training and duties of the Designated Safeguarding Officers as detailed below. In addition to this, at least one of these officers will work in conjunction with the Designated Safeguarding Officers in making decisions on allegations.

#### **2.5 Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSOs)**

These role holders will take responsibility at Service, Faculty or Departmental level for ensuring that policies and procedures for staff and students within their respective areas appropriately reflect the requirements of safeguarding. They will provide expertise where appropriate on relevant professional body requirements. They will act as a point of contact for any individual who may wish to seek advice on policy and procedure, discuss a safeguarding concern or make an allegation. They will be aware of how to identify signs of abuse and making appropriate referrals and to act as Panel Members for interview panels in respect of safe recruitment of students or staff (i.e. to consider information provided through the DBS Disclosure Certificates or via direct disclosure). They will ensure students or trainees in the respective Faculties, Programmes or Departments who are placed in 'regulated' activities receive the appropriate training through the curriculum.

The number of Designated Safeguarding Officers will be determined through discussion with Services and Faculties to meet the needs of individual areas and to provide expertise (for example knowledge of professional body requirements and procedures).

Specifically Designated Safeguarding Officers will:

- Provide support, advice and guidance to staff and students about this policy;
- In conjunction with one Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies;
- Ensure that where allegations or incidents involve a member of university staff that a Designated Safeguarding Officer from Human Resources is part of the team involved in the initial assessment process;
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise when deciding to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;
- Ensure detailed and accurate written records are kept of concerns/referrals and that they are secure, confidential, yet accessible to those with designated authority;
- Liaise with the Safeguarding Officer (Operational) regarding on-going investigations and appropriate cover during leave of absence;
- Undertake training to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral or use internal processes and procedures;
- Have a working knowledge of how local Area Children Protection Committees and local Safeguarding Children Boards operate and the conduct of a Child in Need of Protection Case Conference or Strategy meeting;
- Have a working knowledge of Channel and how it operates;
- Review existing policies and procedures within their own area and update to reflect the requirements of Safeguarding;
- Undertake on-going training as appropriate to the role;
- Attend Safeguarding Working Group meetings;
- Chair or act as a panel member to review criminal convictions or cautions for students;
- Provide expertise on relevant Professional Body requirements in respect of Safeguarding and ensure these are integrated in to the local (and institutional) policies, procedures, and practice as appropriate;
- Identify any staff or students, or groups thereof, within their own Faculty, Service or Department who require safeguarding training and ensure it is delivered;
- Ensure that placement providers and employers are informed of Edge Hill policy and practice in respect of Safeguarding.

## **2.6 Director of Student Services**

In addition to the roles of Lead Safeguarding Officer and Senior DSO, the Director of Student Services is responsible for:

- Advising on the admission and support of students under the age of 18 (in conjunction with the relevant Head of Department);
- Monitoring the welfare of admitted students under the age of 18 (in conjunction with the relevant Head of Department and Head of Admissions).

## **2.7 Director/Head of Human Resources**

The Director/Head of Human Resources is responsible for:

- Advising on the employment and welfare of staff who are aged under 18, including those on work experience schemes.
- Providing guidance as to whether individuals who are employed/volunteer in any capacity should be subject to a DBS check.
- Advising and providing support where a staff procedure is required to support a Safeguarding incident or investigation.

## **2.8 All Heads of Department**

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate risk assessments are undertaken for relevant activities within their department.
- Ensuring appropriate DBS checks are undertaken for relevant staff / students / volunteers within their department.
- Ensuring staff understand the implications of recruiting under 18 staff and students.
- Monitoring the welfare of staff and students in the department who are under the age of 18.
- Ensuring any safeguarding concerns are reported promptly to a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

## **2.9 All Staff and Students**

All staff are responsible for reporting any safeguarding concerns to their Head of Department and/or a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Staff and students who intend to or are in a position of working with children, young people or vulnerable adults are responsible for:

- Ensuring they understand the implications of this policy before commencing

- any programme, apprenticeship, placement, event, visit or activity.
- Ensuring they understand the processes as defined in the University Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Practice.
  - Reporting any safeguarding concerns that arise to their Head of Department and/or one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers and/or their placement provider/employer.

## **2.10 Other Specific Staff**

Within each Service, Faculty or Department there are likely to be several other staff (for example Faculty Placement Officers and Apprenticeship Programme Leads) who in the course of their general duties are likely to be informed of specific incidents or concerns in relation to staff or students. As appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Officers will identify these other staff for which appropriate training will be provided.

## **2.11 Safeguarding Group**

The Designated Safeguarding Officers will normally meet as a group at least once per year. This may be for specific training, sharing of good practice or issues and to consider the annual monitoring report. Other staff with relevant expertise or specific interest in safeguarding may be invited to join the Safeguarding Group from time to time.

## **Management of Risks**

### **3. Annual Monitoring**

In recognising the legal responsibilities upon the University with respect to the safe recruitment of staff and students, the Directorate wish to be aware of, approve and monitor the University's approach to Safeguarding. To this end, a monitoring report on the Safeguarding Policy and procedures will be presented annually to Directorate for information and approval.

### **4. Safe Recruitment, Selection and Development of Staff / Volunteers**

Edge Hill University will take all appropriate steps to ensure that individuals, who are unsuitable for working with children, are prevented from doing so. Where risk assessments have identified that staff or student employees or volunteers are likely to have regular contact or encounters with children, young people or the vulnerable, rigorous checks into their eligibility will be undertaken. Such processes will be compliant with the University's existing equality policy and will include:

- A complete profile of evidence in relation to identity and qualifications.
- Selection and fitness for practice procedures designed to assess initial and continued suitability for the role, including a relevant face to face meeting.
- Enhanced DBS and /or other appropriate background checks.
- Checks to ensure individuals meet all relevant health and capacity requirements for their role.
- References.

The University is registered with the Disclosure & Barring Service and will ensure that any colleague or student employee whose role or activity meets the requirements stipulated by the DBS will be checked for relevant criminal convictions to an enhanced standard. Guidance with respect as to whether an individual employed in any capacity by the University should be subject to a DBS check can be obtained from Human Resources.

Regarding the employment or work placements of young people under the age of 18, Faculty and Service Managers must ensure an individual risk assessment is put in place which details any risks associated with the role and outlines any controls put in place to mitigate such risks. Additional guidance will be provided by Human Resources as appropriate.

Edge Hill University also accepts that it has a duty to comply with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and will ensure that colleagues and student volunteers who participate in university organised activities will be checked under the Disclosure and Barring Service scheme. The University will continue to comply with its statutory duty and refer relevant information to the DBS and as appropriate Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies. If necessary, this will include information in relation to any individuals including staff, volunteers and students who have resigned from or left the University following misconduct or concerns being raised with regards to their suitability to work with children, young people, or adults at risk.

In addition, as a provider of Education and Training for a number of professions, the University also operates to the most recent statutory regulations or good practice guidance (as appropriate) from the relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) in respect of the safe recruitment of staff and students. Full details of these can be found in the University's Admissions Policy and in the Staff and Volunteer Recruitment Procedures.

## **5. Safe Recruitment, Selection and Development of Students**

In line with its duties, including the requirements of the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, Edge Hill University will take all appropriate steps to ensure that

students who apply for and study on professional courses, where they are likely to have regular contact or encounters with children, young people, or adults at risk, go through a rigorous recruitment and selection process. Checks will be undertaken into their eligibility to enter and remain on the course. Such processes will be compliant with the University's existing Equality and Diversity policy and will include:

- A complete profile of evidence in relation to identity and qualifications.
- Selection and fitness for practice procedures designed to assess initial and continued suitability for the role.
- Enhanced DBS and /or other appropriate background checks.
- Checks to ensure individuals meet all relevant health and capacity requirements for their role.

The University will ensure that any student who will have substantial one-to-one contact with children, young people or adults at risk will be DBS checked for relevant criminal convictions to an enhanced standard. Students on professional courses will also have to comply with on-course declaration requirements. Regarding the admission of young people under the age of 18, Deans of Faculty and the Director of Student Services must ensure an individual risk assessment is put in place which details any risks associated with the admission and outlines any controls put in place to mitigate such risks. Additional guidance will be provided by Student Services as appropriate, in line with Appendix 5 of the Admissions Policy.

## **6. Assessment and Management of Risks**

It is the duty of each senior manager to complete a risk assessment before any new activity is embarked upon that involves any form of contact with children, young people, or adults at risk, or before admitting or employing any individual under 18 years of age.

All those involved in the undertaking of risk assessments should be aware that the assessment is not only a way to ameliorate, mitigate or remove any potential risks but may also be a prompt to consider alternative working practices. Risk assessments should encompass all aspects of health and safety as well as transport and safe meeting and collection of children and young people.

If an activity is undertaken in conjunction with another organisation, there must be a written agreement as to whose responsibility it is to undertake the risk assessment and both parties should have copies.

All staff and students that intend or may be tasked with working with children, young people or the vulnerable should ensure that they understand the implications of this policy before commencing any activity.

## **7. Providing Guidelines, Training and Support to Staff and Students in Undertaking their Duties and Activities**

Edge Hill University is committed to providing a range of training and guidance to raise awareness of child protection and safeguarding issues, ensuring staff, students and volunteers understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and the reporting of any concerns and will regularly review the operational guidelines it has in place.

All staff will receive a Corporate Induction when joining the University which will include reference to the Safeguarding Policy and Prevent duty. Staff will be advised of their responsibilities and asked to read the policy and ensure they know what to do in the case of a concern, allegation or incident which could potentially be a Safeguarding issue.

Further Safeguarding training, which includes training on the Prevent Duty, will be provided to staff where this is identified as part of their role, and students where required for their programme of study.

## **8. Under 18s and Access to University IT Networks**

Unlike schools and colleges, the University does not operate parental controls in respect of its IT Networks and internet access. All staff and students sign the IT Acceptable Use Policy, which covers accessing inappropriate materials. Thus, arrangements covering the use of computing, ICT and library facilities are covered by established Codes of Practice and associated procedures. Any concerns relating to improper use of facilities are investigated and action is taken where appropriate.

Staff should avoid including children in any online or social media groups (for instance Facebook pages used for teaching and learning or student contact) in which posted content and interaction with users cannot be fully controlled.

## **9. Conduct of External Contractors on University Premises**

A range of external contractors and companies will have legitimate business on university premises. The University will ensure that contractors and others are appropriately selected in accordance with the University's Contractor Management Policy. Contractors and companies will be informed of the standards of behaviour expected of them whilst on site.

## **10. Code of Conduct for External Organisations Hiring University Facilities for the Provision of Activities for Children or Adults at Risk**

In accepting bookings from external organisations wishing to hire university facilities



for the provision of activities for children or adults at risk the University will satisfy itself (as far as it is reasonably able) that the organisation and the specific event have adequate safeguarding provision. The University will look for assurances on the staff to participant ratio, appropriate gender mix of supervisors, DBS clearances and appropriate registrations for supervisors and an appropriate code of conduct for both staff and participants, including the use/abuse of drugs and alcohol. However, acceptance of such a booking by the University does not confer or guarantee that the activity or the external organisation is 'safe'. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that they are satisfied that the event organisers are conducting their events in a safe and responsible manner.

## **11. Use of Alcohol and Non-Prescription Drugs**

The University considers that being deliberately under the influence of alcohol or nonprescription drugs whilst supervising children to be an act of gross misconduct. The University operates a zero-tolerance policy in respect of the use of alcohol and nonprescription drugs for all children visiting its premises and for all visitors who have responsibility for supervising children. The University reserves the right to remove individuals in breach of these policies from its premises.

## **Potential Indicators of Harm, Abuse, or Neglect**

It is generally recognised that there can be many forms of harm / abuse. Concerns of harm / abuse can be disclosed to you, or observed directly by you, or reported to you by another person. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. A person may abuse or neglect a child, young person, or adult at risk by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Individuals may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

## **12. Types of abuse**

### **12.1 Physical abuse**

Can include but may not be limited to hitting, pushing, pinching, biting, shaking, throwing, hair-pulling, poisoning, misuse of medication, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, inappropriate restraint or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness, particularly in a child.

### **12.2 Sexual abuse**

Can include but may not be limited to rape or sexual assault, forcing, or enticing a child, young person or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, which they have not or could not have consented or where pressurised into consenting, including

prostitution, whether or not the individual is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They can include non-contact activities, such as for example, involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online activities, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways and sexual exploitation.

### **12.3 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

A type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status, and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities.

### **12.4 Psychological or emotional abuse**

Can include but may not be limited to threats of harm or abandonment; deprivation of social or any other form of contact; humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, or harassment; verbal abuse; prevention from receiving services or support. It may involve conveying to individuals that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed upon children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing individuals to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption, particularly of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **12.5 Neglect or acts of omission**

Can include but may not be limited to the persistent failure to meet an individual's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development. Neglect can include preventing access to health, social care, or educational services; withholding the necessities of life, such as food, drink, or heating, failure to ensure adequate supervision or neglect of basic emotional needs. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse.

### **12.6 Extremism**

Goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable, including the young, by seeking to sow division between communities. Extremism is defined in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 as “the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.”

### **12.7 Online abuse**

Includes any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones and it can happen anywhere online, including social media, text messages and messaging apps, emails, online chats, online gaming, live-streaming sites. Individuals can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse, which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online.

### **12.8 Discriminatory abuse**

Such as that based upon a person's race, sexuality, or disability; any other forms of harassment or slurs.

### **12.9 Domestic violence**

All forms of abuse can be experienced in a family setting by a partner, family member, or with someone with whom there is a relationship including same sex relationships from the age of 16 years upwards.

### **12.10 Financial or material abuse**

Such as: theft; fraud or exploitation; pressure in connection with wills, property, or inheritance; misuse of property, possessions, or benefits.

### **12.11 Forced Marriage**

Occurs where one or both parties do not consent to the marriage.

### **12.12 Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

Involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

### **12.13 Institutional abuse**

Can include poor practice, disrespect and unethical practice, ill treatment, and professional misconduct. Any of these forms of harm / abuse can be deliberate, or be the result of either ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if an individual is being abused in one way they are also being abused in other ways. The presence of any of the above characteristics does not prove that a child or adult at risk is being abused, nor does their absence mean there is no need for concern.

## **13. Recognition of Abuse**

Recognising abuse is not easy. It is not the responsibility of staff, volunteers, or students at Edge Hill University to decide whether abuse has taken place. It is however the responsibility of staff, volunteers, and students to report any concerns they may have or allegations they have heard about a child's, a young person's or a vulnerable adult's welfare and safety as per section 6 of this document.

Edge Hill assures all staff, students, and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concerns that someone is, or may be abusing a child, young person, or an adult at risk.

## Dealing with Suspicions or Allegations

### **14. Safeguarding procedure**

In all incidents of disclosed or suspected abuse, Edge Hill University considers it essential to act both quickly and professionally. Therefore, any allegation or disclosure by a child, young person or adult at risk should be reported immediately to one of the relevant Safeguarding officers who has responsibility as defined under this policy.

It is important to report any concern promptly and not to assume that someone else will have reported it. If you are told that the authorities are already aware of a concern you still need to report it so that this can be confirmed officially.

### **15. Sharing Information about Concerns with Agencies**

If safeguarding a child or young person warrants sharing information in confidence with professionals, agencies or similar third parties external to the University, this is best achieved through the consent of the individual.

However, if that is not feasible or achievable it will still be lawful to share that information under the Data Protection Act 2018 provided that the data protection principles are complied with and relevant conditions under the Act are met.

Where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a child or young person, information will have to be shared. To this end, Edge Hill University will develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with any enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences.

Any decision about sharing information in relation to safeguarding an adult at risk will be taken on a case-by-case basis, recognising that:

- Each adult is an individual and has the right to be involved in making decisions regarding their care and how they are treated;
- It may still be appropriate to share information without consent if, in a Designated Safeguarding Officers judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden by the duty of care to an individual or the public.

## **16. Summary Statement of Procedures**

Any allegation or disclosure involving a child, young person or adult at risk should be reported immediately to one of the relevant Designated Safeguarding Officers who have responsibility as defined under this policy.

Staff, students, and volunteers of the University who come into contact with children, young people, or adults at risk in another organisation whilst representing the University must also familiarise themselves with the host organisation's safeguarding procedures. Any concerns about a child, young person or adult(s) should be reported to the host organisation's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and to the faculty or other University DSO.

## **17. Exercise of Professional Judgement**

Every reported safeguarding incident is unique. Policies, procedures, codes of conduct, guidance or training cannot provide a complete check list of what to do in every specific set of circumstances, but they do provide a framework within which to operate, and they can highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate, or inadvisable.

There will be circumstances in which staff will have to make decisions or take actions that are in the best interests of a vulnerable individual and for which no blueprint exists.

In respect of those staff working directly with vulnerable groups, and those responsible for handling incidents or allegations, they are expected to make judgements about their own behaviour and those around them to secure the best interests and welfare of those vulnerable individuals. They must consider whether their actions are warranted, safe, proportionate and equitably applied. In so doing, they will be considered to have acted reasonably.

## **18. Protection for reporting party and vexatious claims**

Any staff or students coming forward are protected under the University's Whistle Blowing policy. However, staff or student disciplinary procedures may be invoked in the case of vexatious or malicious claims. Visitors to the University or members of the general public who have concerns about abuse or neglect of a vulnerable individual are also encouraged to make contact with any of the [Designated Safeguarding Officers detailed on the website](#).

Safeguarding issues are likely to come to light through one of four main methods:

- direct observation,
- disclosure from a child or adult at risk,

- observation by a third party,
- referral from an external Public, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB).

Anyone wishing to report a suspicion or concern should complete the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form found in Section 10, keeping as accurate a record as possible of events or reports. Care must be taken, particularly in the case of disclosures, not to lead or interrogate the individual in a way that could prejudice further action by the relevant authorities.

The initial formal reporting of any incident or disclosure should be through a Designated Safeguarding Officer or nominated authority.

In all such instances once a report has been provided to, or prepared by, a Designated Safeguarding Officer or nominated authority, that person will work with a Senior DSO or nominated authority to determine the most appropriate course of action.

All such officers have the opportunity to seek professional advice from appropriate external bodies (e.g. PSRBs or Local Authority Safeguarding Boards) on the basis that the identity of those concerned is kept confidential until such time as a decision to formally refer is made.

## **19. Precautionary Action and Investigating Allegations**

It is a statutory requirement that allegations or suspicions of abuse against children are investigated by Social Services and/or the Police. The Local Authority where the child is normally resident is the responsible authority in these cases.

The University's Designated Safeguarding Officers have a responsibility to ensure that as accurate an account of alleged incidents as possible is established, as quickly as possible, to determine the level of risk posed to an individual(s) and to determine whether any form of action, to reduce the risk posed to individuals or groups, is required. The sharing of information protocols in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 will then be applied. In all allegations against staff, at least one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers involved in the initial assessment will be a Human Resources (HR) specialist.

Staff and students may be allowed to continue to work or study during an investigation, may be subject to conditions, or may be suspended without prejudice pending the outcome of any investigations. The decision whether to impose conditions or suspend the staff member or student is not automatic and will be determined by the Lead Safeguarding Officer or nominee in conjunction with other relevant members of staff in Human Resources, Student Services and/or the faculty.

Staff and students affected will be informed of the allegation and the procedures to

be applied to investigate, either internally, in accordance with the Staff Disciplinary Policy (staff), Student Disciplinary Regulations (students), Fitness to Practice Procedure (students) or externally via the Police, Social Services or the relevant Children's or Adult Services.

Allegations against members of the public using University facilities will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Where a referral is required, the University would normally refer the case to the relevant Police Authority or Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board, as appropriate, for investigation.

## **20. Records Management**

The formal casework log associated with this policy are controlled by Student Services and will be created, stored, and disposed of in line with the University's Records Management guidelines and procedures.

The University is committed to complying with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and with GDPR legislation and regulations and therefore any personal data created as part of this policy will be processed in accordance with the University's procedures. This includes ensuring that data is held securely, is not disclosed unlawfully, and is destroyed when no longer needed.

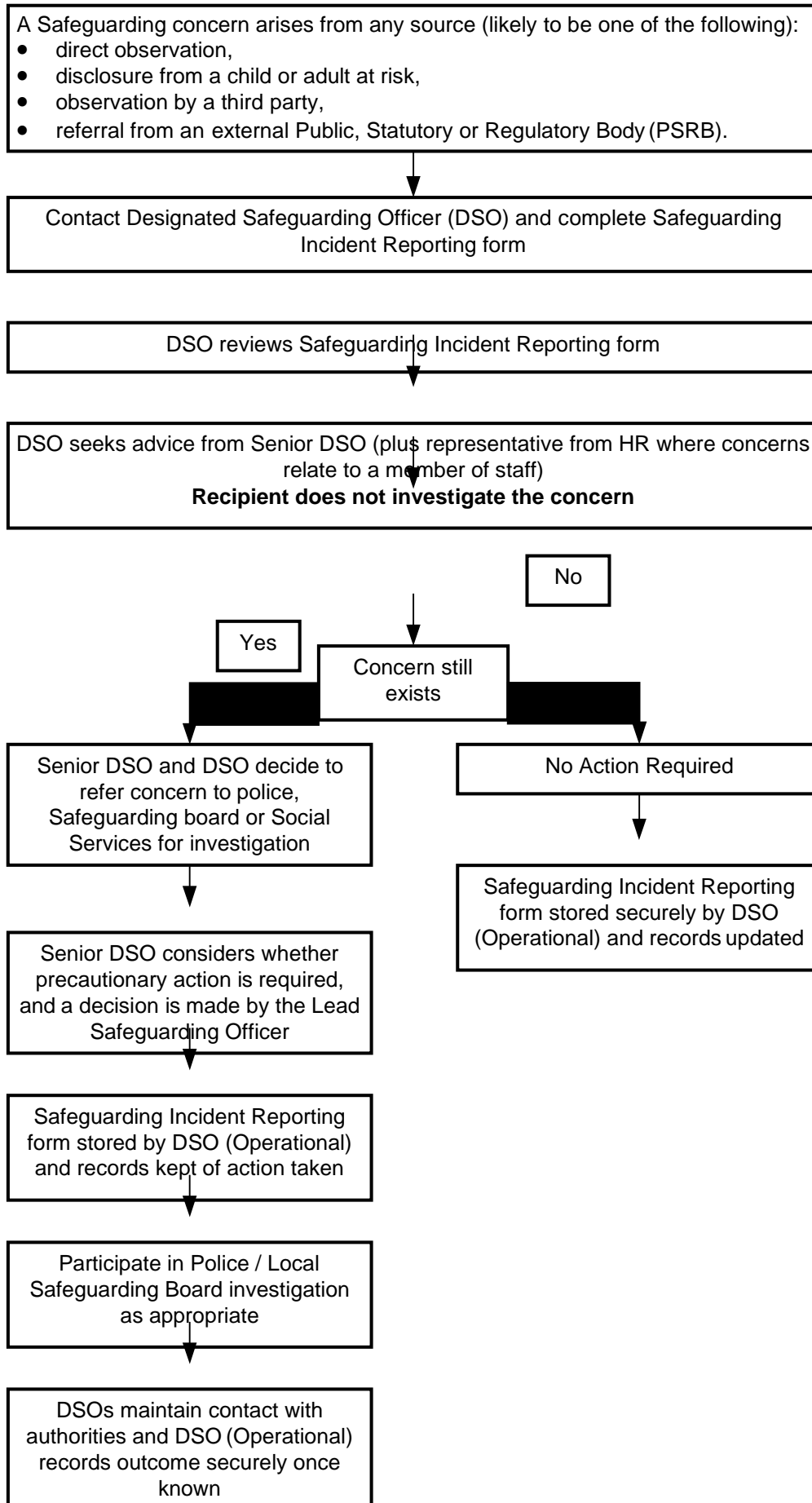
## **21. Reporting a Concern Out of Hours**

If a Safeguarding issue occurs out of hours (i.e. when the Designated Safeguarding Officers will not ordinarily be in work) then consideration should be given as to whether anyone is currently at immediate risk of harm.

If there is concern that someone is at immediate risk of harm emergency services should be called using 999 for the police or ambulance as appropriate so that it can be reported immediately. Contact should also be made with Campus Support on 01695 584227 so this can be officially recorded on the university day / night report. Campus Support staff will decide as to whether it is necessary to contact other senior staff at the University or whether this can wait to be followed up the next working day.

Where there is not a concern that anyone is at serious risk of harm then the report should be made to a Designated Safeguarding Officer the next working day. However, it is advisable for an individual to make brief notes at the time of the decisions taken so that these are up to date and available if needed.

## Flowchart for Procedure for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns





# Dealing with Concerns Over Radicalisation

## 22. Background Information

The duty to protect children, young people and adults from harm extends to protecting them from involvement in groups which set out to radicalise individuals.

Within the government's Prevent Strategy, universities have been identified as potential sites for radicalisation and university leaders have been asked to work in partnership with the regional Prevent coordinators, local authorities, and the Police to minimise the risks of individuals becoming radicalised. Whilst it is recognised that no single measure will reduce radicalisation, it is believed that the only way is to target potential at risk vulnerable groups and individuals and try to re- assimilate them into society. The UK government has delegated the function of monitoring authority for relevant Higher Education Bodies to the [Office for Student \(OfS\)](#).

To comply with the Prevent duty, providers need to:

- assess the risks associated with Prevent and draw up a plan to mitigate these.
- have effective welfare support systems, linking to DfE Prevent coordinators, local authorities, or the police if necessary.
- have systems for assessing and mitigating risks around external speakers and events on campus, while maintaining the existing duty to promote freedom of speech.
- arrange ongoing Prevent training for relevant staff.
- have an IT usage policy, and where appropriate a research policy, which cover the Prevent duty.
- engage with students and ensure that students' unions and societies are aware of policies concerning activities on campus.
- work with employers of apprentices to ensure they address their responsibilities as part of our partnership agreement.

## 23. Potential Indicators of Susceptibility to Radicalisation

The following information is provided to enable those working within the policy to understand possible indicators that someone is 'susceptible to radicalisation'. However, it should be noted that these indicators could be found in a variety of scenarios that involve vulnerable students, entirely unrelated to any sort of radicalisation. They are though, likely to be indicative of a student who is generally struggling to settle into university life and who would benefit from the wide range of student support that is provided within the University. By providing a referral to the Designated Safeguarding Officer it will enable those relevant services within and outside the University to identify an individual's needs and vulnerabilities. This would include deciding whether the Channel Process may be of benefit to the individual.

Factors which are considered when determining whether an individual may be vulnerable to involvement with terrorism could include:

- Identity Crisis - Distance from cultural/ religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them.

- Personal Crisis - Family tensions; sense of isolation; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances - poverty, deprivation, local community tensions at home; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations - Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
- Criminality - Victims of hate crime/discrimination. Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/ reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups.

Staff or students may become concerned about someone due to changes in behaviour or appearance, with the following possible indicators prompting cause for concern:

- Stopping contact with peers, only interested in contact with members of a particular ideological group;
- Changes in a habitual style of dress;
- Condoning violence in support of an espoused ideology;
- Quickness to anger, intolerance, close-mindedness;
- Attitude to women;
- Change in attitude;
- Isolation;
- Physical changes - clothing, tattoos;
- Overt new religious practices;
- Accommodation changes - posters etc.
- Spreading messages and/or extremist views.

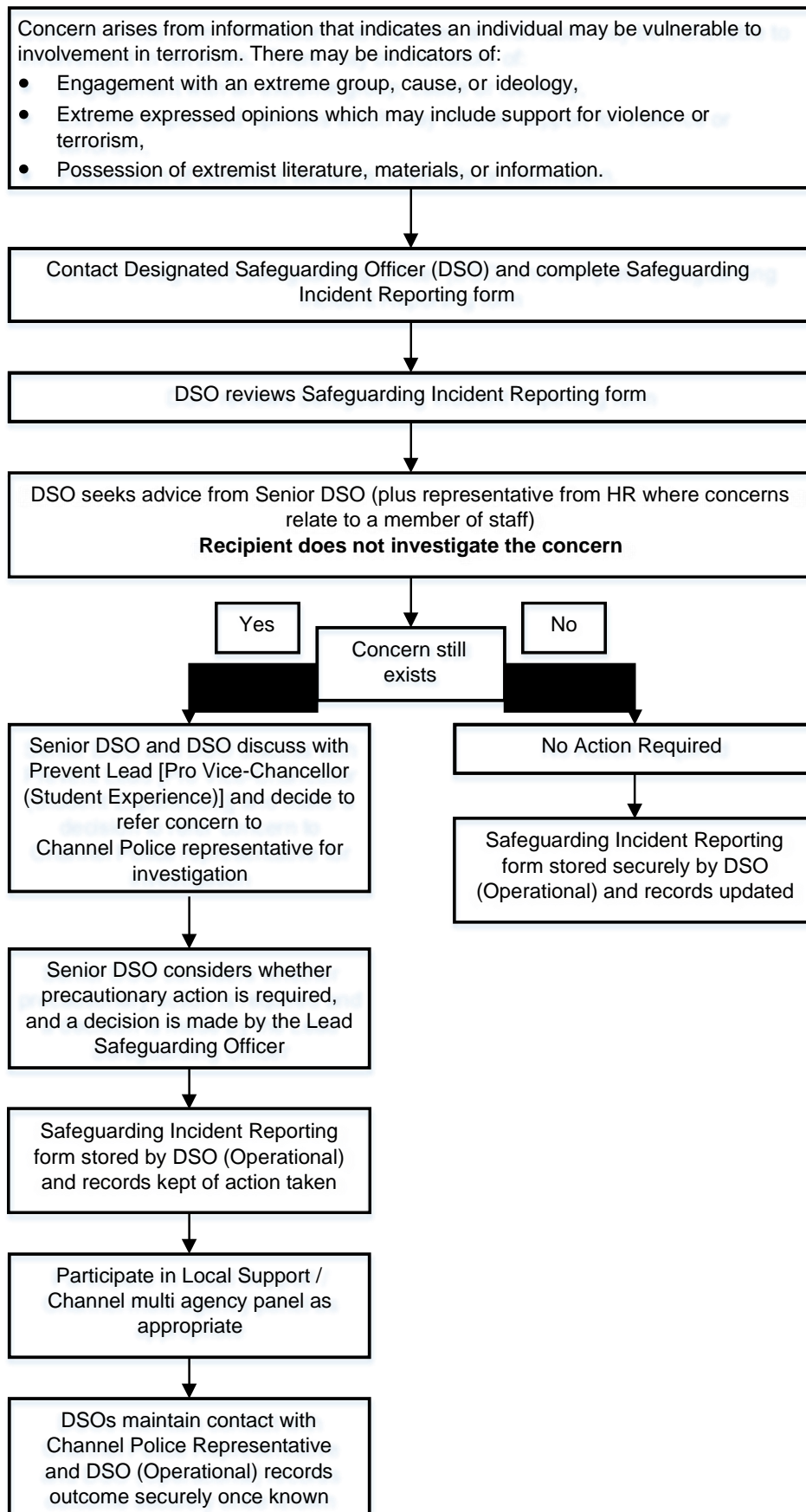
There may be many reasons for such changes, which is why a safeguarding approach should be adopted, as this will enable relevant services within and outside the University to identify an individual's needs and vulnerabilities. This includes deciding whether the Channel Process may be of benefit to the individual.

## **24. Dealing with Concerns of Radicalisation**

If a member of staff is concerned that an individual may be becoming radicalised, they should follow the process described in the flowchart below as they would for any other Safeguarding concerns.

The Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer will always discuss and agree any decision in relation to a potential referral to Channel with the Prevent Lead – designated as the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience).

## Flowchart for Procedure for Reporting Concerns Over Radicalisation



# Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

## **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

### **TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF IN ALL INSTANCES OF SAFEGUARDING QUERIES/CONCERNS**

Date of initial report/ referral:

**Time of initial report/ referral:**

**Staff member(s):**

**Name and details of individual(s) concerned** *(please include all names of those involved or implicated and contact details/whereabouts as known. Where students please include ID numbers and where children please indicate ages/dates of birth if known):*

**Does the report/ referral relate to concern(s) arising from within a practice area?**  
**Y/N** *(if yes, please give details, and is the placement area aware of them?):*

Name of Mentor/Supervisor/Practice Educator/Personal Tutor (if applicable): Nature of concern(s):

**Description of actions taken/advice given (include contact details of internal/external people/agencies contacted if relevant):**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

Please pass this form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/other nominated authority e.g. your line manager once completed

## Key to Relevant Documents

This policy and procedure should be used to deal with issues of a Safeguarding nature (including Prevent) and on occasion it may be necessary to use it in conjunction with [other University policies and procedures which can be found on the University web site](#). Other relevant policies include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Bullying Harassment and Hate Crime Policy,
- Student Disciplinary Regulations,
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (Staff),
- Fitness to Practice Procedure,
- Fitness to Study Procedure.

## Endmatter

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