



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

BY LAW of
CHESTER STUDENTS' UNION

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1. Aims and Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to explain the measures that form the basis of Chester Students Union's (CSU) approach to safeguarding and protecting the wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk who come into contact with the CSU.
- 1.2. This policy will provide officers, staff and volunteers with guidance on the procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or adult at risk may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Throughout this policy the following definitions will apply:
 - Children and young people – people aged 0 – 18 years of age.
 - Adults at risk – as defined by section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (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.
 - Prevent – part of the government's anti-terrorism strategy. Higher Education has been identified as a sector where young people may be radicalised. This strand of the anti-terrorism strategy aims to prevent young people getting involved in terrorism.
 - Radicalisation – the process by which an individual comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
 - Safeguarding – protecting children, young people and adults at risk from maltreatment and harm. Harm could be physical, sexual or psychological. This can include protection from involvement with crime and/or terrorism.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Chester Students Union Safeguarding Officer is the Chief Executive and the Board delegate to them the responsibility for:
 - Implementing and promoting this Policy;
 - Ensuring that the Policy is monitored and reviewed in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children;
 - Acting as the main contact within CSU for the protection of children;
 - Ensuring that appropriate staff members are provided with information, advice and training on the identification and protection of children and adults in a vulnerable situation;
 - Establishing and maintaining contacts with local Children's and Adult Social Care Services departments and Police;
 - Maintaining confidential records of relevant cases and action taken.

4. Work Experience Placements and Apprenticeships

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that a risk assessment is carried out prior to the commencement of the placement.

5. Photographic Policy and Protocols

- 5.1 Making, storing, publishing and distributing photographic and video images of any individual requires consideration of privacy and Data Protection issues.
- 5.2 CSU will seek to avoid situations where images can be inappropriately misused, adapted or circulated.
- 5.3 Organisers of any event involving children, young people or adults at risk at risk need to:
 - 5.3.1 Obtain written consent from parents or carers prior to the event.
 - 5.3.2 Ensure the information for parents, children and schools states that CSU is not responsible for any photography/filming taken on individual mobile phones or digital cameras.
 - 5.3.3 Include photography and video in the risk assessment for any event.
 - 5.3.4 Make sure that they do not publish personal details alongside an image.
 - 5.3.5. Give young people guidance on expectations regarding their own taking of images.
 - 5.3.6. Treat images as confidential information, store them appropriately and delete once they are no longer required.

6. Code of Conduct

- 6.1 It is the Union's view that the conduct of staff should be based on the following principles:
- 6.2 That staff recognise their professional and ethical responsibility to protect the interests of students, to respect the trust involved in the staff/student relationship and to accept the constraints and obligations inherent in that responsibility.
- 6.3 That to embark on a romantic/sexual relationship with a student will always involve serious risks and may involve serious difficulties rooted in the unequal power of the two parties concerned. It is likely to create real problems in maintaining the boundaries of professional and personal life.
- 6.4 In the event of involvement in a relationship with a student, particularly where it is a romantic or sexual one, it is the duty of the member of staff to declare it to their Line Manager so that alternative arrangements can be made for the student concerned if necessary. Such a declaration will be treated as confidential by CSU. The information given, would only be disclosed on a 'need-to-know' basis e.g. where alternative arrangements have to be made.
- 6.5 To leave undeclared a romantic/sexual or other potentially incompatible association, where a member of staff is in professional contact with the student may be regarded as misconduct and could leave the member of staff open to disciplinary action.
- 6.6 Students who are, or who have been, involved in romantic/sexual relationships with staff and who do not consider their involvement to be truly consensual have the right of complaint under Complaints Policy.
- 6.7 A member of staff who enters into a romantic/sexual relationship with a student, where a power differential exists, must realise that if a charge of sexual harassment is subsequently lodged, it will be exceedingly difficult to prove immunity on the grounds of mutual consent.
- 6.8 It should be noted that sexual harassment is not simply a set of behaviours. It is about unequal power relationships and the myriad ways in which these are conducted and maintained. An individual who has suffered sexual harassment has the right of legal redress under the Equality Act 2010.

7. Guidelines for Staff and Officers Working with Children, Young People and Adults at Risk

- 7.1 All staff and/or students who intend to, or may be put in a position of, working with children, young people or adults at risk should ensure that they understand this policy and its implications prior to commencing any programme, event, visit or other activity.
- 7.2 The following guidelines apply to all CSU staff and volunteers working with children, young people or adults at risk:
 - 7.2.1 Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
 - 7.2.2 Avoid taking a child, young person or adult at risk alone in a vehicle on journeys, however short.
 - 7.2.3 Unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, do not take a child or adult at risk to the toilet unless another adult is present or another adult is aware.
 - 7.2.4 If you find that you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, young person or adult at risk, wherever practicable make sure that others can clearly observe you.
 - 7.2.5 Avoid close personal relationships with a child, young person or adult at risk in relation to whom you are in a position of trust.
 - 7.2.6 Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, young person or adult at risk, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.

8. Guidelines for Responding to a Suspicion or Allegation of Child Abuse

- 8.1 All members of staff must seek to actively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and be alert to the possibility that some children may have suffered or be at risk of suffering significant harm, including forms of child abuse. All complaints/allegations of significant harm to children must be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance with the following procedure.
- 8.2 If a staff member has a suspicion that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, no matter what the cause, he/she should seek the advice and assistance of the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer, setting out the basis of the suspicion as clearly as possible. This should be done immediately without awaiting confirmation of concerns.
- 8.3 If a staff member receives from a child or young person an allegation that that child or another child is being abused/has been abused or is at risk of abuse he/she should:
 - 8.3.1 Listen carefully and stay calm.
 - 8.3.2 Ensure that he/she does not 'quiz' the child. However, if necessary, he/she may seek to clarify, using open questions and without putting words into the child's mouth but only to the extent that they understand what the child is telling them.
 - 8.3.3 Reassure the child that by telling him/her they have done the right thing.
 - 8.3.4 Inform the child that he/she must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told.
 - 8.3.5 Inform the child to whom he/she will report the matter.
 - 8.3.6 Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child said and did and the questions asked of the child etc.
- 8.4 Staff members should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves but should report them immediately to the Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy Safeguarding Officer in the absence of the Safeguarding Officer).

- 8.5 Staff members should not generally make referrals to Children’s Social Care Services or other authorities themselves. They must seek approval from the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer.
- 8.6 On receipt of a report of suspicion/allegation of significant harm to a child by a staff member, the Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy Safeguarding Officer) will make a referral to the local Children’s Social Care Services department and/or the Police and take steps to initiate the appropriate staff or student disciplinary procedure when appropriate.
- 8.7 In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy Safeguarding Officer, staff members should discuss any suspicion or allegation of child harm with the local Children’s Social Care Services department or the Police where there appears to be a significant risk to a child.

9. Guidelines for Responding to an Allegation of Abuse of Trust by a Young Person or Adult at Risk Against a Member of Staff

- 9.1 An allegation of an abuse of trust made by a young person or adult at risk against a member of staff should be reported to the CSU Safeguarding Officer.
- 9.2 The CSU Safeguarding Officer will make preliminary enquiries to establish whether there is substance to the allegation.
- 9.3 As soon as practicably possible the CSU Safeguarding Officer will inform the Board of Trustees of the allegation and in any event within 24 hours of the initial concern being raised. If the Board of Trustees in consultation with the CSU Safeguarding Officer is of the opinion that a criminal offence has been committed the police will be informed.
- 9.4 The CSU Safeguarding Officer will decide whether the allegation requires further action being taken under CSU Disciplinary Procedures. Only if the allegation were trivial or demonstrably false would further action not be warranted.
- 9.5 In accordance with the provisions of the Disciplinary Procedure, the CSU Safeguarding Officer may decide to suspend the member of staff from duty or refuse permission for the volunteer to enter the CSU premises, its grounds or premises whilst an investigation into the matter is carried out.
- 9.6 The CSU Safeguarding Officer or nominee will be appointed to conduct the investigation and will act as Invoking Officer at any disciplinary proceedings.
- 9.7 If the member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the conclusion of the investigation, CSU will comply with its obligations in reporting any relevant matters to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

10. Allegations of Abuse of Trust Made by Individuals Over the Age of 18

- 10.1 Allegations of abuse of trust made by individuals over the age of 18 should be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

11. Deliberately False or Malicious Accusations

- 11.1 An important issue for Chester Students’ Union in conducting an investigation is the need to protect the welfare of a member of staff who may be wrongly accused of serious offences.
- 11.2 Persons making deliberately false or malicious complaints may themselves become subject to disciplinary action.

12. Guidelines for Responding to a Suspicion of Domestic Abuse

- 12.1 Domestic violence and abuse can be defined as any incident or patterns of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or above who are, or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:
- Psychological
 - Physical
 - Sexual
 - Financial
 - Emotional
- 12.2 Signs and symptoms could include (but are not limited to):
- Arriving to work late or very early
 - Unplanned or increased use of annual leave
 - Decreased productivity
 - Tension around receiving repeated personal phone calls
 - Wearing long sleeves on a hot day or sunglasses inside
 - Difficulty making decisions alone
 - Difficulty concentrating on tasks
 - Avoiding windows and main entrance of office
 - Repeated discussion of marital or relationship problems
 - Flowers or gifts sent to the employee at work for no apparent reason
 - Bruises, chronic headaches, abdominal pains, muscle aches
 - Vague, non-specific medical complaints
 - Sleeping or eating disorders
 - Signs of fear, anxiety, depression
 - Fatigue
 - Intense startle reactions
 - Suicidal or homicidal thoughts
 - Nightmares or flashbacks
- 12.3 Staff members who suspect that a student or member of staff is suffering domestic violence or abuse should report this to the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

13. Recruitment and Employment of Staff/DBS Checks of Staff and Students

- 13.1 All roles are reviewed to see whether they meet the criteria.

14. Dealing with Concerns and Radicalisation

- 14.1 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. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism which may lead to terrorism.
- 14.2 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 creates a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the 'Prevent Duty'. Prevent is one of four strands of the government's counter-terrorism strategy and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- 14.3 Factors which are considered when determining whether an individual may be vulnerable to radicalisation and 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. Experience of imprisonment; poor resettlement/reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups.
- 14.4 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 a particular ideological group;
 - Changes in a habitual style of dress;
 - Condonement of violence in support of an espoused ideology;
 - Quickness to anger, intolerance, close-mindedness;
 - Attitude to women;
 - Change in attitude;
 - Isolation;
 - Physical changes – e.g. clothing, tattoos;
 - Overt new religious practices;
 - Accommodation changes – posters etc;
 - Spreading messages and/or extremist views.
- 14.5 If a member of staff is concerned that an individual may be becoming radicalised, s/he should speak to his/her line manager who should contact the Safeguarding Officer.