



UNIVERSITY OF  
LINCOLN

## **Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy**

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## Policy Statement

- 1.1 The University of Lincoln has a statutory, ethical and moral duty to ensure that the University functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults who are enrolled on courses or are visiting the University. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- 1.2 Throughout this document, reference is made to 'children and young people'. This term is used to mean 'those under the age of 18' (a more detailed description is available in the Children Act 2004). This policy also refers to 'adults who are vulnerable to abuse'. This term is used to mean a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type (a more detailed description is available in the Vulnerable Groups Act 2006):
  1. a substantial learning or physical disability;
  2. a physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
  3. a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity
- 1.3 The University is committed to ensuring that it:
  - Provides a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults to study and live in and those children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe and feel safe.
  - Identifies children, young people and vulnerable adults who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and
  - Takes appropriate action to see that such children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe, both at the University and at home.
- 1.4 In pursuit of these aims, the Education and Student Life Committee annually review relevant policies and procedures and recommend their approval to Academic Board with the aim of:
  - Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the promotion of a safe environment for them whilst they are at University
  - Aiding the identification of children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk of significant harm, and providing procedures for reporting concerns and acting on these
  - Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and fellow students
  - The safe recruitment of staff and students
- 1.5 In reviewing relevant policies and procedures, the Education and Student Life Committee will consult with, and take account of relevant guidance and good practice, including liaison with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

- 1.6 The University will refer concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult might be at risk of significant harm to Social Services / the appropriate agencies as agreed with the LSCB.
- 1.7 Senior Managers and all staff working with children will receive training adequate to familiarise them with protection issues and responsibilities and University procedures and policies, with refresher training at least every 3 years. The University Registrar will have special responsibility for protection issues as the designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults. The University Registrar shall be assisted by other members of staff with responsibilities for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- 1.8 The University recognises the following as definitions of abuse:

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse causes harm to a child, vulnerable adult or a young person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child, vulnerable adult or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of the child or young person's health or development.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves a child, vulnerable adult or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity, looking at or being involved in the production of pornographic materials or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. It is not necessary for a child, or young person to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child, vulnerable adult or young person is irrelevant.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child, vulnerable adult or young person's behaviour and emotional condition, resulting in low self-worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

### **Financial Abuse**

Financial abuse occurs when money is unreasonably denied to someone who is financially dependent, money is stolen, misused or information is withheld about welfare benefits.

### **Prevent Duty**

- 1.9 The University has a duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the 'Prevent' duty). The University is required to respond to any concerns raised by the disclosures or

actions of students which could suggest that they have been influenced by extremist ideologies and radicalised, including where students may be thinking about taking action based on those influences.

- 1.10 The Prevent duty extends to all forms of terrorism and non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and popularise views which terrorists then exploit. Preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism requires challenge to extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. The duty also requires intervening to stop people moving from extremist (albeit legal) groups into terrorist-related activity.
- 1.11 Staff who have concerns that a student may be in the process of being drawn into terrorism or may be vulnerable to radicalisation, should promptly report their concerns, as you would with any other Safeguarding issue, to the Director of Student Affairs or, in her absence, the Head of Student Services.
- 1.12 The Director of Student Affairs and/or the Head of Student Services will ensure that any information regarding a student will be shared confidentially and sensitively within the University and, if appropriate, seek advice from the local Prevent lead on any matters with regard to the ongoing welfare of the student.

## **Annexe 1 Designated Staff with Responsibility for Safeguarding**

### Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility

The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults is the University Registrar.

The University Registrar has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the University of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and the promotion of a safe environment within the University.

Additionally, the University Registrar is responsible for ensuring that the following take place:

- Oversight of the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies as agreed with LSCB
- Provision of advice and support to staff and students on issues relating to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Maintaining a proper record of any child or vulnerable adult protection referral, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a formal referral)
- Ensuring that parents of children and young people within the University are aware of the University's Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Liaison with the LSCB and other appropriate agencies
- Liaison with organisations who send children or vulnerable adults to the University to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made
- Liaison with employers and training organisations that receive children, young people or vulnerable adults from the University on placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place
- Ensuring that staff receive basic training in safeguarding issues and are aware of the University protection policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place for the management of contractors on University premises
- Ensuring that recruitment and selection policies for staff, and admissions policies for students, are regularly reviewed and adhered to.

The University Registrar is responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the LSCB (or others) to the Senior Management Team at the earliest possible opportunity.

### **Designated Staff Members**

Designated members of staff with responsibility for Safeguarding issues are:

- Judith Carey - Director of Student Affairs - Ext 6016

The Director of Student Affairs:

- Reports to the University Registrar on protection issues
- Will know how to make an appropriate referral
- Will be available to provide advice and support to other staff and students on issues relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults
- Has particular responsibility to be available to listen to children, young people and vulnerable adults studying at the University
- Will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate.
- Has received training in protection issues and inter-agency working, as required by the LSCB, and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years. This training is referred to by OfSTED as Level 2 training.

### **Designated Governor**

The designated member of the Board of Governors with responsibility for child protection issues is the Chair of the Board.

The Chair is responsible for liaising with the University Registrar and the Director of Student Affairs over matters regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults, including:

- Ensuring that the University has procedures and policies which are consistent with the LSCB's procedures
- Ensuring that the Board of Governors reviews the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy each year
- Ensuring that the Board of Governors receives an Annual Report.

## **Annexe 2      Procedures for Dealing with the Disclosure of Abuse and Reporting Concerns**

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult tells a member of staff about possible abuse:

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Do not interview the child, young person or vulnerable adult, but question normally and without pressure to be sure that you understand what the person is telling you. It is important not to ask leading questions.
- Do not put words into the person's mouth.
- Reassure the person that by telling you, they have done the right thing and try to ensure immediate safety.
- Inform the person that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of to whom you will report the matter. Do not offer confidentiality.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child, young person or vulnerable adult said, did and your questions etc. Note the main points carefully for your detailed record.

Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to a designated staff member, as detailed in Annexe 1.

### **Annexe 3 Procedures for Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Students and Members of Staff**

1. These procedures apply to all staff, whether academic, administrative, management or support, as well as to any volunteers working in the University. The word “staff” is used for ease of description. These procedures also refer to all enrolled students. Where students are also employed by the University, the procedures relating to staff should be followed.

#### **A Allegations against members of staff**

2. In rare instances, HE and FE staff in UK institutions have been found responsible for the abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults. Because of their frequent contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, staff may have allegations of abuse made against them. The University recognises that an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.
3. The University recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child or young person is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the University will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

#### **Receiving an Allegation**

4. A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff from a member of staff, a student, a child, a young person or a vulnerable adult should follow the guidelines in Annexe 2 for dealing with disclosure.
5. The allegation should be reported immediately to the Director of Student Affairs (DOSA), or nominee. The DOSA will obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, that are signed and dated. Where possible, information about times, dates, locations and names of and potential witnesses should also be recorded.

#### **Initial Assessment**

6. The DOSA will make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with colleagues and the LSCB as appropriate. **Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child, young person or vulnerable adult has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the LSCB. This is a 24 hour responsibility.**
7. It is important that the DOSA does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received and is a decision about whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.
8. Where the matter does not require reporting to the local LSCB, other potential outcomes are:



- The allegation can be addressed in accordance with University Staff Disciplinary Procedures.
- The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true and no further action is required.

### **Enquiries and Investigations**

9. Protection enquiries by Social Services or the Police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by the University. The University may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The statutory agencies, including the Police, have no power to direct the University to act in a particular way; however, the University should assist the agencies with their enquiries.
10. The University shall hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal Police or Social Services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries shall conform to the existing Staff Disciplinary Procedures.
11. If there is an investigation by an external agency, e.g. the Police, the DOSA should normally be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions. The DOSA will be responsible for ensuring that the University provides every assistance to the investigation and will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made. The DOSA should advise the member of staff that they should consult with a representative, e.g. a trade union.
12. Subject to objections from the Police or other investigating agency, the DOSA should:
  - Inform the person making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
  - Ensure that the parents/carers of a child or young person making an allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to inform the recorded next of kin of a vulnerable adult making an allegation.
  - Inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
  - Inform relevant, senior, colleagues of the allegation and the investigation.
13. The DOSA shall keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation and should consider, with the Director of Human Resources, any action under University Staff Disciplinary procedures which should be taken, pending the outcome of the full investigation, to safeguard those who have made the allegation, any others who may potentially be at risk, and the member of staff concerned.

### **Records**

14. It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is

taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file, in line with normal data protection procedures.

15. If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, they should be informed about the University's statutory duty to inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

### **Monitoring Effectiveness**

16. Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the University Registrar and the Director of Human Resources should, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the University's procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the LSCB.

### **B Allegations against students**

17. In some instances, students have been found to be responsible for the abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults who may also be fellow students.
18. The University recognises that an allegation of abuse made against a student may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.
19. The University recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child or young person is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a student can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Those dealing with such allegations within the University will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

### **Receiving an Allegation**

20. A member of staff who receives an allegation about a student from another member of staff, a student or a child, young person or vulnerable adult should follow the guidelines in Annexe 2 for dealing with disclosure.
21. The allegation should be reported immediately to the DOSA or nominee. The DOSA will obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, that are signed and dated. Where possible information about times, dates, locations and names of any potential witnesses should also be recorded. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the DOSA.

### **Initial Assessment by the Director of Student Affairs**

22. The DOSA will make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with the University Registrar and the LSB as appropriate. **Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child, young person or vulnerable adult has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the LSCB. This is a 24 hour responsibility.**

23. It is important that the DOSA does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received and is a decision about whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.
24. Where the matter does not require reporting to the local LSCB, other potential outcomes are:
  - The matter can be addressed in accordance with the Student Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.
  - The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true and no further action is required.

### **Enquiries and Investigations**

25. Protection enquiries by Social Services or the Police are not to be confused with internal disciplinary enquiries by the University; however the University may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The statutory agencies, including the Police, have no power to direct the University to act in a particular way; however, the University should assist the agencies with their enquiries.
26. The University shall hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal Police or Social Services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries shall conform to the Student Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.
27. If there is an investigation by an external agency, e.g. the Police, the DOSA would normally be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions. The DOSA is responsible for ensuring that the University provides every assistance with the agency's enquiries. The DOSA will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the student about whom the allegation is made. The DOSA should advise the student that they should consult with a representative, e.g. the Students' Union, a parent or guardian or a legal representative.
28. Subject to objections from the police or other investigating agency, the DOSA should:
  - Inform the person making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
  - Ensure that the parents/carers of a child or young person making an allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to inform the recorded next of kin of a vulnerable adult making an allegation.
  - Inform the student against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
  - Inform the University Registrar of the allegation and the investigation.
29. The DOSA will keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation and should consider, with the University Registrar, any action under the

Student Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations which should be taken, pending the outcome of the full investigation, to safeguard both those who have made the allegation, any others who may potentially be at risk, and the student concerned.

### **Records**

30. It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the student's personal and confidential file, in accordance with standard data protection procedures.

### **Monitoring Effectiveness**

31. Where an allegation has been made against a student, the University Registrar and the DOSA should, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the University's procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the LSCB.

## **Annexe 4 Recruitment and Selection Procedures, Staff and Students**

### **Recruitment and Selection Procedures (staff)**

1. The University has recruitment and selection procedures which are sensitive to the need for the University to reduce the risk of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults. These procedures take account of the following areas of good practice in relation to protection issues:
  - They apply to all staff who may work with children, young people and vulnerable adults
  - The role and key selection criteria are clearly identified
  - They require documentary evidence of academic/vocational qualifications.
  - They contain the need to obtain professional and/or character references.
  - They will verify previous employment history.
  - Where required, ISA/DBS checks are carried out prior to confirmation of appointment and a central list is held of all clearances, the dates carried out and when renewal is due.
  - They use a variety of selection techniques (e.g. qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks).

### **Recruitment and Selection Procedures (students)**

1. The arrangements for the recruitment and selection of all students are detailed in the University Admissions Policy.
2. This Policy sets out the ways in which the University works to satisfy itself that it is not recruiting students who will pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact as part of their engagement with the University as a student.
3. The Senior Management Team recognises that it has to rely on the honesty of students making applications to disclose any criminal convictions on their application. Any students found to have made a fraudulent declaration will be subject to University Disciplinary procedures.
4. For certain, specified, professional programmes, students are required to have an ISA/CRB check prior to starting their academic programme or, in the case of Social Work, prior to them coming into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults as part of their course.
5. Students are issued with photo ID at enrolment and should carry this with them at all times when they are on University premises

## **Annexe 5      Guidelines for the Appointment of University Contractors**

1. In appointing Contractors to undertake work on behalf of the University on its premises, the University takes into account the need to reduce the risk of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults. These guidelines take account of the following areas of good practice in relation to protection issues:
  - All contracted staff who work on University premises are required at all times to carry proof of identity supplied and verified by the University and which controls the areas of the University they are approved to enter
  - All contracted staff who have access to “sensitive” areas, such as Halls of Residence, will have been required to undertake an ISA/DBS check through their employer or to be accompanied at all times by an authorised member of University staff (or designated and approved contractor)