



## **Safeguarding Policy**

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Person Responsible: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approved By: Governing Board

For Information To: All Staff, Students & Stakeholders

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## 1. Introduction

ISBM University [India] London recognises that the University's community (management, staff, students, employers, stakeholders, and visitors) all have an important role to play in safeguarding the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and preventing their abuse.

All persons, especially vulnerable adults, are protected by the laws and guidance associated with Safeguarding. They must be safeguarded, whether this is in the home, in a learning environment, in the workplace, or any other setting.

All members of ISBM University's community have a legal duty to report, in strict confidence, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Safeguarding Officer (the nominated person) if they have cause for concern and believe that an individual (employed, volunteer, student, visitor or anyone else at the University) has:

- Harmed a vulnerable adult or is doing so.
- Caused a vulnerable adult to be harmed.
- Put a vulnerable adult at risk of harm.
- Attempted to harm a vulnerable adult.
- Incited another person to harm a vulnerable adult.
- Been the victim of abuse.

Abuse can take many forms, but it is categorised under 4 main themes:

- Physical.
- Sexual.
- Emotional / Psychological.
- Neglect.

In addition to the above, vulnerable adults may also be subject to:

- Financial and material.
- Self-neglect.

Vulnerable people must be protected from any form of harm. As such, all complaints, allegations, or suspicions must be taken seriously. The following procedure must be followed whenever an allegation is made that a person has been abused or when there is a suspicion that abuse may be taking place.

Harmful activities by other persons who are not employed staff or volunteers, will be dealt with using normal University procedures for incident management. The police and the local safeguarding boards may nevertheless be involved. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis alongside the associated organisational policy review.

To support the University's safeguarding agenda, it may on occasion be necessary to refer to the University's other policies/procedures on Health & Safety, Harassment/Bullying and Staff Discipline. In all cases, safeguarding will take precedence over other policy and procedure areas.

Allegations of abuse are serious. Where a claim of abuse is made against another person is not substantiated and is found to have been malicious in intent, this would be dealt with through the student or staff disciplinary procedure.

## Risk Assessment

The University uses risk assessment to inform the planning of safeguarding activities. This takes place at several levels:

- Organisational risk register – explicit section on Safeguarding.
- Staff safeguarding risk assessment – considering safeguarding measures to be put in place for various groups of staff.
- Hazardous activity risk assessments – in line with the University's Health and Safety policy.
- Individual student risk assessments – where the needs or circumstances of the individual dictate that completion of a risk assessment would be beneficial.
- Risk assessments are reviewed and updated on a regular basis as needed and at least once every year.

## 2. Raising Awareness of Safeguarding Procedures:

It is important that all members of the University community recognise the role they play in safeguarding. Safeguarding is a topic covered within the induction of every member of the University community, whether they are students, staff, employers, or stakeholders. It is also reinforced through regular email updates and a safeguarding newsletter.

**i. Students:** Within the induction programme, students will be made aware of the following:

- What constitutes abuse under Safeguarding.
- The reporting procedures for self-referral or reporting suspected abuse of someone else.
- To whom the referral should be made.
- The responsibilities each student has for one another.

**ii. Staff:** Within the staff induction programme, employees will be made aware of the following:

- The procedure for reporting issues associated with safeguarding.
- The key organisational personnel to whom the report should be made.
- The responsibility of members of staff under the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.
- All staff will complete safeguarding training annually.
- All staff to read and be familiar with the OfS guidance on the Prevent Duty:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/student-protection-and-support/counter-terrorism-the-prevent-duty/>

**iii. Employers:** Any employer working with a student must be provided training on the University's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. This should be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Safeguarding Officer before the student embarks upon the placement. The University representative and employer must:

- Identify a key employee who will act as the main contact for the student on the placement.
- Instruct the key employee on the University's Safeguarding policy and procedures and identify who their key point of contact is within the University for any matters relating to safeguarding.
- Sign a declaration that appropriate training has taken place, and that the employee is fully aware of their responsibility and the reporting process (appropriate notes and procedures will be left with the employee for reference purposes).

#### **iv. Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns:**

**Note 1:** Promises of confidentiality must not be given other than by University Counselling staff, as the matter may develop in such a way that these promises cannot be honoured.

**Note 2: Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities:** Individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may require tailored support, as their physical or mental conditions can sometimes make it more challenging to recognise signs of abuse.

**Note 3: Forced Marriage:** If there are concerns that a vulnerable person (male or female) is in danger of forced marriage, you should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) (020 7008 0151) or by visiting the [FMU page](#) of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website. The police and Children's Services will also be contacted. [Forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- If the complainant is the person being abused, questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged, and leading questions should be avoided. The use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings.
- A full record should be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information, including:
  - The date and time of the allegation.
  - The place where the alleged abuse happened.
  - Your name and the names of others present.
  - The name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the person who has allegedly been abused.
  - The nature of the alleged abuse.
  - A description of any injuries observed.
  - It should be signed and dated by the person completing the report.
- Any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse must be reported to the DSL or Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and at least within two hours.
- The DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer shall telephone and report all allegations and incidents of abuse to the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Duty social worker before the end of the working day. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made, and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the Chief Operating Officer and Student Services Manager within 24 hours.
- The DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer should discuss with the LA social services department what action will be taken to inform relevant parties, and a note of that conversation should be made.
- If the DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer cannot be contacted within 2 hours of the allegation or observation, the person making the report must notify the LA Adult Safeguarding Department of the issue and inform the University's DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer, as soon as possible, about the action taken.
- The DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer must notify the Chief Operating Officer and Student Services Manager of any allegation or incident as soon as is practicable and in any event within 24 hours of the initial concern arising.

### **Written records.**

- a.** The DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer shall retain a copy of:
  - The report.
  - Any notes, memoranda, or other correspondence dealing with the matter.
  - Any other relevant material.
- b.** Copies of reports, notes, etc. should be kept securely always locked and kept for a minimum period of seven years.
- c.** Copies of reports regarding allegations made against staff shall be kept securely sealed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead for a period of seven years.

### **3. The Work of Student Services.**

- At the start of any advice session, students must be informed that if information divulged during a confidential meeting leads to suspicion that a vulnerable person is at risk, the Student Advisor will be obliged to report the matter to the DSL/Safeguarding Officer or appropriate authority.
- If, during an advice session, a student makes an allegation relating to an abuse issue, then it is incumbent upon the Student Advisor to assess the situation with regard to any ongoing danger to the student. The immediate aims are to:
  - Ensure the safety of the student and any other vulnerable person.
  - Help prepare the student to come to terms with the situation and begin to empower them to protect themselves in the future.
- Client confidentiality should be maintained, providing the above aims are not compromised.
- The status of all allegations referred to the Student Advisor by a third party must be explained to the DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer before the end of the working day, without breaching confidentiality.

### **4. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff:**

- Where an allegation of abuse is made, and it involves a member staff, the University will always comply with good practice guidance.
- Under no circumstances should the member staff be informed about the allegation. Notification of the allegation will be managed through the University's official procedures described below.
- Any suspicion, allegation, or actual abuse by a member of staff must be reported to the as soon as possible and at least within two hours. If, within 2 hours of the initial concern, it has not been possible to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer, the matter must be reported to the Chief Operating Officer.
- Full records must be made about the alleged incident/s as described in point 2 above.
- The DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer will notify the Chief Operating Officer within 24 hours. The Chief Operating Officer will instigate an initial assessment of the allegation, relevant investigations and enquiries, and take appropriate action as detailed in the University's Disciplinary Policy.
- The University will, as deemed appropriate through the investigation, cooperate fully with the Police, Social Services, and other external organisations in the execution of their duties within the investigation.
- The Safeguarding & Prevent Committee will be kept informed of any situation where the investigation of an alleged incident under the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure has been

escalated to external authorities. They will, in turn, keep the Chief Operating Officer informed of necessary action taken.

- Parents or carers of a vulnerable adult involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it (subject to discussion with the relevant authority). They should also be kept informed about the progress of the case and told the outcome where there is no criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the allegation or complaint, the matter must be reported directly to the Chief Operating Officer.
- If the Chief Operating Officer is subject to any such allegation or complaint, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the Vice-Chancellor and Chair of the Governing Board.

## **5. Personal Care and Vulnerable Adults**

- The University will endeavour to ensure an appropriate environment and staff to allow intimate care to be delivered whilst meeting the need for privacy, dignity and safety. The vulnerable adults' wishes will be adhered to as closely as possible.
- The University will provide clean, well-maintained and equipped environments to meet the needs of adults receiving personal intimate care.
- It is recognised that in certain circumstances, same-sex support cannot always be available, in which case support for a female student will be given by a female staff member. Support for male students will be given by male staff wherever possible, but if not possible, then two female staff members.

## **6. E-Safety**

- People can be vulnerable to exploitation or abuse through the medium of Information Technology. It is important that staff are alert to potential risks vulnerable people may be exposed to, and that steps have been taken to mitigate the risk of this occurring, with specific reference to:

**Content** – e.g. exposure to age-inappropriate material, inaccurate or misleading information, socially unacceptable material (inciting violence, hate, or intolerance), and illegal material (including images of child abuse).

**Contact** – e.g. grooming using communication technologies leading to inappropriate behaviour or abuse.

**Commerce** – e.g. exposure to inappropriate advertising, online gambling, identity theft, and financial scams.

**Culture** – e.g. bullying via websites, mobile phones or other communication technologies, or inappropriate downloading of copyright materials (music, films, images); exposure to inappropriate advertising, online gambling, and financial scams.

**Social Media** – e.g. X, Instagram, Facebook, and other social media sites can also include and be used for bullying, coercion and grooming and as a point of exposure for extremism, sexual misconduct and scamming (financial schemes).

- Addressing these issues through Safeguarding E-Safety training and awareness raising with staff, students, employers and stakeholders will be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If there is any indication that a vulnerable person is experiencing difficulties in this area (for instance, if they are reported to be spending long periods using a PC on their own or if they appear unnecessarily defensive, secretive, or anxious about their PC use), then this must be taken seriously.

## **7. Safer Recruitment and Selection**

**7.1** Although the University works with adult students, we pay full regard to DBS guidance "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" (2023):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

- It ensures that all appropriate measures are applied to everyone who works for the University. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining references satisfactory to the University, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, undertaking Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

### **7.2 Statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, are that:**

- A DBS Enhanced Disclosure is obtained for all new appointments to the workforce. No new member of staff can start teaching/assessing any students until the DBS has been completed. If the DBS is delayed, the new staff will not be left alone with any student and will be allocated desk space where they may be supervised.
- The University will keep a single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on staff.
- All new appointments to the workforce who have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks as appropriate.
- The university will satisfy itself that supply/temporary staff have undergone the necessary checks.
- Identity checks must be carried out on all appointments to the workforce before the appointment is made.

### **Single Central Record**

The University maintains a single central record of all checks on staff and, where appropriate, for all other people who may come into routine contact with vulnerable students through the course of their studies.

### **7.3 Role of the Regulated Activity Provider (RAP)**

- Acting as the Regulated Activity Provider (RAP), the University has a legal 'legitimate interest' in all persons in the University community and will report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff, student, employer, stakeholder or visitor who, following investigation by the DSL and/or Safeguarding Officer, is shown to have harmed, abused, neglected, harassed or bullied any child or vulnerable adult at work, in work placement, during training or education or other activity controlled or within the contracted remit of the University. This is irrespective of whether the activity they were performing at the time was regulated by law.
- Where harm may have been committed by employed staff, volunteers, students, visitors or stakeholders, the University has a duty to report under the criminal law of England.
- The University has continuous regard to the following:
  - General safety and welfare of staff, ancillary staff, volunteers, students, visitors, builders and maintenance workers, consultants, inspectors, suppliers, service level agreement holders and sub-contractors, or any other person or stakeholder connected with the University. In this, common sense applies, and the University will consider acceptable working practices. All staff and volunteers are required to be polite. They are to react immediately to protect anyone from harm if they can do so using reasonable actions and resources. They can ask anyone they think is causing harm to desist. They should call for

help and stay with the person being harmed until another person they fully trust arrives to take responsibility or assist with the situation.

- Specific legal duties under the criminal law connected with regulated activities and controlled activities. A failure by the RAP to adhere to the legal regulations can lead to criminal prosecution, fines and imprisonment for persons in that role.
- Failure of the RAP or a person delegated by the RAP to check with the DBS to see if a prospective staff member or volunteer is barred or not, is a criminal offence punishable by a term of up to 5 years in prison. Similarly, the failure of the RAP to report an individual who the DSL or Safeguarding Officer says has caused harm to a child or vulnerable adult is a criminal offence.
- Taking on new staff members or inviting volunteers to help with work projects without the permission of the RAP or a person formally delegated by the RAP to give permission is a serious disciplinary offence. Staff are specifically NOT to invite any person of any age to the University to take part in organisational activities, which might be considered to involve work tasks, without obtaining clearance. It will not be clear to all staff if any students are under 18 or which adults have privately disclosed a vulnerability. Visitors are not included in this as they are visiting, not working.
- It is an offence for a barred individual to work or volunteer with vulnerable adults or to seek to do so.
- It is an offence to knowingly employ a barred individual/s in roles with vulnerable adults.
- Employers are under a legal duty to refer individuals they believe pose a risk of harm to the DBS.
- New staff may start work in an emergency prior to receipt of DBS disclosures, subject to **a risk assessment** by the Designated Safeguarding Lead being completed and references received.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

- This policy will be reviewed as deemed necessary through changes in law and/or good practice, but at least annually.
- This policy draws on information contained within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, and ISBM University will refer to these documents for enhanced information in areas of concern or lack of clarity.