

March 2022

General Policy Statement GPS3

Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Middlesex University is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students, employees and individual visitors who access its facilities and services.
- 1.2 This policy is intended to give a framework for members of the University and contractors in the event that a safeguarding issue arises and to provide a framework to help the University prevent and respond appropriately to significant harm, abuse and exploitation.
- 1.3 A Safeguarding Board has been established to oversee safeguarding at Middlesex University. The Chair of Safeguarding board has strategic responsibility for safeguarding at Middlesex University and works in close collaboration with the Lead Safeguarding Officer who has operational responsibility for safeguarding at Middlesex University.
- 1.4 This policy applies to the Hendon campus only.

2. Statutory duty

- 2.1 In accordance with UK law, the University has a statutory duty to have measures in place to protect and promote the wellbeing, health and safety and equal opportunities of all its students. This policy has been developed and reviewed with consideration of the legal framework, as specified below.
 - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
 - Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
 - Modern Slavery Act 2015
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - Care Act 2014
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Education and Skills Act 2008
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - Mental Capacity Act 2005
 - Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
 - Children Act 2004
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Common Law Duty of Confidentiality
- 2.2 Although there is no legislation in the area of safeguarding that is directed specifically at higher education institutions, there are guidance documents and recommendations, as highlighted below, which have been used to inform the development and review of this policy.

- Changing the culture: Report of the Universities UK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students, Universities UK, October 2016
The report recommends the implementation of a 'centralised reporting system', 'a clear, accessible and representative disclosure response' and 'a clear, multi-tiered training strategy covering different types of [safeguarding] incidents'.
- Prevent Duty Guidance for higher education institutions in England and Wales, March 2015 (updated March 2016)
- Safeguarding Children: Guidance for English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills 2007
"Effective safeguarding practice starts with having in place effective procedures. Lines of responsibility should be clear, with leadership from the highest level.

Representatives from across the HEI should be involved in implementation and in contributing to a culture in which safeguarding is discussed openly. Staff with particular responsibilities will need appropriate training, and all staff need to be aware of the HEI's policy and procedures" (Extract from the Executive Summary).
- The Office for Students is committed to ensuring that all students have a fulfilling experience of higher education. The environment in which they learn and study is key to achieving this aim. In order to be successful, students need to feel safe, healthy and part of a tolerant, inclusive academic community. (Reference, <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/safeguarding-students-understanding-what-works/>).
- UUK's guidance on protecting students' mental health and wellbeing states that universities have a "general duty of care at common law: to deliver their services (for example teaching, supervision, pastoral) to the standard of the ordinary competent institution; and, in carrying out their services and function as institutions, the act reasonably to protect the health, safety and welfare of their students" (Universities UK, 2015, 'Student Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education: a good practice guide).
- In addition, this policy has been written in consideration of Tier 4 sponsor guidance.

3. Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk

3.1 The University acknowledges its particular responsibility to safeguard the wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk engaged in the range of university activity. This is achieved by ensuring that there are appropriate arrangements in place to enable the University to discharge its duty to provide a safe and secure environment, to prevent abuse, and to respond appropriately to suspected or reported abuse of children, young people or adults at risk.

3.2 This policy recognises that students under the age of 18 study at the University. It also recognises the multiple contexts in which children, young people and adults at risk engage in university activity, such as through outreach work at schools and further

education colleges, student placements in care homes and nurseries, and non-students temporarily on campus e.g. during open days or graduation.

3.3 Before a member of the University undertakes any of the below regulated activities with a child, young person or adult at risk, suitable disclosure and vetting procedures should be followed, principally through checks under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The below activities may increase the vulnerability of a child, young person or adult at risk of experiencing significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

- Healthcare
- Personal care
- General household matters e.g. with cash, bills and/or shopping
- Conducting their own affairs
- Transport to a place where they will receive healthcare, personal care or social care.

3.4 All representatives from external organisations working with the University are required to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to permit them to work with children, young people and adults at risk. A risk assessment therefore must be completed before any student attends any form of work placement, including apprentices, visits and research activities. For programmes that are delivered in accordance with Professional Statutory Bodies (PSBs), the University must comply with the relevant PSB standards and guidance. In some cases (e.g. work placements) the external organisation (placement provider) may be required to provide evidence of its own safeguarding policy and procedures, and the name of their designated safeguarding officer, and this should formulate part of the placement agreement.

3.5 With respect to the safeguarding of children, this policy has been written with reference to Pan London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance (updated September 2019). 'Adults at risk' also derives from this guidance.

4. Safeguarding all students

4.1 The framing of safeguarding at Middlesex University is different from that employed at other institutions and sectors. Safeguarding in, for example, hospitals, care homes or primary or secondary schools, refers to protecting and promoting the welfare and wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk. Safeguarding at Middlesex incorporates the protection of all students, including those over the age of 18.

4.2 This broader definition, which is not confined to meeting statutory and legal requirements alone, is reflective of the circumstances in which all students may find themselves vulnerable to significant harm, abuse or exploitation. It also acknowledges the potential for an increased risk of harm from attending University as a result of, for example, limited support networks, adjustment problems, a culture of experimenting and new experiences, or a lack of resources to access help.

4.3 Explicit reference to 'British Values' features in safeguarding policies of other types of educational institutions, notably schools. Middlesex University adheres to core values that align to those underpinning the 'British Values' approach, namely: putting students first; collaboration and achieving more by working together; acting fairly, with integrity, respect and purpose, and; shaping the future, continuously improving on what has gone before.

4.4 The University is committed to ensuring that students, whatever their protective characteristics might be, have the right to protection from significant harm, abuse or exploitation, and a right to be safe in the activities that they choose. The protective characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act (2010), are as follows: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

5. Scope

5.1 The university's values of acting with integrity, purpose and respect are embedded within its approach to safeguarding and in the working practices and accountability of the Safeguarding Board.

5.2 The University accepts its responsibility to safeguard all students who participate in university life. It also accepts its responsibility to protect the welfare and wellbeing of any child, young person or adult at risk who is engaged in university activity or/and comes onto university premises for organised activity. This responsibility covers disclosure of, or concerns of, significant harm, abuse and/or exploitation. Incidents of significant harm, abuse and/or exploitation may be categorised as follows (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Abuse/violence (such as physical, emotional, sexual and/or psychological)
- Bullying, harassment, hate crime and hate incidents (including online)
- Intimate partner violence, including forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Modern slavery, forced prostitution, radicalisation
- Mental health conditions and vulnerabilities
- Self-harm, self-neglect and self-abusive behaviours, such as alcohol and drug abuse or eating disorders

5.3 Middlesex University's safeguarding policy applies to all contexts in which members of staff are engaged in university activity both in the physical world and online, whilst working both on and off campus, for example in seminars and lectures, in online discussions, and where there are working from home arrangements. Regardless of whether safeguarding concerns occur in the physical world or online, on campus or off-campus, the university's safeguarding protocols apply and staff should refer circumstances of concern via the Care and Concern procedure.

5.4 In light of the increased use of digital technology (e.g. online camera, video conferencing, social media), staff members are reminded that safeguarding responsibilities include safeguarding online and in particular ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children, young people and adults at risk. Guidance for staff on delivering digital safeguarding, as well as safeguarding training, is accessible here: <https://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/services/student-and-legal-affairs/safeguarding>. Guidance on blended working and staying safe, particularly in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, is accessible here: <https://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/blended-working>. Please also see 'Home Working Policy and Guidance', accessible here: <https://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/tools-policies/policies-and-guidance/policies-a-z>.

6. Guiding principles

6.1 Safeguarding refers to putting in place arrangements to take all reasonable measures

to minimise the risks of harm to all students and children, young people and adults at risk engaged in university activity.

- 6.2 The University acknowledges its particular responsibility to safeguard the wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk and its wider duty of care to protect the wellbeing of all its students.
- 6.3 The University is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all who access its campus, facilities and services.
- 6.4 The University is committed to ensuring that everyone who works at Middlesex University understands their safeguarding responsibilities and is provided with the training, resources and guidance to fulfil their duty of care. These responsibilities are detailed in the Safeguarding Manual and explored further in the Safeguarding at Middlesex online training course.
- 6.5 All university members are expected to act on any safeguarding concerns in a timely fashion, referring to the Care and Concern team with due regard for confidentiality and consent. If any university member is in any doubt about what to do should a safeguarding concern arise, they should consult their line manager.
- 6.6 All reasonable actions must be taken to prevent situations where significant harm, abuse and/or exploitation might arise or be alleged. The University acknowledges the need to conduct a risk assessment prior to any student attending any form of programme related work placement (including apprentices), field trips, visits and activity undertaken as part of a research degree. Research projects, programmes of study or learning activity involving children, young people or adults at risk require Ethics Committee approval to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and best practice guidelines.

7. Mitigating risk

- 7.1 Middlesex University aims to maintain the highest possible standards to meet its social, ethical, moral and legal responsibilities to safeguard all students and protect the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk with whom the university's work brings it into contact. The University puts this into practice through the following actions:

The appointment of a Lead Safeguarding Officer who is responsible for:

- Leading on the implementation and promotion of this policy;
- Ensuring that the policy is monitored and reviewed in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of higher education students and children, young people and adults at risk engaged in university activity;
- Acting as the lead contact within the University for the safeguarding of all students and the protection of children, young people and adults at risk engaged in university activity;
- Ensuring that appropriate university members are provided with information, advice and training on the safeguarding of all students and the protection of children, young people and adults at risk engaged in university activity;
- Establishing and maintaining contacts with external agencies, including, for example, the local Children's Social Care Services departments and police;
- Maintaining confidential records of all safeguarding cases;

- Ensuring data is used intelligently to prevent future incidents;
- Ensuring that information is shared appropriately.

7.2 The appointment of a Deputy Safeguarding Officer may be nominated to deputise for the Lead Safeguarding Officer and the appointment of Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) as appropriate.

7.3 The University, through DSOs, will train and supervise university members, as appropriate, to adopt best practice to safeguard all students and protect children, young people and adults at risk from significant harm, abuse and exploitation and to minimise risk to themselves. This includes providing adequate information on this policy as part of the induction process for any new university members.

7.4 Line Managers and Heads of Departments have a duty to ensure adequate training is undertaken and information provided.

7.5 A Safeguarding Board will be maintained to oversee safeguarding for the University and will have overall responsibility for leading and monitoring the implementation of this policy. The Safeguarding Board will report annually to the Assurance Committee (a sub-committee of Academic Board).

7.6 Disciplinary procedures may be invoked where staff or students breach this policy and/or where there are allegations covered by this policy.

8. Radicalisation and safeguarding

8.1 The University recognises the positive contribution it can make towards protecting its students from radicalisation to violent extremism. The University will continue to support and empower its students to create communities that are resilient to extremism and protect the wellbeing of particular students who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremism or crime. It will endeavour to promote the development of spaces for free debate where shared values can be reinforced.

8.2 Radicalisation is the process by which individuals come to support terrorism or violent extremism. There is no typical profile for a person likely to become involved in extremism, or for a person who moves to adopt violence in support of their particular ideology. Although a number of possible behavioural indicators are listed below, staff should use their professional judgement and discuss with other colleagues if they have any concerns regarding:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Possession of violent extremist literature
- Behavioural changes
- The expression of extremist views
- Advocating violent actions and means
- Association with known extremists
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology

8.3 If staff have any significant concerns about a student beginning to support terrorism and/or violent extremism, they should raise them with a Designated Safeguarding Officer, who can work together with external partners to address the issues.

9. Safeguarding procedure

9.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the below and in particular Middlesex University's Safeguarding Manual which provides best-practice guidance for all staff to recognise, respond and report safeguarding concerns.

- Safeguarding at Middlesex online training course (February 2020)
- Safeguarding Manual (February 2020)
- Care and Concern Framework and Procedure (May 2019)
- Code of Practice - Student Work placement
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure (May 2016)
- Staff Code of Conduct – Working Together
- Policy on Consensual/personal relationships between staff and students (November 2011)
- Computer Use Policy for Staff (February 2014)
- Data Protection Policy (June 2018)
- Equality and Diversity Policy (May 2013)
- Information Sharing Policy (May 2016)
- Information Sharing Code of Practice for Cause for Concern and Safeguarding (October 2016)

9.2 Care and Concern - the university's centralised reporting system - is the mechanism by which safeguarding concerns should be referred and managed. The Care and Concern procedure responds to concerns relating to the conduct (or potential misconduct), health, wellbeing, risk of harm, or safety of a student. It ensures an holistic response to four policies: [Safeguarding](#) (including Prevent); [Fitness to Study](#); [Fitness for Practice](#), and; [Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

9.3 The Care and Concern team is made up of members of university staff from professional services, such as Counsellors, Mental Health Practitioners, Progression and Support Advisors, Assessment Officers, Student Support and Student and Legal Affairs staff. They meet up twice a week and work together to help put actions in place to implement appropriate and proportionate action-interventions. Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) are the first port-of-call for the Care and Concern procedure. They volunteer to be available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, to respond by phone or in person to initiate an initial response and determine next steps.

10. Definitions

- 10.1 For the purposes of this policy, the term "university member" is used to describe all staff (regardless of station), all UK students, apprentices, volunteers, members of MdxSU, recognised visitors and contractors, and out-sourced service providers.
- 10.2 The definition of a "child" is anyone under the age of 18.
- 10.3 A young person is defined as anyone aged 16 or 17.

10.4 An “adult at risk” is defined as any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation. A person can have a disability but be perfectly able to look after themselves. If that disability, illness or condition were to mean that the individual were unable to look after themselves independently, and thus were more at risk of significant harm, abuse or exploitation, then they would be defined as an adult at risk.

Safeguarding Board February 2022

(This policy is due for review in February 2025)