

Safeguarding and Student Safety

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Middlesex University Higher Education Corporation

Safeguarding and Student Safety Policy

Introduction

1. Middlesex University Higher Education Corporation (“the University”) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of all members of its community, and to fostering a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which students can engage in safe and successful study and wider university life.
2. This policy sets out the University’s overarching approach to safeguarding and student safety and its commitment to responding to concerns in a proportionate, timely and supportive manner, prioritising safety and wellbeing while balancing the rights, safety and interests of the wider university community.
3. This policy is informed by relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:
 - a. Children Acts 1989 and 2004
 - b. Care Act 2014
 - c. Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent duty)
 - d. Equality Act 2010
 - e. Department for Education statutory guidance
 - f. Office for Students regulatory requirements, including E6 condition of registration
 - g. Where applicable, the University also meets Ofsted safeguarding expectations in relation to regulated provision of apprenticeships

Scope

4. This policy applies to all students, staff, governors, contractors, volunteers and visiting speakers at any of the locations in which the University delivers programmes which lead to an award of the University. All campuses and subsidiaries are expected to implement the principles of the policy, noting that local legislation and practice influence how they are implemented.
5. The principles of this policy also apply to academic partners of the University, noting that local populations, legislation and practice will influence how they are implemented.
6. It applies to activities, including learning, teaching and assessment, placements, accommodation, events and online environments.
7. The University recognises that statutory safeguarding concerns may arise in relation to children and young people under 18 and adults with safeguarding needs.

8. In addition, the University recognises that safety concerns may arise for any student during their study. These concerns may relate to wellbeing, health, behaviour, safety, exploitation, abuse, neglect or radicalisation.
9. The majority of concerns raised at Middlesex University relate to student safety and wellbeing rather than statutory safeguarding concerns. These concerns are also taken seriously and addressed through supportive, proportionate and preventative approaches.
10. Where a concern indicates that a child or adult with safeguarding needs may be experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, significant harm, the University will act in line with its statutory safeguarding duties.

Principles

11. The University has identified the following as the core principles through which it will meet its statutory and regulatory responsibilities:
 - a. The welfare of children and adults with safeguarding needs is paramount in all safe-guarding decision-making
 - b. Student safety and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
 - c. Any individual who has a safeguarding concern must report or refer that concern through the University's safeguarding procedures as soon as possible.
 - d. Staff are expected to identify, respond to and promptly report safeguarding concerns. Staff should not investigate concerns themselves but should refer them in accordance with University procedures.
 - e. The University will ensure there are appropriately trained and competent safeguarding teams with responsibility for assessing concerns, managing risk and making safeguarding referrals.
 - f. The University will work with statutory safeguarding agencies where appropriate.
 - g. Students will be informed, listened to, involved and supported wherever possible, however, where there is a risk of serious harm, and the University has a legal basis to do so, information may be shared with statutory services without consent in order to protect the student or others.
 - h. Prevent concerns will be managed through the University's safeguarding arrangements and referred to external Prevent partners where appropriate
 - i. Decisions regarding statutory safeguarding referrals will be informed by local authority thresholds and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and led by appropriately trained safeguarding professionals.
 - j. In situations where there is an immediate risk of serious harm, staff must contact emergency services and/or University Security without delay before making a referral.

12. Definitions

Term	Definition	Applicable to	Required action
Statutory safeguarding concern	A situation where the University has a legal obligation to act because a student is at risk of, or experiencing, significant harm as a result of abuse, neglect or exploitation.	a) Children and young people under the age of 18; b) Adults with safeguarding needs	Referral to, or engagement with, external statutory agencies for further assessment and response.
Adult with safeguarding needs	An adult who has care and support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect (Care Act 2014, Section 42)	c) A small number of adult students, who meet all 3 criteria	Referral to, or engagement with, external statutory agencies for further assessment and response.
Safety concern	A situation where a concern arise for the physical, mental or emotional safety of a student or students, but does not meet the threshold for statutory safeguarding because the student is an adult and does not meet the criteria for an adult with safeguarding needs. Examples include: • Mental health difficulties or emotional distress, thoughts of suicide, self-harming behaviours • Unusual or disruptive behaviours, including those impacting on others • Radicalisation or support for proscribed groups • Substance or alcohol misuse • Domestic abuse, stalking, sexual violence, bullying and harassment	d) Could apply to any student during their studies. Students' safety can be impacted by themselves, by others or could be impacting on the safety of others	May be supported and/or addressed exclusively within the University through support and University procedures, or may require liaison with external statutory or non-statutory agencies such as the NHS or third sector specialist services

	• Situations of vulnerability that could worsen without support • Housing insecurity, homelessness or significant financial stressors		
Prevent Duty	A legal obligation under Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.	e) Could apply to any student during their studies, if they demonstrate behaviour that suggests they are at risk of or have been radicalised	Internal referral routes and liaison with DfE, local Prevent coordinators, other statutory services, where there are concerns about individual(s) being radicalised or drawn into terrorism Assess and mitigate risks around external speakers and events Ongoing staff training.

Prevent

13. Prevent is delivered through the University's safeguarding and safety arrangements, with a focus on early identification, support and safeguarding
14. The University has processes in place to risk assess and mitigate risks around external speakers and events
15. The University is committed to ensuring that Prevent responsibilities are met in a way that protects freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law.
16. The University's Prevent Lead is a member of London Borough of Barnet's Prevent Delivery Group, which is responsible for the practical implementation and management of the government's Prevent strategy at a local or regional level.

Reporting and Assurance

17. People Committee will receive quarterly briefing reports on the volume and nature of safeguarding and safety concerns throughout the academic year. Academic Board and the Board of Governors will receive a detailed annual report on safeguarding and safety.
18. Safeguarding and safety themes and trends will be used to inform preventative work, staff and student training and policy development.

Responding to Concerns

19. The University will respond to safeguarding concerns, including both statutory safeguarding concerns and wider safety concerns, in a timely, proportionate and appropriate manner, taking account of the nature of the concern and the views of the individual where possible.
20. Responses may include providing advice, coordinating internal support, signposting or referring to external services and making referrals to statutory agencies where required.
21. Safeguarding matters will be handled sensitively and information will be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with data protection legislation and safeguarding requirements.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

22. Information will only be shared on a need to know basis.
23. Information related to safeguarding and safety concerns are stored on a secure database
24. Information will be managed lawfully, proportionately and in accordance with data protection legislation and safeguarding guidance.
25. The University recognises the importance of confidentiality; however, information may need to be shared to protect individuals from harm.

Staff Training and Awareness

26. The University ensures that:

- a) Staff have frequent opportunities to attend appropriate safeguarding and safety training relevant to their role, including that those who are responding directly to concerns receive enhanced training
- b) Safeguarding information is accessible to staff via the intranet, staff briefings and information cascade

Student Training and Awareness

27. The University ensures that:

- a) Students are aware of their responsibilities in terms of behaviour and
- b) Students understand what they can expect from the University in terms of response when concerns arise or they need support
- c) This is communicated through a coordinated induction programme, regular communications with students and strong presence on the student intranet and the [Student Safety, Protection and Support](#) page.

Criminal Convictions, Recruitment and Roles Requiring Enhanced DBS Checks

28. There are some roles within the University which are considered to involve positions of trust and may include activities that constitute, or are closely aligned with, regulated activity under safeguarding legislation, due to:

- a) Regular, direct engagement with students, including those who may be vulnerable or have safeguarding needs
- b) Responsibility for student wellbeing, safety, or pastoral support
- c) The potential for one-to-one unsupervised interactions

29. For the purposes of safeguarding, the University requires an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to be satisfactorily completed prior to the commencement of employment for some roles

30. Practitioner roles within Student Success and Support services that involve direct, regular, and/or unsupervised contact with students, particularly where the role includes the provision of welfare, safeguarding, pastoral, or advisory support. This includes (but is not limited to):

- a) Student Advisers
- b) Disability and Inclusion Advisers
- c) Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisers
- d) Any other roles delivering specialist student support, casework, or intervention services

31. All staff within the Sport and Active Campus function whose duties involve direct delivery, supervision, or facilitation of sport, physical activity, or wellbeing programmes involving students, particularly where contact may be regular, unsupervised, or includes responsibility for student safety and welfare.

32. The University is committed to fair and inclusive recruitment practices. The existence of a criminal conviction, whether spent or unspent, will not automatically preclude an individual

from employment within Student Success and Support or Sport and Active Campus services, however, in line with safeguarding obligations:

- a) All disclosed convictions will be subject to a risk-based assessment
- b) Consideration will be given to the nature, seriousness, relevance, and recency of the offence in relation to the responsibilities of the role
- c) Particular scrutiny will be applied where offences relate to safeguarding, abuse, violence, exploitation, or breach of trust

33. There may be other roles that require Enhanced DBS Checks, any need for DBS checking will be clearly communicated to applicants.

34. DBS checks will be undertaken in accordance with eligibility criteria and relevant safeguarding legislation.

35. Employment will only be confirmed where the University is satisfied that the individual is suitable to work with students and does not pose a risk to their safety or wellbeing.

Policy Review

36. This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as required to reflect legislative, regulatory or significant operational changes.

Appendix 1: Referral pathway, Hendon Campus

