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OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

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Safeguarding

Procedure

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Safeguarding Procedure

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Definitions.....	1
3. Criteria.....	1
4. Guide to the Procedure.....	1
4.1 Timescales.....	2
4.2 Support available	2
4.3 Seeking consent to make referrals	2
4.4 Outcomes of the procedure.....	2
5. Stages of the Procedure.....	3
5.1 Upon Receipt of Concerns.....	3
5.2 Allegations Against Staff	3
5.3 Handling of Concerns	4
5.4 Whistleblowing	4
5.5 Flowchart explaining Safeguarding referral procedure.....	5
6. Training	6
7. Guidelines for Members of Staff	6
7.1 Listening to Concerns.....	6
7.2 Expected Conduct.....	7
8. Monitoring and Review	7
9. Benchmarking/References	7
9.1 Students.....	7
9.2 Staff	8

Safeguarding Procedure

1. Introduction

The following process and procedures should be read alongside “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused” (DfE, 2015), “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (DfE, 2020) and [UCEM Code of Practice: Safeguarding and Prevent \(opens new window\)](#).

The purpose of the following process and procedures is to ensure that children and vulnerable adult’s rights are protected. All staff are obligated to be aware of the types of issues which may affect our learners, and the following organisational, local and statutory guidelines in the reporting of safeguarding concerns. **All staff at UCEM are responsible for the reporting and recording of safeguarding concerns (i.e. a concern where a staff member believes a learner is at risk of significant harm, abuse or neglect). This responsibility applies to all staff, not just those working with learners under the age of 18.**

A flowchart explaining this procedure in one page can be found in section 5 of this document. Alternatively, if you need any additional help understanding this document please contact safeguarding@ucem.ac.uk for support.

2. Definitions

- **Safeguarding-** The actions which we take and measures we put in place, guided by statutory obligations, to promote the welfare of learners and protect them from harm.
- **Child-** In accordance with the Children Act (1989), a child is defined as a young person under the age of 18.
- **Vulnerable adult-** For the purpose of this process document, a vulnerable adult is someone who requires community care due to reasons of mental or other disabilities, age or illness, and who may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Please see [Safeguarding example concerns and their definitions \(opens new window\)](#).

3. Criteria

This procedure is applicable to all UCEM staff (including temporary staff), volunteers, students, apprentices and trustees.

UCEM safeguards all its learners, regardless of their age or any other protected characteristic.

4. Guide to the Procedure

This procedure sets out how UCEM employees manage Safeguarding concerns about their learners and/or employees. Equally, UCEM seeks to ensure all students are able to engage effectively and safely with their learning. If a member of staff is concerned that the physical or mental health of a student is affecting the student’s learning, or that a student’s studies are having a significant negative impact upon their wellbeing, then a concern should also be raised according to the Fitness to Study Procedure.

Safeguarding Procedure

4.1 Timescales

Upon receipt/suspicion of a concern- Staff must report the concern immediately to the safeguarding team wherever possible, arranging cover where needed to facilitate this. Where not physically possible to report immediately, a phone call should be made to the safeguarding team by the end of the day on 01184672400. If the safeguarding team is not available by telephone, an email should be sent to safeguarding@ucem.ac.uk, followed by a telephone call as soon as possible the next morning.

Upon Safeguarding team receipt of concern- The Safeguarding team will respond to all concerns within 1 working day.

4.2 Support available

The Safeguarding team are available as a source of advice and guidance for staff, students and employers (of apprentices). If the Safeguarding team are unable to advise themselves, they will refer to external sources of support, which might include:

- Local authorities
- Charities
- Links to literature/resources (online or elsewhere)

Support and guidance for staff on listening to Safeguarding concerns can be found in [Section 7: Guidelines for Members of Staff](#).

4.3 Seeking consent to make referrals

Wherever possible, the DSL will seek consent from a student before making a referral to statutory services.

Where a student is aged 18 or over, a referral will not be made to statutory services without consent unless there is a statutory exemption which allows UCEM to do so (for instance, if there is a serious risk to life, if UCEM is aware that a child is at risk, or if a crime has been committed).

Where a student is aged under 18, consent will be sought from the student but a referral may be made without consent if this is in the best interest of the child. Consent will also be sought from a parent and/or guardian to make a referral, where doing so will not place the child at risk of further serious harm.

4.4 Outcomes of the procedure

Following a referral, the safeguarding team will conduct an investigation. All stages of the case, from referral to closure, will be logged and stored within the single central record. Staff will be kept informed on a need to know basis. Possible outcomes of a safeguarding case might include:

- No action taken
- Further monitoring required
- Referral for additional support (see [Section 4.2: Support Available](#) for possible sources of support), with the impact of the support tracked and monitored
- Referral to the [Fitness to Study Procedure \(opens new window\)](#)

Safeguarding Procedure

- Disciplinary action or termination from programme/employment (where it is found that a learner/staff member has been found to have caused a safeguarding issue, or breached other UCEM policies/procedures)

5. Stages of the Procedure

5.1 Upon Receipt of Concerns

Anyone who suspects or learns of abuse or risk of significant harm of a child or a vulnerable adult should report this to the safeguarding team immediately, either by telephone (01184672400) or in person, followed by an email to safeguarding@ucem.ac.uk. An email alone is not sufficient. This responsibility extends to when someone has heard rumours of abuse, or has suspicions with no firm evidence. This responsibility extends to all aspects of the learner's life, not just within the UCEM learning environment. Students can also contact the Safeguarding team for concerns about their own wellbeing.

For advice on recording concerns, please see section 6. The details for the Safeguarding team members can be found in [Staff Responsibilities \(opens new window\)](#).

Staff must contact the relevant DSL when they know or suspect that another staff member or student has a previous history of abuse of children and/or vulnerable adults, or has a concern of a current issue regarding a member of UCEM staff (including volunteers) or a student. The HR DSL should be contacted for concerns about members of staff, and the DSL should be contacted for concerns about students.

Staff should never try and investigate an issue on their own, as they are not equipped or qualified to do so. Contact details for the DSL can be found on the VLE, and on the UCEM website in the Safeguarding Code of Practice.

An appropriate member of the safeguarding team will investigate any safeguarding concerns, under the supervision and oversight of the DSL.

If staff have spoken to a member of the Safeguarding team and they have decided to take the matter further, staff will be asked to prepare a written report. This is essential in order to prevent misrepresentation of concerns. Staff should send their report (please see the [Safeguarding Referral Form \(opens new window\)](#) for a suggested report structure) to the DSL within 24 hours of the suspicion arising- email is acceptable. Reports should be factual, not including opinions or personal interpretations of facts. Include as much detail as possible, including physical signs or abuse or anything else which led to suspicious, or the account from the child or vulnerable adult, as accurately as possible. Staff must sign and date the report, and store a copy in a secure place.

If staff need help writing a report, please contact safeguarding@ucem.ac.uk.

5.2 Allegations Against Staff

UCEM's primary concern is to ensure the safety of its students. In each case of suspected abuse by a member of staff, action should be taken quickly and professionally. There may be cases where a student will accuse a member of staff of abusing them. On occasion these allegations may be unfounded, but they may also be true.

In the event that a UCEM employee suspects another member of staff of abusing a student, they must report these concerns to the HR DSL. The HR DSL will:

- Report the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and will seek and follow their advice

Safeguarding Procedure

- Take the necessary steps to ensure that the student is safe, as are any other students who may be at risk
- Ensure that a report is completed by the person who originally reported the concern
- Ensure that the necessary steps are in place in order to follow the advice of the LADO

If the allegation of abuse concerns the HR DSL, this matter should be discussed with the Vice Principal of Student Experience, in addition to following the normal safeguarding procedures outlined in this document.

5.3 Handling of Concerns

Upon receipt of a concern, a member of the safeguarding team (either the DSL or a Safeguarding Officer) will conduct an investigation. The team will decide on the next steps, with oversight of the DSL (which might include not taking action). The DSL may seek advice from the LADO and agree further actions. Further actions might include:

- Seeking more advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- Conducting further investigation under LADO direction, or supporting the investigation of the LSCB
- Referring to an appropriate agency
- Reporting the incident to a social worker
- Reporting the matter to the police, if a crime is suspected
- Providing ongoing internal support to the student

When a referral is made, this must be confirmed in writing to the appropriate agency within 24 hours.

The DSL may decide that it is appropriate for those involved to receive counselling. When necessary, the Safeguarding team can make arrangements.

5.4 Whistleblowing

Should a UCEM employee not be satisfied with the way that a Safeguarding case has been handled by the Safeguarding team, they are responsible for whistleblowing.

In the first instance, if an individual is concerned about the way that a Safeguarding case has been handled, they should discuss their concern with the SLT member with responsibility for safeguarding.

In the second instance, if an individual is still concerned there are two options:

- Employees- .. If they are not satisfied after discussion with the SLT DSL, employees can raise their concern initially to the Board of Trustees member with responsibility for Safeguarding. Details of the Board of Trustees member with responsibility for safeguarding can be found in the Staff Responsibilities appendix. If still not satisfied, concerns can be raised to the NSPCC whistleblowing service or directly to the Local Authority.
- Students- Students can raise whistleblowing concerns by contacting the Board of Trustees member with responsibility for safeguarding, details of whom can be found in the Staff Responsibilities appendix. Alternatively, concerns can be reported to the NSPCC whistleblowing service or directly to the Local Authority.

Safeguarding Procedure

5.5 Flowchart explaining Safeguarding referral procedure



(Image: Flowchart explaining the steps to the Safeguarding Procedure)

Safeguarding Procedure

6. Training

Staff with responsibilities in relation to safeguarding will receive appropriate training in relation to their role(s), and all staff will be made aware of UCEM's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Training will be updated at recommended intervals, with DSL's and Safeguarding Officers receiving training at least every two years and other relevant staff receiving training at least every three years as directed. All staff will be expected to engage with updates and bulletins at least annually, to keep their knowledge up to date. New staff should ensure that they have completed Safeguarding and Prevent training prior to completion of their probationary period.

Temporary staff and/or volunteers working for UCEM must participate in Safeguarding and Prevent training and/or awareness raising. Where a temporary staff member/volunteer is working for UCEM for a period of more than a month, the staff member should complete the full Safeguarding and Prevent training available on the VLE. Where a temporary staff member and/or volunteer is expected to work for UCEM for a period of less than a month, they should meet with the DSL to go through expectations relating to Safeguarding and Prevent, and should be supervised closely by their line manager.

7. Guidelines for Members of Staff

7.1 Listening to Concerns

Children or vulnerable adults may approach staff members to disclose apparent abuse or other safeguarding concerns. Staff must listen carefully and follow these guidelines:

- Do not promise confidentiality. If the learner does not wish to talk if you cannot promise confidentiality, reassure them that you are there if they wish to speak to you later.
- Allow the person to talk without interruption
- Do not trivialise or exaggerate the issue
- Do not make suggestions
- Reassure them, and let them know you are glad they have spoken to you, and that this is the right thing to do
- Ask enough questions to clarify understanding, but never interrogate, coach or probe. Do not ask leading questions
- Be honest, and let the person know that you cannot keep the information secret
- Remain calm- this is not easy for the student
- Do not show emotions, this may discourage a student from talking
- Let them know the matter will be taken seriously
- Make sure that the student feels as safe and secure as possible

The concern should be reported as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Team by calling 01184672400, and emailing safeguarding@ucem.ac.uk. Cover for staff should be found to facilitate this if required.

Upon receipt of an allegation, the DSL may liaise with external agencies, and will record information about cases, collecting reports and notes as appropriate. Detailed information about a case will be confined to the safeguarding team and any external agencies the DSL determines to engage. Staff will be kept informed on a 'need to know' basis of the progress of a case.

Safeguarding Procedure

7.2 Expected Conduct

UCEM sets out a standard of behaviour for all employees, which can be found in the Staff Code of Conduct. This includes a section on Safeguarding expectations, which can be found in [Staff Code of Conduct Part 1 \(opens new window\)](#) and [Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct Part 2 \(opens new window\)](#).

8. Monitoring and Review

This document will be fully reviewed every 4 years as is UCEM's procedure. The Safeguarding team will also review the document at least annually to ensure compliance with legislation and other requirements, and the document will be approved by QSEC in this period if required.

9. Benchmarking/References

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies, procedures and guidance documents, which set out details that relate to key aspects of UCEM's approach to safeguarding:

9.1 Students

- [UCEM Code of Practice: Safeguarding and Prevent \(opens new window\)](#)
- [Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct - Part 1 \(opens new window\)](#);
- [Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct - Part 2 \(opens new window\)](#);
- [Student Anti-Bullying and Harassment Procedure \(opens new window\)](#);
- [Online Safety Guidance \(opens new window\)](#);
- [Prevent Procedure \(opens new window\)](#);
- [Online Protocol – A Student's Guide for the VLE \(opens new window\)](#);
- [UCEM Fitness to Study Procedure \(opens new window\)](#);
- [UCEM Code of Practice Chapter: Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning \(relating to the recruitment of students with criminal convictions\) - Higher Education Programmes \(opens new window\)](#);
- [UCEM Code of Practice Chapter: Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning \(relating to the recruitment of students with criminal convictions\) - Further Education Programmes \(opens new window\)](#)
- [UCEM Code of Practice: Student Appeals and Complaints \(opens new window\)](#)
- [UCEM Code of Practice Chapter: Neurodiversity Disability and Wellbeing \(opens new window\)](#);
- [Privacy Policy \(opens new window\)](#)
- [Data Protection Policy \(opens new window\)](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Policy \(opens new window\)](#);
- [External Speakers Policy \(opens new window\)](#);

Safeguarding Procedure

9.2 Staff

- [IT Acceptable Use Policy - Staff \(opens new window\)](#);
- [Recruitment Policy - Part 1 \(opens new window\)](#)
- [Recruitment Policy – Part 2 \(opens new window\)](#)

Relevant for face-to-face sessions (on or off-site)

- [Health and Safety Policy and Procedures \(opens new window\)](#);

This policy has also been benchmarked against relevant statutory frameworks, which can be found in [Safeguarding and Prevent - Statutory Frameworks \(opens new window\)](#).