University safeguarding statement

The University is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all members of its community, students and staff. It is also mindful of the particular safeguarding duties owed to specific vulnerable groups. In all its activities the University aspires to promote the safety and wellbeing of all members of its community.

The purpose of this document

This document sets out:

- the University's approach to safeguarding;

- the responsibilities of its members, students and staff, in relation to safeguarding and the channels by which to report concerns;

- what members can expect from the University in response to raising concerns; and

- an Appendix of relevant University policies and procedures.

What is safeguarding?

The term 'safeguarding' has traditionally been used to describe the legal duty to protect from harm Children (any person under the age of 18) and Adults At Risk (an adult who is or who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against serious harm). However, over the last few years the term 'safeguarding' has increasingly been used to describe "*wider ethical or pastoral responsibilities where it may be possible to safeguard the welfare of children and adults…*"[1]. This wider meaning of the term 'safeguarding' is used within this document as it is consistent with the University's aim to promote the safety and wellbeing of all members of its community.

Within the University, 'safeguarding' applies in any situation where any member of our University community may be at risk of physical, mental or emotional harm, whether as a result of particular vulnerabilities, their circumstances or the behaviour of another person. The University's safeguarding duties, and the policies and procedures that cover these duties, can be grouped under the following categories:

- **legal safeguarding duties** (relating to Children and Adults At Risk);

- **specific safeguarding-related responsibilities** (for example: complying with the Prevent duty; operating whistleblowing policies for staff; taking immediate action where serious harm or risk of serious harm has been reported; and carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service checks as necessary); and

- a **general duty of care** (for example: work or study away policies for overseas work and study; Occupational Health assessments; the provision of counselling and wellbeing services; keeping personal data secure; and the requirement for staff to undertake health and safety training).

In order to ensure the community is appropriately protected, where applicable, the University and all its members are required to follow and comply with the relevant policies and procedures.

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[1] Advance HE, 'Getting to Grips with Safeguarding, Guide for Governors' 2018, https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/getting-grips-safeguarding

How and why does safeguarding take place?

Risk assessment, risk management and safeguarding processes are a critical part of the University's governance structure, managed through delegated responsibility to senior University officers including Heads of Institution (the Faculties, Departments and Divisions that make up the University). In this way, the University's decision-makers, Regent House, General Board and Council can assure themselves that the University is taking appropriate steps to minimise risk of harm and to safeguard all members of its community.

Almost all members of the University community are adults and, therefore, the University expects and enables them to act appropriately and take responsibility for their actions, within the confines of the University's policies and procedures. For example, staff in contact with Children or Adults at Risk are expected to have read the Safeguarding Policy.

Proportionality and the rights and freedoms of individuals

While complying with its legal responsibilities and acknowledging that the welfare of the members of its community is paramount, the University will endeavour to ensure that any action taken in connection with safeguarding is proportionate. Preventative and responsive action will be based on the University assessing the level of risk of harm, which may draw on internal and external information and advice, to members in a particular set of circumstances. In some instances, it may be necessary to take urgent action which involves curtailing the rights of members of its community in order to safeguard those members themselves or other individuals. It will usually only be appropriate to take such action if there is an immediate and significant risk of harm to one or more members of the community. This threshold is set purposefully high to protect the rights and freedoms of individuals within the community. Types of safeguarding actions which may restrict the rights and freedoms of individuals may involve temporarily restricting access to University facilities (physical or virtual), premises or services; not permitting student travel for the purpose of University study or work; or, where other action will not sufficiently mitigate the risk, temporarily suspending a student or member of staff.

Sources of safeguarding disclosures

The University may take action upon the receipt of information from a variety of sources, including:

- from a person who is themselves at risk of harm or neglect, for example, the person may report concerns to the University because they are worried about themselves, or their circumstances;

- from a member of the University community who is concerned about another member of the University community. This source may include the University's medical professionals, support professionals or counsellors, where there are concerns that an individual:
    a) has needs for care and support;
    b) is experiencing, or at risk of, neglect or physical, mental or emotional harm; and
    c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the neglect of harm or the risk of it by themselves or others.
  Support services will explain the limits of confidentiality to clients in this regard at the beginning of their engagement with the service;

- from someone who reports being harmed by a member of the University community;

- from someone who has made or is aware of allegations against a member of the University community, which may result in potential risk to other members of the University community;

- from specialist external agencies, such as the Home Office and safety travel advisers.

In every situation, although the individual decision-makers may vary, the University will use transparent, consistent and lawful principles in deciding on what action to take within appropriate timeframes.

Principles for making safeguarding decisions

There are sometimes competing risks and conflicting information when considering if the threshold for taking action has been met and, if so, what action is proportionate. These decisions may also need to be taken very quickly and therefore the information available to the University may change and lead to a decision being revised. However, in every case and within these limitations, these principles will apply:

- the University will promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of Children and Adults At Risk;
- the University will consider all reports or disclosures made in good faith;
- the University will use all information it is aware of that is relevant to the circumstances when making a decision, and will take into account the nature of that information, how it was collected and any legal restrictions on its use;
- the University will consider the appropriate weight of different types of evidence. For example medical evidence from a medically qualified professional or the account of a witness is likely to hold more weight than someone reporting something of which they do not have first-hand knowledge;
- the University will liaise with internal specialists or external partners where lawful, possible and beneficial;
- the University will appoint appropriate decision-makers and safeguarding leads who will be appropriately trained and supported, who are not conflicted as a result of personal knowledge of the student or staff involved;
- the University will consider the risk of harm to the person who is the subject of any concerns, and the person reporting any concerns, as well as to other members of the University community;
- the University will consider the likelihood and the impact of any risks;
- where the University considers that the threshold for taking action is met, the University will seek to ensure that any action taken is reasonable and proportionate;
- once a decision has been made that action is required, the action will be put in place as soon as possible;
- information about the decision-making process and the decision will be shared only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with relevant law and standards;
- any action taken will be reviewed as the circumstances or information change, in line with the relevant policy and/or procedure.

Communicating safeguarding decisions

The duties around safeguarding may often involve managing the potential ongoing and changing risk that a person may pose to themselves or others. Communication is part of this management process.

Actions that are taken in relation to safeguarding can be shared only on a need-to-know basis. It is important that the risk of harm to the person themselves or others is not increased by widely sharing information about the matter and that the University complies with data protection law and other laws governing information sharing. People who potentially pose a risk of harm to others may themselves be vulnerable or have poor mental health. There may also be other people involved and sharing further information may pose additional risks to these people. The University has a duty to minimise the risk of harm to all those involved.

The table below indicates different groups and the information that each group can usually expect to receive where a risk is identified:

Group	Involvement	Information provided – including relating to action being taken and outcome
1	The person potentially posing the risk	The decision and reasons for the decision. The sources of the information will be shared with the person if it will not affect an ongoing police or University investigation.
2	Those involved in making decisions about the person or environment potentially posing the risk	All information, so that the most appropriate decision can be made.
3	Those directly impacted by the person or environment posing the risk (they may have reported experiencing harm, or be supporting the person potentially posing the risk)	Any aspects of the decision that directly affect them – for example, if the person is prohibited from communicating with them or is not permitted in particular areas where they may regularly go, or if changes are made to the environment.
4	Those who are aware of or are concerned about the person or environment potentially posing the risk	Confirmation that appropriate action has been taken, but not the nature of the appropriate action.
5	The rest of the University community, who may be affected if no action is taken	No information.
6	Those outside the University community	No information unless as a result of necessary reporting to external organisations.

However, the University recognises that decisions as to what information is shared and with whom are context-specific, and that there may be circumstances when it is necessary to share or not to share information other than as set out above. For example, there are strict rules regarding sharing medical, counselling or disciplinary information.

Informing the University of concerns

Members of the University community should report serious concerns to the University either about themselves or about others, or regarding the University's physical environment. Although in an emergency, emergency services should be contacted in the first instance. Protective measures are in place to ensure that someone is not disadvantaged for raising a genuinely-held concern.

Students and staff are encouraged to report risks and concerns as they arise using appropriate channels, so that any risks can be effectively mitigated. However, there is no formal deadline for reporting, as the University understands that the impact of some incidents (for example, being subjected to sexual violence or racial discrimination) can result in delays to reporting. A significant delay in reporting may impact the level of investigation that can take place, or the range of possible outcomes that may result from the investigation (for example if the student or staff is no longer a member of the University). However, every case is different and therefore, it is better to report it through the appropriate channel so that the matter can be recorded and the person reporting can be advised on the possible next steps.

The appropriate channels for reporting concerns relating to University matters are as follows (references to 'Head of Institution' relate to the relevant Head of Faculty, Department or Division, where concerns relate to College matters then this may be appropriately reported to the Bursar, Senior Tutor or Head of House):

I am reporting:	I am a:	Reporting a:	Reports can be made to:
Any matter relating to Children or Adults at Risk	Student or staff	Any matter relating to Children or Adults at Risk	The Head of HR, as the designated safeguarding lead
Physical, sexual or abusive harm of another member of the community, including on the basis of protected characteristics (in person or online)	Student	Student	Report+Support (OSCCA)
	Staff	Student	OSCCA (or Senior Tutor if in same College)
	Student	Staff	Report+Support (OSCCA or Head of Institution)
	Staff	Staff	Departmental/institutional HR or School HR team or Head of Institution, or where relevant using the whistleblowing procedure
Concerns relating to Prevent	Student or staff	Student or staff	Secretary to the Referral Group of the Committee on Prevent and Freedom of Speech via referralconfidential@admin.cam.ac.uk
I am currently not fit to work or study	Student	Myself	College Tutor or Graduate Tutor or course leader
	Staff	Myself	Line manager, Head of Institution or HR
Someone else who may not be fit to work or study	Student or staff	Student	OSCCA (or Senior Tutor if in same College)
	Student	Staff	Head of Institution
	Staff	Staff	Head of Institution or HR

A criminal investigation or conviction or another serious matter	Student	Student (including myself)	[Report+Support](...) (OSCCA)
	Staff	Student	The Head of OSCCA at OSCCA@admin.cam.ac.uk
	Student	Staff	[Report+Support](...) (OSCCA)
	Staff	Staff (including myself)	HR or Head of Institution or where relevant using whistleblowing to preserve anonymity
A serious incident that has happened to me whilst I am away from the University, where the University may need to intervene	Student (or someone on the student's behalf)	Myself	Head of Institution, Senior Tutor, PhD supervisor or [Report+Support](...) (OSCCA)
	Staff (or someone on the staff's behalf)	Myself	Head of Institution or HR
A student (or group of students) whose risk assessment to study overseas is rated 'high risk'	Staff	Student	Study Abroad Risk Assessment Committee

Reporting concerns outside the University

Criminal proceedings

There may be some circumstances where those involved choose to report a matter to the police instead of, or as well as, the University. All students, staff and visitors are free to report matters to the police where they believe a crime has been or may have been committed.

If something is being investigated by the police, then the University will not interfere with that investigation (and may be obliged to cooperate with it) and will usually wait until the investigation and any resulting proceedings are complete before taking its own action. However, where the allegation is serious, the University may take interim action to protect the University community, for example by removing or limiting the person's access to University premises, services (including online services) or other members. Nevertheless, an integral part of the criminal justice process is that a person is 'innocent until proven guilty'. Calculating potential risk to the community is different to making a judgment on whether the person has broken the law; the former is concerned only with whether it is necessary to mitigate any risks arising from the fact that the person may have broken the law.

If a student or staff has been charged with a relevant criminal offence (including any sexual offence or any offence which may prevent them lawfully from having certain types of contact with Children or Vulnerable Adults), then there is a requirement that this is disclosed to the University by the student or staff themselves using the framework outlined above, so that a risk assessment can be undertaken.

Any criminal investigations or proceedings are made using a 'beyond reasonable doubt' standard of proof. The University usually applies a different standard of proof 'balance of probabilities' in its procedures – that is, based on the evidence, what is more likely than not

to have happened. The University's rules are also different to the criminal law. These different rules and standards of proof mean that even if the police decide not to investigate or charge, or if a court finds someone 'not guilty' of an offence, it may still be appropriate for the University to take action using its own regulations and procedures.

Other external investigations

Sometimes, other agencies or organisations have an interest in investigating a matter. This can include following a University investigation. The person who has been the subject of an investigation will normally (and as required by law and University procedure) be informed about any other organisation with whom the University will share details of the investigation or outcome. Others involved in the matter, who are not the person who has been the subject of the investigation, will not necessarily be informed of which external organisations will receive any details of the matter. However, the University will always follow its duties to report.

External organisations who may receive information during or following University investigations may include: funding bodies, professional bodies (e.g. the General Medical Council), the Disclosure and Barring Service, employers of the person, and other organisations who may need to know.

Appendix A

Safeguarding-related policies and procedures

The following table sets out a list of the most relevant policies and procedures, references to 'Institution' refer to the relevant Department, Faculty or Division:

Policy/ Procedure	Purpose	Aimed at	Team/person responsible for receiving reports/concerns	Contact for Reporting for serious risk, (where it differs from the preceding column
1. Policy/procedure to assess and limit future risks prior to concern arising				
Children and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy	To enable reasonable care of adults and children at risk that engage with University activities	All	HR	Director of HR
University Counselling Service Policy 'Reporting abuse'	To enable counselling service practitioners to report abuse of Children and Adults at Risk	University Counselling Service practitioners	Head of Counselling	
Staff Counselling Centre Policy and Procedure in relation to the safeguarding of Children	To enable reasonable care of adults and children at risk that engage with Staff Counselling	Clients of Staff Counselling	Head of Staff Counselling	
Health and Safety Policy	Ensuring those who create risks, manage and control them	All	Safety Office, Head of Institution, Departmental Safety Officer	Consultative Committee for Safety and sub-committees, Health & Safety Executive Committee, Council/ General Board
Screening Policy	To ensure proportionate checks are carried out on prospective and current staff to safeguard individuals,	Prospective and current staff	HR	

	buildings, property and assets			
Screening checks for prospective students: Graduates DBS checks for professional students/ Research Passports	To ensure that prospective students can engage safely with their studies and research, with appropriate consideration of any previous criminal convictions	Prospective Students	Head of Graduate Admissions	Standing Committee
Code of Practice: reasonable adjustments for disabled students	To ensure that any risks or inequalities that disabled students may experience are mitigated	Students	Disability Resource Centre	
Policy to Safeguard Students Studying and Working Away	To ensure risks are proportionately considered in relation to student study or work away	Students	Head of Institution referral to SARAC (Study Away Risk Assessment Committee) where risk is high	Safety Office, University Silver Team
Guidance on managing risks from Travel, Fieldwork and Work Away	Guidance only, relates to appropriately risk assessing staff and student activities inc. travel, fieldwork and work away	Staff and students	Safety Office, Head of Institution	University Sub-Committee for Physical Safety
Lone working, working out of hours	Risk assessing students and staff engaging in lone working or working out of hours	Students and Staff	Institution	
Personal relationships between staff	To discourage and require reporting of any relationship between staff with a professional connection	Staff	HRBM/ Head of Institution	
Personal relationships between staff and students	To discourage and require reporting of any relationship between a student and staff with a professional connection	Staff and students	HRBM/ Head of Institution	
Ethical considerations relating to research	To ensure that any research relating to those that may be vulnerable is	Anyone conducting or participating	The relevant research student's supervisor, or the relevant research	The relevant School-level Research

	appropriately conducted and sufficient support is offered to participants	in a research project	staff's local ethics Committee of Head of Institution	Ethics Committee
2. Policy/procedure to assess risk in response to concern arising				
Staff				
Fitness for work assessments	To ensure staff are fit to perform work tasks effectively and without risk to their own or others' health and safety	Staff	Occupational Health	
Stress at Work Policy	Managing staff stress at work, including risk assessment of role	Staff	HR/ Safety Office	
Whistleblowing	Enables staff to report malpractice, where this is in the public interest	Staff	Academic Secretary/ Registrary	Council/ General Board
Dignity@Work Policy	To ensure staff can work without bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation, or sexual misconduct	Staff	Line Managers, Departmental/ institutional HR or School HR teams,	Departmental/ institutional HR or School HR teams
Staff disciplinary action	To impose limitations or remove staff from employment where misconduct has occurred	Staff	Departmental/ institutional HR or School HR teams	
Computer Security Incident Response	To enable the University to respond to security incidents	IT staff only	CSIRT	Information Services Committee
Students				
Precautionary action	Risk assessing whether interim action is required to protect the collegiate University community whilst an investigation is ongoing	Students	OSCCA & Academic Secretary	Council/ General Board
Support and Capability to Study	To ensure students can engage appropriately with their studies	Students	OSCCA	

Fitness to Practise	To ensure students with professional requirements can engage appropriately with the course requirements	Students	Fitness to Practise Committee	
Student Disciplinary Procedure	To impose limitations or remove students from student where misconduct has occurred	Students	Report+Support (OSCCA)	
Year Abroad	What to do when problems arise on a student's year abroad	Students	MML Year Abroad Office, AMES	Chair of MML Faculty and AMES Faculty, staff contacts from 2017-18
Students and staff				
Prevent	Policy in response to 'Prevent duty'	Students and staff	University Prevent Lead, Prevent coordinator	Committee on Prevent and Freedom of Speech
Informal welfare 'check' during the access of a service	Staff providing a service that encourages people to discuss potential trauma may risk assess with a client if there are wellbeing concerns	Students and staff	Student counselling, DRC, Staff counselling, OSCCA investigator, HR, Occupational Health	

In addition to these key policies, some wider health and safety and HR policies include elements of safeguarding:
- Safety Office – Health and Safety Policy and Guidance Publications
- Human Resources – Policies and Procedures Overview

There are also a number of anonymous reporting mechanisms, which are available to the University community, which due to their limited nature are not linked to safeguarding but are options for those reporting matters:
- A University anonymous reporting mechanism for the purpose of capturing statistics and prevalence of behaviour: Anonymous reporting for students, staff and visitors.
- 'End everyday racism' reporting – a mechanism created by the Whistle, a group of sociologists within Cambridge, to record incidents of racism: https://racismatcambridge.org/.

This appendix does not include reference to College-only safeguarding policies and procedures. However, Colleges may be involved in the policies outlined in the table and there are some specific policies relating to Colleges, including:
- Serious incident case review for College reviews of serious student incidents, which may involve the University silver team
- Safeguarding Policy template for Colleges