



## Safeguarding Policy

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## Policy Statement

UKRI has a duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who are either employees or take part in events or activities either hosted by UKRI, in which UKRI participates, or in any other interactions. It will also protect employees who have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the event of allegations being made, subject to them following this policy. This policy applies at work and outside of work.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the protection from harm and promotion of welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults in these circumstances, and to provide guidance on how UKRI will achieve that purpose. All children, young people and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse, and UKRI will not tolerate abuse of any kind.

This policy applies to:

- All UKRI employees in the UK and in all International offices and those working overseas temporarily.

This policy provides employees with the overarching principles that guide UKRI's approach to safeguarding.

This policy covers children, young people and vulnerable adults. For the purposes of this policy:

- a child is defined as someone aged under 18 as per the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child.
- "Young Person/People" or "Youth" in line with United Nations definitions, include individuals – young women, young men, and young persons of other gender identities - aged 15 years to 24 years old. This group spans the categories of 'children', 'adolescents' and 'adults' but regards young people as having particular safeguarding needs and requiring distinct consideration aside from younger children and older adults.
- University students, work experience students and apprentices under the age of 18 are covered by these safeguarding guidelines.
- A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care or other recognised services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. Within vulnerable adults UKRI recognises those that may fall outside this defined group but due to gender are more likely to be a victim i.e. Adult women without intrinsic vulnerabilities.
- A responsible person is the teacher, parent or carer of the above.

Personal Conduct outside Work or Engagement with UKRI:

UKRI does not dictate the belief and value systems by which employees, students, associates, and visitors conduct their personal lives. However, actions taken by them out of working hours that are seen to contradict this policy will be considered a violation of the policy.



### Management Statement

The policy has been agreed with the Trade Union Side and complies with statutory legislation.

### References

- UKRI Code of Conduct
- UKRI Managing Performance and Conduct Policy
- UKRI Acceptable Use of Systems and Services Policy
- UKRI Personal Use of Social Media Policy
- UKRI Whistleblowing policy

Version Number	Status	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
Version 1.0	Complete	January 2020	New policy created



## 1. Principles

- 1.1 UKRI has particular responsibilities to children, young people and vulnerable adults who are either employees or take part in events or activities either hosted by UKRI, in which UKRI participates, or in any other interactions. No child, young person or vulnerable adult must suffer harm, intentionally or unintentionally, as a result of their engagement, association or contact with UKRI.
- 1.2 All children and young people aged under 18 years have equal rights to protection from all forms of violence as declared in Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises fundamental human rights, the dignity, worth and equal rights of people at any age.
- 1.3 The human rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults will be respected and applied to all irrespective of age, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, race, language, religious or political beliefs, marital status, disability, physical or mental health, family, socio-economic or cultural background, class, any history of conflict with the law or any other aspect of their background or identity. Inequality, exclusion, and discrimination will be challenged and will not be tolerated.
- 1.4 All children, young people and vulnerable adults should be empowered and encouraged to fulfil their potential. Decisions made about children, young people and vulnerable adults will be made as far as possible with their participation and in their best interest giving full consideration to how such decisions will affect them. All children, young people and vulnerable adults should be encouraged to express their views and this will be given 'due weight' in accordance with their age and level of maturity.
- 1.5 UKRI has a responsibility to inform and empower children, young people and vulnerable adults so that they learn about and are better able to exercise their rights to protection. UKRI will work with children, young people and vulnerable adults ensuring they understand the essence of this policy, the UKRI safeguarding commitment and the means by which they can report policy breaches.
- 1.6 UKRI is open and transparent and will hold itself to account for its commitment to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding concerns can be raised and discussed, poor practice and inappropriate behaviour challenged and addressed, and the safeguarding measures continuously reviewed and strengthened to ensure accountability to children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families.
- 1.7 UKRI will act on safeguarding concerns, ensuring that its actions are timely, appropriate and victim-centred around the child, young person or vulnerable adult, taking into account their gender and other specific safeguarding needs and vulnerabilities.
- 1.8 UKRI will work together in partnership with other agencies to promote the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults within organisations engaged with us and in the wider community.



## Safeguarding

- 1.9 UKRI's safeguarding approach recognises and responds to the specific safeguarding risks and needs of the differing gender and other identities. It takes appropriate measures to address gender bias and other forms of discrimination and violence which may arise as a result of these. It supports the empowerment and fosters the inclusion of girls and women in the safeguarding process, in a manner that promotes equality, equity and ultimately their increased safety and protection.
- 1.10 UKRI will ensure its employees are supported to meet their safeguarding responsibilities and requirements, understand the specific risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults of differing gender and other identities and how they can work and engage in ways that increase the safety and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom the organisation is in contact.

## 2. Working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

- 2.1 In order to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults, UKRI will:
  - 2.1.1 Make this policy accessible to all parties.
  - 2.1.2 Ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities and that they should adhere to the practices within this policy and receive training appropriate to their role in UKRI.
  - 2.1.3 Work with children, young people and vulnerable adults ensuring they understand this policy, UKRI safeguarding commitments and the means by which they can report policy breaches.
  - 2.1.4 Risk assess all activities involving children, young people or vulnerable adults (including young workers), taking account of their ages.
  - 2.1.5 Provide effective management for employees and volunteers through guidance, supervision and support.
  - 2.1.6 Recruit, manage and deploy employees and volunteers with appropriate safeguarding checks.
  - 2.1.7 Share concerns with the appropriate agencies that need to know and involve other appropriate people when necessary.
- 2.2 UKRI will take appropriate action in response to breaches of this policy in line with the Code of Conduct and the Disciplinary procedure in the Managing Performance and Conduct Policy, or a referral may be made to statutory authorities in the relevant jurisdiction whilst ensuring that to do so will not cause further harm to the victim. Any disciplinary action may lead to dismissal.
- 2.3 Breaches of this policy will be investigated in accordance with employer disciplinary procedures and/or any contractual agreements. A referral may be made to statutory authorities for criminal investigation in the relevant jurisdiction whilst ensuring that to do so will not cause further harm to the victim. The action may lead to possible termination of all relations including contractual and partnerships agreements, and where relevant, appropriate legal or other actions such as reporting to governing bodies.

## Safeguarding

- 2.4 If a legitimate concern about the suspected abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult is raised but proves to be unfounded on investigation, no action will be taken against the reporter. However, appropriate sanctions will be applied in cases of false and malicious accusations.
- 2.5 UKRI will monitor, review and evaluate compliance with this Policy through the mandatory tracking and auditing of the Safeguarding Implementation Standards and UKRI Code of Conduct. In addition, this will include working with and ensuring the participation of children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff, students, associates and visitors to review, monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy.

## 3. DBS checks

- 3.1 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme checks will be required for staff working directly with children, young people (including work experience students) and vulnerable adults. However, Checks will not normally be required for employees involved in interactions with children, young people (including work experience students) and vulnerable adults. Contact HR for guidance.
- 3.2 Employees must inform UKRI if they are disqualified from working with children under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act.

## 4. Children on site

- 4.1 Children should only be brought on to sites in specific circumstances, such as:
  - 4.1.1 When attending UKRI organised events.
  - 4.1.2 When attending an on-site nursery.
  - 4.1.3 When children are being taken to or collected from a nursery.
  - 4.1.4 When accompanied by an adult to collect or deliver another adult or item of work. Site security registration procedures must be adhered to at all times.
  - 4.1.5 In the case of those under 18, when on work experience placements.
- 4.2 In other circumstances, additional local controls may be in place and further permission may be required.

## 5. Use of facilities

- 5.1 Children, young people and vulnerable adults will be able to use facilities, including toilets, prayer rooms, restaurants, provided that appropriate site-specific safeguarding procedures are in place.
- 5.2 Children, young people and vulnerable adults will be informed in advance of the facilities that are in shared use. Employees will be encouraged to find alternative facilities for their own use where possible.
- 5.3 It will not always be possible to reserve facilities for the sole use of children and young people and children must always be accompanied.

## Safeguarding

### 6. Work experience

- 6.1 A health and safety risk assessment must be undertaken for all kinds of work placement, including those of an unpaid nature. A copy of this health and safety risk assessment will be provided to the appropriate parent, guardian or carer on request, as well as to the student's school.
- 6.2 Consent for the work experience placement (including emergency medical permission) must be obtained from their parent, guardian or carer.
- 6.3 Work experience students will receive a health and safety induction (either in person or online) at the start of their placement.
- 6.4 See [Appendix B](#) for further guidance on work experience requirements prior to placement in the place of employment.

### 7. Apprenticeships

- 7.1 Apprentices under the age of 18 are covered by this policy.

### 8. Public and school events on site

- 8.1 Children, young people and vulnerable adults remain the responsibility of their accompanying adult throughout the event.
- 8.2 Visitors will be informed of specific health and safety issues prior to their visit – for example vehicle movement on site, noise or radiation.
- 8.3 A health and safety briefing will be given at the start of every event with a set start time. For drop-in events, Health and Safety information will be made available at the entrance and in advance.
- 8.4 UKRI will ask the school, parent or carer of any children, young people or vulnerable adults attending an event if there are specific health, special or additional needs, (including allergies) of which it needs to be aware. Alternative or additional provision whilst the children, young people or vulnerable adults are on site must be communicated to the appropriate UKRI employees.
- 8.5 Specific individual risk assessments for the child, young person or vulnerable adult will be produced as necessary.

### 9. External off-site events

- 9.1 If the safeguarding policy of an off-site event arranged by a third party is not compatible with UKRI's Safeguarding Policy, UKRI should not take part in the event. If a UKRI employee wishes to take part in the event in a private capacity it should be made clear to the event organiser, and the employee, that this does not constitute official involvement by UKRI.



## Safeguarding

### 10. Unaccompanied children on site

- 10.1 In general, with the exception of employees, children are not allowed on site unaccompanied by a responsible adult. To allow an unaccompanied child on site (UKRI employees being formally responsible for the child, "in loco parentis") there must be significant educational benefit in the child attending independently, and additional safeguarding measures must be in line with those recommended by government / local authority / NSPCC as appropriate (these should be specified in a risk assessment with specific reference to acting in loco parentis).
- 10.2 UKRI must obtain written permission from the child's parent / guardian / carer to act in loco parentis and maintain up to date records of at least two emergency contact details for the child, as well as any medical or other relevant details. When there is sustained contact with a child in loco parentis, wider issues of the child's welfare may come into play. The incident procedure and training covers in loco parentis interactions as well.
- 10.3 Visitors are informed of site-specific health and safety issues prior to the visit – for example vehicle movement on site, noise or radiation.
- 10.4 A health and safety briefing will be given at the start of every event with a set start time. For drop-in events, Health and Safety information will be made available at the entrance and in advance.
- 10.5 Prior to an event, activity or placement involving a child or vulnerable adult using UKRI ICT systems parents, guardians or carers are required to sign an e-safety internet acceptable use policy agreement.

### 11. Overnight events

- 11.1 Overnight events are not normally run by UKRI and must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the educational/engagement benefits are sufficient.
- 11.2 Unless specially trained, UKRI employees should not accept responsibility for children, young people or vulnerable adults at overnight events when representing UKRI.
- 11.3 If the safeguarding policy of the overnight event arranged by a third party is not compatible with UKRI's safeguarding policy then UKRI should not participate.

### 12. Stalking Protection Act 2019

- 12.1 The Act created the provision of civil Stalking Protection Orders (SPO) which impose prohibitions and requirements on the perpetrator of alleged stalking.
- 12.2 For employees under the protection of an SPO, where advised, by the employee, UKRI will:
  - 12.2.1 Assess the risk to the employee and determine who needs to be notified and what details disclosed. For example, for an employee who has disclosed the need for protection from an individual who is subject to an SPO, UKRI may inform the relevant manager responsible for the security of the site that an individual should be prevented from entering the site, and may circulate a picture and name, but not disclose the reason being the existence of an SPO.



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- 12.3 There is no requirement under the Act for an employee to disclose to their employer that they are subject to a SPO.
- 12.4 As far as practicable, the conditions imposed on an employee by an SPO should not interfere with the place or times of that employee's work. However, where both the victim and the employee who is subject of an SPO work within UKRI, it may be necessary to take steps to ensure that the respective employee does not breach the terms of the SPO.
  - 12.4.1 This may include amending hours of work to ensure that both parties do not work at the same time or changing working areas so that contact between the parties is avoided. UKRI may have to instigate random checks to ensure this is adhered to.
  - 12.4.2 The employee subject to an SPO may be fairly dismissed for 'some other substantial reason' where working arrangements cannot be put in place to separate the victim and the employee. However, UKRI has a duty to satisfy itself that there is evidence and grounds for any dismissal.
- 12.5 In cases where an employee has targeted a co-worker, it may be necessary for UKRI to investigate following the UKRI Grievance, Bullying and Harassment policy.

## Safeguarding

### **Appendix A – Guidance on how to raise or respond to concerns or allegations and disclosures**

- A1.** If an employee sees or hears anything relating to a young person that worries them, this should be reported to HR. It may not be an obvious safeguarding issue, but combined with other concerns or left without action, it could develop into a serious issue.
- A2.** If an employee or third-party representative becomes aware of problems or has any concerns about safeguarding, then they should follow the procedure below.
- A3.** Don't think "What if I am wrong?" - think "What if I am right?".
- A4.** If an employee is concerned about a safeguarding issue, they should:
  - A4.1 document the concern in a timely manner (as soon as the concern is raised),
  - A4.2 speak to either their own line manager or HR.
- A5.** Safeguarding incidents must be reported to HR.
- A6.** If a child, young person or vulnerable adult confides in an employee and tells them that they think they are being abused, the employee should contact HR or a designated person within UKR.
- A7.** If, in their interactions with a child, young person or vulnerable adult, an employee suspects that the child, young person or vulnerable adult is being abused, neglected or is otherwise in distress they should raise their concerns with HR.
- A8.** In the event of an incident or allegation under this policy UKRI will keep a dedicated log of all written and oral statements, along with a record of relevant telephone conversations. In the case of a child or young person on work experience or training this information will be immediately passed on to the learner's educational institution (through the safeguarding lead) or primary carer as appropriate.



Safeguarding

**Appendix B – Guidance on how to ensure safeguarding during work experience**

- B1.** Whilst on work experience the student should not be left unsupervised for long periods (30 minutes for under 16s, 60 minutes for 16-18-year olds). Lone working in laboratories or workshops is not permitted for work experience students.
- B2.** Work experience is on a voluntary basis only and the child or young person will not be requested or expected to carry out the tasks of a worker or employee, unless the task is required to maintain the safe working environment for themselves, UKRI employees or other visitors.
- B3.** The Work Experience team will obtain two emergency contact numbers for the work experience student's parents (or carer / guardian). These details will be kept confidential by the Work Experience team and they will not be disclosed to the placement supervisor.
- B4.** If the Work Experience team is unavoidably out of office they will designate a suitable alternative employee (with an enhanced DBS/PVG check) and grant them access to emergency contact and medical details of the students, to act on their behalf in case of emergency. All supervisors will be notified of the arrangement.
- B5.** In the case of work experience students who are of school age it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the Acceptable Use of ICT Systems and Services Policy has been signed by each student undertaking a placement and then to provide UKRI with confirmation that this action has been undertaken.
- B6.** This agreement will ask for consent to be given for their child, young person or vulnerable adult to be contacted by various means such letter, phone, or email by appropriate UKRI employees. Any copies of correspondence and emails will be sent to the participants and their parents, carers or guardians.

Safeguarding

**Appendix C – Safeguarding legislation**

**C1.** This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults, namely:

- C1.1 Children Act 1989
- C1.2 United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- C1.3 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679
- C1.4 Sexual Offences Act 2003
- C1.5 Children Act 2004
- C1.6 Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- C1.7 Human Rights Act 1998
- C1.8 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- C1.9 Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- C1.10 Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- C1.11 Stalking Protection Act 2019



Safeguarding

**Appendix D – UKRI International Offices**

- D1.** UKRI recognises the importance of its work where it affects those within the overseas environments within which it operates, and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to its employment and involved with its research operations.
- D2.** The Directors of the UKRI International offices shall ensure that:
- D2.1 The International Office has in place local procedures that are consistent with this Policy including the reporting requirements and the manner in which they are escalated within UKRI. These local procedures should be developed with the assistance of local advisers and updated regularly. The policy and applicable procedures must be made available in other appropriate formats including local languages.
- D2.2 The relevant UKRI associated entity implements our Safeguarding Implementation Standards as outlined in point 1. These apply to employees as well as students, associates, visitors, children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom they engage, as well as the processes, programmes, projects, events and activities they undertake.