



Safeguarding Policy

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Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out AUB's policy for the safeguarding of children and adults who may be at risk of harm or abuse. AUB aims to adopt the highest possible standards and to take all reasonable steps to secure the safety and welfare of all people in the course of its work. This policy aims to ensure that all children, young people, adult(s) at risk of harm and those who work with them are safe and supported at AUB.
- 1.2 This policy is based on and incorporates elements of the following legislation, national and local guidance documents (including but not limited to):
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
 - Care Act 2014
 - Children Act 2004
 - Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2024
 - Disclosure and Barring Service Guidance documents
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2004
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined¹ as:
- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
 - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
 - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

A child is defined as any person under 18 years of age.

- 2.2 Adult safeguarding is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect². Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:
- Has care and support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs) and
 - Is experiencing, or is 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.

¹ Department for Education *Keeping Children Safe in Education* September 2024

² Care Act 2014

2.3 AUB will endeavour to identify vulnerable students deemed to be at risk and put appropriate measures into place to fully support them. In a university setting, factors which may indicate vulnerability include:

- Physical or mental disabilities
- Language or communication difficulties
- Social isolation
- International or refugee status
- Health conditions, particularly those long term
- Drug or alcohol dependence
- Care leavers or estrangement
- Homelessness
- Caring responsibilities
- Permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity, brought on by significant life events.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all members of AUB staff, AUB board members, third party employees, associates, students and volunteers who in the course of their duties, may have contact with children (i.e. individuals under 18 years old) or adults at risk of harm.

3.2 University work that may require contact with children, young persons and / or adults at risk of harm includes (but is not limited to):

- teaching, supervision and support of students
- bookings for halls of residence, teaching facilities, etc
- outreach and Access & Participation initiatives, taking place on or off campus, as well as summer schools or other events such as work experience
- provision of counselling or other welfare services for students or staff
- placements or work experience
- research subjects; and
- trips, volunteering and other social activities or student societies.

3.3 AUB has a duty of care to ensure risks to vulnerable groups are managed. Course teams or professional services should conduct risk assessments of activities and put in place appropriate mitigating actions to minimise risk.

3.4 AUB staff may become aware of safeguarding concerns relating to children or adults at risk external to the university. Staff have the same obligation to report these concerns to a member of the AUB Safeguarding Team.

3.5 A general duty of care for visitors on University premises is referenced in the AUB Health & Safety Policy and subsidiary documents.

3.6 Online activities may present additional safeguarding risks such as image-based abuse, identity fraud and exploitation; safeguarding duties apply equally to online and virtual activities.

4. Principles

4.1 This policy is based upon the following principles:

- The welfare of young and vulnerable people is paramount.

- All young and vulnerable people, regardless of gender, gender reassignment, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs, should be treated with respect and dignity, and protected from harm or abuse.
 - All staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm.
 - Any suspected or alleged safeguarding issue should be reported promptly to an AUB Safeguarding Officer. Members of the AUB community should never leave a safeguarding concern unreported. AUB will take all safeguarding concerns (including suspicions and allegations of harm, abuse, or exploitation, including radicalisation) seriously and will report concerns promptly.
 - AUB will share information with relevant external agencies as appropriate, to safeguard children and adults at risk.
- 4.2 Any information relating to safeguarding concerns will be handled in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). All information relating to any safeguarding issue should be managed confidentially. Information should only be disseminated on a “need to know” basis, and should be stored securely, in accordance with GDPR.
- 4.3 The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) supports the sharing of relevant information for the purposes of keeping children or adults at risk safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children or protecting adults at risk.
- 4.4 It is not necessary to seek consent to share information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child or adult at risk, provided that there is a lawful basis to process any personal information required. It is good practice to be transparent and inform parents/carers or adults at risk that information is being shared for these purposes and seek to work cooperatively with them, where it is safe to do so

5. Safeguarding responsibilities

- 5.1 Safeguarding is the responsibility of ALL AUB staff, including casual staff and those undertaking voluntary work at AUB. All staff must maintain an awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures and undertake relevant training where required. It is the responsibility of all staff to help foster a safe and inclusive community for all adults and children.
- 5.2 Members of the AUB community who have regular contact, as part of their work or studies, with children or adults at risk of harm, should:
- ensure they understand the implications of this policy before commencing any event or activity and ensure appropriate risk assessments have been completed;
 - incorporate safeguarding training into relevant programmes of study and / or briefings for students undertaking activities or research which may involve children or adults at risk;
 - be responsible for their own actions and behaviour and avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

- 5.3 Staff are responsible for the behaviour of their students undertaking projects. If a project or learning agreement suggests engagement with children or adults at risk of harm, this should be discussed in detail and appropriate risk assessments undertaken. If a student fails to comply, the staff member will need to demonstrate that appropriate advice was given.
- 5.4 Course teams are informed of any student who is under the age of 18 on the date of enrolment. Although parental consent to study at AUB is gained as part of admissions processes, it is for the Course team to determine and assess any additional risks to students under the age of 18.

6. AUB Safeguarding team

- 6.1 Whilst safeguarding is the responsibility of all members of University staff, AUB has a specific team in place for managing the safeguarding of the young and vulnerable:
- 6.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is accountable for all safeguarding and Prevent concerns at AUB, and responsible for overseeing the management of safeguarding issues within AUB.
Named Person: Heidi Cooper-Hind, Director of Student Experience and Employability.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for supporting operational safeguarding and Prevent provision at the University, including supporting nominated safeguarding officers.

Named Person: Kerry Sheehan, Director of People, Inclusion and Organisational Development.

- 6.3 A team of nominated Safeguarding Officers act as a source of support, advice and expertise in any safeguarding issues, and receive and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns within the University.
The names and contact details of staff members who are nominated Safeguarding Officers are included at the start of this policy.
- 6.4 The President of the Students' Union, or nominee, attends regular Safeguarding team meetings but is not a nominated safeguarding officer.
- 6.5 The Safeguarding Team meet at least three times per year to review processes and policy and develop good practice around safeguarding. An annual safeguarding report will be sent to the Vice Chancellor's Group and the Governing Board.
- 6.6 The Safeguarding Team undergo regular safeguarding training and attend refresher training as appropriate. Awareness training in Safeguarding is offered to all AUB staff.

7. Reporting incidents and raising concerns

- 7.1 AUB staff are not experts at recognising abuse and it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred. However, you do have a responsibility to report any concerns about a child or an adult who may be at risk.
- 7.2 Examples of when concerns may arise include (but are not limited to):

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- Abuse or harm is disclosed by any individual: a child, adult, student, staff member, or other person.
 - There are observable changes in the behaviour of an individual that may be related to abuse.
 - The behaviour of an adult towards a child or another adult causes concern or there is a concern that an adult is harming a child or another adult.
 - Awareness that someone has looked at/searched for child pornography and/or literature.
- 7.3 All staff have a responsibility to report any concerns regarding the safety and welfare of children or adults at risk of harm and to raise a concern if an individual may be or may have been harmed or exploited. If, in the course of their work, staff become aware of a potential safeguarding issue, this must be treated as an **absolute priority**.
- 7.4 Any safeguarding concerns should be communicated to either the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Safeguarding Officers at the earliest opportunity on safeguarding@aub.ac.uk. All concerns, allegations or complaints will be taken seriously.
- 7.5 Staff should make a factual recording of any concerns but under no circumstances should staff begin an investigation into a safeguarding issue before reporting concerns to the Safeguarding Team.
- 7.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead may maintain confidential records of informal or “low level” concerns which do not meet the threshold of a referral to safeguarding authorities, for the purpose of monitoring concerns.

8. Responding to safeguarding disclosures

- 8.1 If you are approached by an individual with a disclosure that they are being, or have been harmed or abused, or you are informed of such a disclosure by a staff member, student or member of the public, remember the “4 Rs”

RECEIVE; REASSURE; RESPOND; RECORD.

Do:

- React calmly and tell the individual s/he was right to tell
- Pay attention and take what the individual says seriously,
- Keep any questions to the absolute minimum, aiming for a clear, accurate understanding of what the individual has said
- Reassure the individual but do not make promises of confidentiality. Report the disclosure immediately to a Safeguarding Officer or, if the incident occurs out of hours seek advice from local services – contact details are included at the end of this policy.
- Record the information in writing as soon as possible after the disclosure, using the same vocabulary as the child / adult (do not interpret or adapt what they have said) and pass this on to a Safeguarding Officer.
- It can also be helpful to remember to use the following approach when receiving information, ‘**T.E.D.**’, i.e. ask the person informing you of their concern to: **Tell, Explain, Describe** their concern, and note this down using their own vocabulary.

Don't:

- Panic or allow your shock or distaste to show
- Ask questions other than to clarify that you have enough information to act
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets. Make it clear that you have a duty to refer the matter on.
- Make the individual tell anyone else. They may have to be formally interviewed later and it is important to minimise the number of times information is repeated
- Make any suggestions to the individual about how the incident may have happened
- Discuss the information with anyone other than a Safeguarding Officer or an appropriate external agency.

9. Safeguarding referrals to external agencies

- 9.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a nominated Safeguarding Officer will usually be responsible for making referrals to external agencies. The decision to refer will be discussed between at least two members of the safeguarding team, unless emergency action is needed.
- 9.2 Any member of staff may make a referral direct to external agencies; the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be promptly informed of any referral. If you have concerns about the immediate safety of someone and you are unable to contact a Safeguarding Officer, staff should contact the Police (non-emergency) or local authority, using the contact numbers at the end of this policy. In an emergency, where there is an imminent threat to someone's safety, call 999.
- 9.3 Where possible, informed consent should be obtained from the individual concerned before making the referral wherever possible. It is therefore expected that staff discuss their intentions to refer a safeguarding concern to an external agency.
- 9.4 However, there will be occasions where consent cannot be obtained, or it is not safe to discuss the intention to refer. Scenarios may include:
- Where the person making the referral believes that the individual is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm;
 - Where obtaining consent would put the individual at risk of significant harm;
 - Where obtaining consent would put the person making the referral at risk of harm;
 - Where obtaining consent could lead to a loss of evidence, such as forced marriage/honour based violence etc.
- 9.5 Where consent has been overridden, the reasons should be clearly documented in the safeguarding case notes. Where there is a significant risk of harm, an external referral must be made as a matter of urgency.
- 9.6 Designated Safeguarding Officers are available for support from Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Outside of these hours, staff should use

the contacts at the end of this policy.

10. Support

- 10.1 Any student who is the subject of a safeguarding referral will be offered ongoing support by the university's Wellbeing service.
- 10.3 Staff who may be involved in managing disclosures are encouraged to consider their own needs for support. Staff can access counselling through AUB's staff counsellor (email staffcounsellor@aub.ac.uk) or via the free, confidential telephone support helpline in the Employee Assistance Programme: call 0800 072 7072 anytime.
- 10.4 AUB's Human Resources will consider appropriate support for adults at risk of harm who are staff members and are the subject of safeguarding concerns, or for staff members who may be the subject of allegations of safeguarding concerns, abuse or inappropriate behaviour.
- 10.5 Where an allegation of inappropriate behaviour, abuse or neglect is made against a member of staff (occurring in the course of their work), AUB's Safeguarding Team will prioritise support for the individual who is the subject of concern. In accordance with its employment procedures, AUB reserves the right to suspend and / or dismiss staff from employment or from undertaking a specific role with respect to that employment.
- 10.6 Disciplinary action may be taken against staff, in accordance with the University's Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure, for a failure to comply with this policy.
- 10.7 Following any safeguarding incidents or disclosures the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any nominated safeguarding officers involved in the referral will debrief and review to identify any further actions or need to amend safeguarding procedures.
- 10.8 Requests for information made by external agencies should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Linked policies:

- Prevent Policy
- Working in schools guidance
- DBS Checks
- Community contact numbers

Appendix 1: Community contact numbers

BCP Children's First Response Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
Tel: 01202 123334 Email: childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

BCP Children's Social Care Out of Hours Service
Tel: 01202 738256 Email: ChildrensOOHS@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

BCP Adult Social Care Contact Centre
Tel: 01202 123654 Email: asc.contactcentre@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

BCP Adult Social Care Out of Hours Service
Tel: 03001 239895

Dorset Child Advice and Duty Service
Tel: 01305 228866 Email: childrensadvicenddutyservice@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Dorset Adult Social Care Service
Tel: 01305 221016 Email: adultaccess@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Dorset Adult Social Care Out of Hours Service
Tel: 01305 221000

Police (non-emergency): Tel: 101

NSPCC Helpline Tel: 0808 800 5000

Childline Tel: 0800 1111

Related policies:

- AUB Fitness to Study policy
- AUB Codes of Conduct for students and staff
- AUB Dignity at Work
- AUB Equality at Work
- AUB staff Disciplinary Procedure
- AUB student Disciplinary Policy
- AUB Communication Protocols and the Web Guidelines.
- AUB Whistleblowing (Public Interest Disclosure) Policy
- AUB Code on Freedom of Speech

Appendix 2: Types of Abuse

Abuse is a violation of a person's human and civil rights by another. There is no exhaustive list of what may constitute abuse or exploitation, but it includes:

- A single or repeated act of any scale which causes harm;
- Neglect or omission on part of someone with caring responsibilities

Types of Abuse:

Physical Abuse: includes hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions, or otherwise causing physical harm.

Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination: includes direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, religion or disability.

Emotional Abuse: includes intimidation and threats, continuous criticism, controlling behaviour, emotional blackmail.

Sexual Abuse: includes both physical and non-physical components. It can involve rape, inappropriate touching, forcing or grooming someone.

Economic or Financial Abuse: includes controlling money and budgets, preventing someone from getting a job, running up debts in that person's name.

Institutional Abuse: maltreatment of a person brought about by poor or inadequate care or support.

Online / Electronic Abuse: the use of communication technologies (e.g. internet, text or video messaging, e-mail, chatrooms, social media such as Snapchat or Instagram) to embarrass, humiliate, threaten, intimidate or bully an individual in an attempt to gain power and control over them or to influence towards particular views about people or society. Often closely linked with child sexual exploitation and the posting of illegal images but can be relevant generally to 'grooming' or drawing people towards extreme views or actions. Online abuse may include image-based abuse, identity fraud, or exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation: a form of sexual abuse against children. This occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. This does not always involve physical contact; it can occur through the use of technology.

Criminal Exploitation: occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child, young person or vulnerable adult. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Age is most often a factor in the imbalance of power, but other factors can also create vulnerability to exploitation including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Domestic Abuse/ Violence: an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence by a partner or ex- partner.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): a procedure where a female's genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed without medical reason. This can include partial or total removal of external female genitalia. It is also known as 'female circumcision', 'cutting' or by local terms such as sunna, guniin, halalays, tahur, megrez, khitan and others.

Forced Marriage: a marriage where one or both parties do not consent to the marriage, with pressure or abuse being used.

Honour Based Violence: a form of domestic abuse where women are often punished for bringing 'shame' on a family. Honour based violence can exist in any culture or community, and males can also be victims.

Human Trafficking: involves the recruitment, harbouring or transporting individuals into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion and forced to work against their will. This can include forced prostitution, forced labour, forced begging, forced criminality and forced marriage.

Modern/ Domestic Slavery: the illegal exploitation of people for private or commercial gain. Individuals are trapped in servitude, which they were deceived or coerced into, and are unable to leave.

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Good Practice Guidelines

AUB as a provider of both higher education, further education and extra curricular programmes, has a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all students including the young and vulnerable when studying, working, or engaging in activities or events at AUB or externally supported by AUB.

As a member of AUB staff you should:

- Treat all students with respect and dignity
- Always put the welfare of students first
- Maintain a safe and professional relationship with students. (it is illegal to have an intimate relationship with a child – Sexual Offences Act 2000)
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empower students to share in decision-making
- Avoid manual/physical support and touching; if it is vital, ask for consent from the student and provide it openly with an observer present
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of students; do not push them beyond their abilities or against their will
- Keep a written record of any injury or incident that occurs, and always ask for First-Aider assistance if needed
- Be aware of students' disclosed medical conditions, disabilities, additional learning needs or other special requirements; treat this information confidentially
- Maintain professional behaviour at all times.
- Comply with AUB's Code of Conduct.

As a member of AUB staff you should never:

- Spend unnecessary amounts of time alone with a student away from others
- Take students in your car or to your home where they will be alone with you
- Engage in or allow others to engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative ways
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow students to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a student, even in fun
- Exploit your authority over a student unnecessarily or reduce them to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a student to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Provide personal or intimate care for a student unless specifically employed to do so
- Give any medication to a student (prescribed or otherwise) unless you are trained to do so and / or a full risk assessment has been undertaken

Use of Photographs and Video

- Staff, students or visitors should not take photographs of children for any purpose or use names or identities in the replication of images without

obtaining written permission from a person with parental responsibility for the child

- Where permission is given, AUB will only use images for the purposes stated when obtaining permission and where possible will not use precise images
- Any images involving students should be stored and destroyed securely, in line with data protection guidelines, and should be retained only for as long as their original purpose requires.

Appendix 4: Guidelines for Working in Schools, Colleges and Alternative Educational Settings

AUB staff or students undertaking regulated work in schools require an enhanced DBS check, or must be accompanied by a member of staff with an enhanced DBS check at all times.

Safeguarding practice in schools, colleges, and alternative educational settings:

- On arrival, sign in at the main reception desk
- Read the institutional safeguarding policy, abiding by the outlined procedures at all times
- Wear your named visitor badge as directed by staff at the institution
- During visits to external educational settings, you are an ambassador for AUB and a role model for young people. Everything you do should reflect this
- Do not smoke anywhere on the school premises including inside your vehicle
- Alcohol and recreational drugs should never be consumed before, or taken onto school premises under any circumstances
- Prescribed drugs should be kept hidden and out of reach of young people e.g. in the locked vehicle
- Language used in an educational setting should be professional, and appropriate to the age of the audience
- Always use toilets and facilities which are specifically designated for staff
- Photographs and videos should never be taken without explicit prior written permission from the school and/or child's parent/guardian
- Use of videos and photographs taken within an educational setting should never be accompanied by a child's name, or other identifiable information unless explicit consent has been provided by the child and parent/guardian
- Personal contact details should never be shared with a child
- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. Should staff have a concern whilst visiting a school, college, or alternative educational provider, it should be raised in accordance with the institution's safeguarding policy and reported to the AUB Designated Safeguarding Lead.