

1. Statement of Intent

Unitas is committed to safeguarding all children, young people, and vulnerable adults with whom we work. Through the delivery of our services, we aim to promote an environment in which individuals of all ages, whether staff, student or apprentice has a safe environment in which to learn and develop.

2. Safeguarding Principles

In undertaking its functions Unitas staff and associates are expected to ensure:

- The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount
- All children, young people, and adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or beliefs
- The needs of those who may be particularly vulnerable must be considered
- Safeguarding includes not just protection from physical, mental, emotional harm or abuse, but ensuring that all those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are educated as to how to work with each client group in the most appropriate way. It is important to protect people from harm without limiting their potential to face challenges and undertake personal development and achievement.
- Unitas will comply with all legislation and guidance that exists to protect the interests of vulnerable adults, children, and young people.

3. Responsibilities

- This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, associates, contractors, and trustees.
- All the above have a responsibility to refer any concerns in relation to both safeguarding to the appropriate person. This may require a referral to Children's Services and in emergencies, the Police.
- All concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, staff, contractors, and volunteers and responded to appropriately and immediately in accordance with the procedure outlined in this policy
- Confidentiality of information is important, and the protection of the child or vulnerable person must be considered in all use of data/information and information sharing.

4. Promotion of this Policy

Commitment to the safeguarding policy is expected throughout the organisation, including staff, Trustees, associates, partner agencies, learning coaches, contractors, students, and apprentices. The policy will be:

- Made available to staff, learning coaches and associates along with other policy documents via shared drive and/or 'Teams' area
- Included in induction training
- Included in the relevant 'Handbook' and guidance for the course/apprenticeship

This policy document will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is updated in relation to government policy and guidance

5. Implementation of Policy

Implementation of the policy will occur through:

5.1 Recruitment

- Rigorous recruitment of staff, contractors, and associates- though the application and interview process
- Vetting procedures that include the use of references and Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS] checks

5.2 Training

- Safeguarding Policy training will be included as part of the induction of new staff
- Specific Safeguarding Training will be completed within 3 months of their appointment/ contract for all staff, learning coaches and associates who are in contact with students/apprentices and will relate to
 - Knowledge of safeguarding
 - The legal framework
 - Identifying vulnerable students and apprentices
 - How to respond to and report concerns
- All staff working with students and apprentices will be provided with updates in relation to policy, guidance or legal requirements related to safeguarding via the 'Learning Coach Communications Area' of Teams, or via the Policy and Procedures folder (as applicable to individual roles).

5.3 Dealing with Safeguarding concerns

In relation to safeguarding any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse must be reported, including any concerns expressed by children or young people or vulnerable adults.

It is important for all those who may need to act due to safeguarding concerns to be mindful of the 5 Rs of safeguarding

- Recognise
- Respond
- Report
- Record
- Refer

5.3.1 Recognise

Unitas staff and associates will be given training about how to identify signs of abuse and concerns in relation to children and vulnerable adults. Information about concerns for the welfare and wellbeing of students and apprentices will also be used to enable early identification of problems that could impact on their development. For example, mental health problems, stress, and depression. Information will also be available to students and apprentices about how to manage the high stress moments of a learning programmes, who to approach and how to ask for support.

5.3.2 Respond

Once a safeguarding or welfare concern has been raised with a student support coordinator /learning coach /associate or workplace partner this person will be expected to offer immediate support to the individual in terms of indicating that the matter will be taken seriously. Any allegations regarding failure of Unitas staff to safeguard children or young people should be addressed to the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding. Any concerns or allegations will be treated seriously and responded to immediately. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there will be a disciplinary investigation

5.3.3 Report

The member of staff with whom the concern is raised needs to raise the matter with the person in Unitas that they normally report to. For students and apprentices this is their Learning Coach. For learning coaches this is the relevant Head of Learning Programmes. For Student Support Coordinators the Business Manager.

5.3.4 Record

Concerns will then be reported to the Unitas Designated Safeguarding Lead using the reporting log and guidance information provided in Appendix 1. The safeguarding lead will ensure that all concerns are recorded and monitored.

5.3.5 Refer

Where necessary referrals to local authority personal with responsibility for safeguarding will be undertaken by the Unitas Designated Safeguarding Lead with reference to the government guidance [e.g. *Working together to Safeguard Children* [2018]] and the outcome recorded on the *'Safeguarding Concern Log'* [Appendix 1]. Written records of referrals/concerns will be kept securely and in line with the GDPR Policy

5.3.6 Unitas Designated Safeguarding Lead

Unitas will identify a designated person with responsibility for

- maintaining the policy and procedures for safeguarding children, young people students and apprentices
- recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely
- identifying future safeguarding training needs of trustees, staff, contractors or learning coaches.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Unitas is Emma Hannant, Tel: 01603 570365 or via contact@unitas.uk.net (email address constantly monitored).

Unitas as a registered charity has a Board of Trustees. The Trustee responsible for Safeguarding is Paul Wright, with effect from 20.11.2023.

6 Protection of Apprentices

The Apprentice's Journey

The apprentices journey provides opportunities to identify and address any safeguarding or other concerns as follows:

- Initial meeting to outline respective roles and what specific needs or concerns the apprentice may have.
- Regular recorded meetings between Unitas as a training provider, the employer, workplace mentor and the apprentice throughout the two year apprenticeship to enable communication and to identify any concerns or need for specific support as soon as possible.
- Three-way contract between employer, apprentice and training provider about respective rights and responsibilities.
- Provision of information to apprentices about the guidance support and additional help that is available to them via their employer, their learning coach and Unitas

- Provision of advice to apprentices about how to manage mental health, health, and safety in the work setting, keeping safe on-line.
- Who to approach for help and support in relation to specific concerns. In this context the Unitas 'Learning Coach' is a central point of contact.

7. Code of behaviour

All those working with Unitas are required to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in their work. The code of behaviour helps to protect the apprentice as it requires Unitas staff and associates:

- To conform to the Unitas Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and to treat other colleagues, partner agency staff, students and apprentices, and the children and young people they work with, with respect and dignity
- To build constructive relationships based on mutual trust
- Give feedback that is strengths based and constructive feedback rather than negative
- Conform to GDPR Policy

7.1 Preparation of Unitas employees

- Rigorous recruitment processes that ensure suitability of staff to work in a learning and development context
- Preparation and induction of staff to work with students and apprentices
- Clear reporting structures so that staff progress can be monitored

7.2 Information Technology Usage Policy

Unitas seeks to promote appropriate use of Information Technology for all apprentices, students, staff, associates, and partners. Unitas acknowledges that online and digital platforms and social media can be used to abuse, coerce, and control. Technology-facilitated abuse is therefore taken very seriously as an important element to protecting students and apprentices. No image, photograph, video, or audio clip of an individual or group can be copied, downloaded, shared, or distributed online without permission from the subject(s) or copyright holder.

Unitas will take steps to make students, apprentices, and staff aware of the risks associated with downloading and posting videos and audio online and how to keep their personal information safe.

For apprentices and sponsored students, the responsibility for providing web-filtering software lies with the employer, but Unitas will seek to promote good practice in relation to using the internet and accessing websites as part of induction to learning.

7.3 Support for students and apprentices who raise safeguarding concerns


Where safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse call for immediate action

- A risk assessment and need for interim action will be conducted to ensure the student/ apprentice is no longer in harm's way
- An identified member of Unitas staff [usually the learning coach] will contact the student/apprentice and offer support and assistance
- Unitas will conduct an internal investigation, although any investigation by police or safeguarding agencies will take priority
- Where there is referral to an external agency the Unitas Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise closely with the agencies to obtain information on the progress of the investigation and update the Chief Executive and Business Manager at Unitas.

References

Universities UK [2019] '*Tackling online harassment and promoting online welfare*' Available @ <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-07/tackling-online-harassment.pdf>
[Accessed 8th November 2022]

HM Gov [2018] *Working together to Safeguard Children*. Available @ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf
[Accessed 8th November 2022]

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Name: | Jayne Cowley |
| Position: | Chief Executive |
| Date: | 26.11.2023 |
| Signature: |  Policy to be reviewed by 31.12.2024 or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation. |



Unitas Safeguarding Concern Log

| Details of Person Reporting Concern | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Name of person reporting concern | Date | Role |
| Email: | Contact telephone number(s) | Work address: |
| Details of Person to whom Concern relates | | |
| Name | Email | Phone number |
| Description of Concern/incident | | |
| Date and time of the incident/concern | What has prompted the concerns? | |
| Details [Please provide an account of what is known about the concern] | | |
| What action has been taken to date and by whom | | |
| Signature of person completing the log | | |
| Signature | Name in print | Date |
| Next section to be completed by Unitas Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | | |
| | | |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Date form received | |
| Name of DSL | |
| Email | |
| Phone | |
| Job title | |
| Action taken | |
| Next steps | |
| Outcome | |
| Signature of Designated Safeguarding Lead | |
| Signature | Name in print |
| | Date |

Examples of what should be reported

Any incidents which cause concern in respect of at-risk individuals are required to be reported immediately to the Unitas Designated Safeguarding Lead

Here are examples of the kinds of things which require reporting:

- A child or adult at risk is accidentally hurt
- There is concern that a relationship is developing which may be an abuse of trust
- You are worried that a child or adult at risk is becoming attracted to you
- You are worried that a child or adult at risk is becoming attracted to a colleague who cares for them
- You have been required to physically restrain a child or adult at risk to prevent them from harming themselves or another or from causing significant damage to property
- You receive a report or disclosure alleging abuse
- You see suspicious marks on a child or adult at risk
- You are concerned that an individual is being influenced or radicalised by any extremist group or ideology
- You find material (via either online or physical environments) whereby the content constitutes a safeguarding concern
- You are concerned that an individual or organisation is inciting hatred or violence

[Adapted from University of Suffolk Safeguarding Policy [2022 p13]

Recognition of abuse

The list below offers examples of types of abuse the list is for illustrative purposes and does not include all possibilities:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Psychological / emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Financial abuse
- Coercion / control / grooming
- Abuse that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence, criminal exploitation, including county lines
- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- Domestic Abuse
- Modern slavery
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- So called honour-based abuse
- Forced marriage
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Gender-based violence
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Other abuse not listed here but that pose a risk to students and at-risk groups.

[Adapted from University of Suffolk Safeguarding Policy [2022 p14]

Glossary

Online harassment

'The use of information and communication technologies by an individual or group to repeatedly cause harm to another person with relatively less power to defend themselves'.
[Universities UK, 2019 p14]

Online Harassment can also be known as

- cyberaggression,
- cyberbullying,
- cyber-harassment,
- cyberhate,
- cybervictimisation
- deviant online behaviour [Universities UK, 2019]

Forms of Online Harassment

CYBERSTALKING:

repeated and deliberate use of the internet and other electronic communication tools to engage in persistent, unwanted communication intending to frighten, intimidate or harass someone, or to spy on someone.

DENIGRATION:

sending or posting harmful, untrue or cruel statements about a person to other people.

DOXXING:

sharing someone else's personal information without their permission.

EXCLUSION:

purposeful isolation of individuals from online communications with others in a network.

IMAGE-BASED SEXUAL ABUSE:

(also known as 'revenge pornography') online disclosure of sexual or intimate photos or videos, without the consent of the person pictured.

INTERNET PILE-ON:

where large numbers of people are encouraged to target one individual with numerous messages.

MASQUERADING:

pretending to be someone else online.

SEXTING:

the exchange of online sexual images or videos. This is illegal for under-18s. Where sexual photos of adults (that is, over 18), without permission of the person/people photographed, this is usually classified as 'revenge porn'.

TRICKERY:

engaging in tricks to solicit personal information that is then made public, often to blackmail the individual.

TROLLING:

sending or posting deliberately inflammatory, inappropriate or controversial messages or comments on the internet in order to upset and provoke responses from other internet users.

UPSKIRTING:

filming or photographing under a person's clothes without their consent to capture images of their body or underwear.

VIRTUAL MOBING:

where a person tries to attract attention to someone else by getting other people to bully a person for example by using hashtags to encourage other people to join in.

[Universities UK, 2019p16]

'Safeguarding' is the process of protecting vulnerable people, whether from crime, other forms of abuse or (in the context of this document) from being drawn into terrorist related activity.