



Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Updated November 2020

For review annually by AWPO management

Note:

Our child protection and safeguarding procedure provides supplementary detail on administrative procedures in the team



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Abbreviations and definitions

AWPO	Access and Widening Participation Office
CIR	Concern or Incident Report form
Disclosure	A report, verbal or written, made by a child or young person that they have been abused by someone
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DSO	Designated Safeguarding Officer
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children



Regulated activity
Work with children and young people
which requires a DBS clearance

SA
Student Ambassador

TP
Taster Presenter

WP
Widening Participation

1. Context of our work with children and young people

AWPO deliver activities for over 2,500 children and young people annually, on a range of programmes.

A child is any person under the age of 18.

The safety and wellbeing of all children and young people on our programmes is essential. All UCL staff and students working for us are responsible for safeguarding. We believe all the children and young people we work with have the right to

be treated equally and with respect, regardless of their background or personal circumstances.

Our programmes support primary and secondary school children, parents, carers, teachers, mature students, and students in their first year of undergraduate study at UCL. Some specific groups we work with, such as disabled young people, may have additional safeguarding needs.

Programmes may take place in person, on the UCL campus or elsewhere, or online. Activities delivered in a school are covered by the school's own safeguarding procedures, and we comply with these as required.

This policy and our working procedures follow the principles of UK government's guide to inter-agency working, [Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018](#).



2. Supporting documentation and other UCL policies

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed annually. This policy is publicly available on our [website](#).

Other relevant UCL policies include:

UCL HR's policy [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure \(Staff and Students\)](#).

UCL HR's policy [UCL DBS Checks and Criminal Convictions Policy](#)

UCL Student and Registry Services' guidance on [Prevent at UCL](#).



3. Safer recruitment and training of staff

We use safer recruitment practices.

Knowledge of child protection is listed as essential or desirable in person specifications, depending on the grade. Compliance with UCL's safeguarding policy is a core responsibility in job descriptions.

Job offers are conditional on provision of:

- Two references, one of which must be the current or most recent line manager;
- For roles that include unsupervised work on regulated activity (this covers the majority of our posts), a clear enhanced level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance certificate, including a check of the DBS 'Children's Barred' List.

These requirements are stated in job adverts, in job descriptions, at interview and in job offers.

AWPO staff in roles that do not require DBS clearances cannot work on regulated activity.

All line managers are responsible for ensuring their direct reports read, understand and follow this policy.

New staff read this policy as part of their induction, and existing staff review it annually.

All new staff complete the EduCare training module '[Child protection in education](#)' in their first month.

Existing staff repeat it once every three years.

The team attend child protection training delivered by a safeguarding professional on an annual basis.

All AWPO Managers are trained as Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) and attend refresher DSO training every year.



4. Safer recruitment of student workers

As well as AWPO staff, children and young people are in contact with:

- UCL student workers: Student Ambassadors and Taster Presenters.
- UCL academics and professional services staff from other departments.
- External guest speakers, including UCL alumni and speakers from other organisations.

Before starting work, all student workers:

- Are interviewed;
- Provide a reference;
- Sign a code of conduct;
- Complete the Educare ‘Child Protection in Education’ online module;
- Attend child protection training delivered by an AWPO staff member, then annual refresher training if they wish to continue working.

In addition, student workers booked for work on regulated activity also need a clear enhanced level DBS certificate, including a check of the DBS Children’s Barred List.

All staff who have administrator rights on an online platform and are carrying out tasks that require them to have access to participant contact details must have received child protection training and have a clear Enhanced DBS check with UCL. This applies to AWPO staff, those from other departments and to student workers.

Note: due to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, UCL does not have the legal right to request DBS clearances for work on unregulated activity (such as campus tours).

5. Safeguarding information for one-off presenters

On occasion, other UCL staff, students, alumni, and external



speakers deliver sessions on our activities. These presenters are asked to complete a form in advance, agreeing to comply with the key principles of our child protection policy and procedures.

If a member of UCL staff or external individual is going to work on regulated activity, for example daily teaching on a summer school, they need DBS clearance and to complete the EduCare module.

6. Safeguarding for UCL academic departments

We fund and support academic departments delivering their own widening participation activities.

Departments work with the AWPO to ensure that everyone working on regulated activity has DBS clearance, a signed code of conduct, and has completed the EduCare module.

7. Safeguarding for external organisations

We partner with external organisations to deliver programmes, online, at UCL or at other locations. For partnership working we request a copy of the organisation's child protection policy and provide them with ours. An Access Manager reviews the policies to ensure they are compatible. If any issues are identified, these are discussed and a joint approach agreed in writing in advance.

When we commission an external organisation to deliver an entire project (with our involvement limited to funding and monitoring), we make it clear that the partner organisation is fully responsible for safeguarding, and we review their child protection policy.

8. Communication

Contact with children, young people, parents / carers and teachers attending WP activities is run through UCL staff email and online platform accounts and UCL telephone numbers, including mobile phones.



Everyone working on activities is instructed not to share personal contact details or interact on social media with children and young people, or their parents / carers.

Our online activity falls into two categories:

1) Fully moderated online activity

On some projects, UCL works with trusted partners to deliver fully moderated online activity through secure online platforms. This includes mentoring for young people by student workers, the ability to submit academic work and receive a grade, and fully moderated messaging to facilitate group work between participants, overseen by student workers. All interactions go through a vetting process before being released to participants to ensure that contact details are not shared and that topics under discussion are appropriate.

2) Online events

UCL uses approved platforms to host online events which include live

interaction between participants and staff (including AWPO staff, academic staff, external partners and student workers). These may include live or pre-recorded lectures or talks, Q&A sessions, instant messaging/chat, and collaborative work in small groups.

9. Supervision

Supervision at face-to-face events

For face-to-face events, we follow NSPCC guidance on the ratio of appropriate adults to young people:

- 9 - 12 years: one adult to eight children
- 13 - 18 years: one adult to 10 children.

Our child protection procedure outlines our enrolment, registration, and departure processes, and our approach to supervision and behaviour management.

We are responsible for young people from the point of registration, until



they depart. We make it clear in enrolment materials that UCL is not responsible for the safety of young people as they travel to and from UCL.

Online events – staff roles

For the purpose of online events, staff fit into three distinct groups:

- 1) Co-ordinator – This is an AWPO staff member with a DBS check who is supervising an online event. They will act as a platform administrator and/or a presenter during an event and have oversight of all sessions taking place.
- 2) Administrator – This is a UCL staff member from inside or outside the AWPO, or a student worker, with a DBS check. They will act as a platform administrator and/or a presenter during an event and will assist the Co-ordinator with tasks such as moderation of specific sessions.
- 3) Presenter – This is a staff member who is working on an

event (for example, delivering a presentation or answering questions) but who does not have platform administrator rights. A DBS is not required and a Presenter should not have access to contact details of participants. A Presenter is accompanied by an Administrator or a Co-ordinator at all times.

Online events – staffing levels

The UCL AWPO ensures that staffing levels are sufficient to meet the following requirements at all times:

- When any aspect of an online event is underway, a Co-ordinator is on duty and acting in a supervisory capacity. The Co-ordinator must have access to all sessions that are taking place.
- Within any online session, regardless of group size or participant interaction, two staff must be present at all times and at least one of these must be an Administrator or Co-ordinator.



- If there are thirteen or more participants in a group, three staff, including at least one Co-ordinator or Administrator, must be present at all times.
- Staff members are not able to moderate and present at the same time. Sufficient cover should be in place to avoid this happening.
- If staff numbers fall below the required level, an event will be suspended or stopped completely if sufficient cover cannot be found quickly.

Our [risk assessments](#) are publicly available on our website.

10. Our professional behaviour standards

UCL AWPO staff and student workers:

- Understand that safeguarding is their responsibility, and that they are in a position of trust in relation to children and young people on our programmes;

- Follow UCL policies and procedures;
- Keep their child protection training up to date;
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour, and avoid any conduct which could lead a reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children and young people;
- Work in an open and transparent way;
- Treat all children and young people the same and avoid favouritism;
- Acknowledge that false allegations of abuse are extremely rare, and that all concerns must be reported and recorded.

When contractual staff are supervising student workers, we model professional conduct and give prompt, regular feedback on conduct issues as needed.



UCL AWPO staff and student workers do not:

- Develop personal relationships with children and young people or their families;
- Discuss their personal lives with children and young people;
- Meet or arrange to meet children and young people or their families privately away from UCL activities;
- Exchange personal contact details with children and young people or their families, or connect with them on social media;
- Display discriminatory, offensive language or behaviours;
- Engage in rough physical play or close contact with children and young people;
- Take gifts or money from children and young people or their families;
- Give gifts or money to children and young people or their families.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (such as a teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

11. Examples of causes for concern

Definitions of child abuse

A child is anyone under the age of 18. There are four categories of abuse: neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Information about child abuse is covered in the EduCare module, on the [NSPCC website](#), and in guidance from the [London Safeguarding Children Partnership](#).



Note: it is not always possible to recognise if someone has been abused - signs may not be obvious.

UCL staff or students are not responsible for investigating or deciding if abuse is occurring, but it is always our responsibility to report concerns.

Possible signs of abuse:

- Direct disclosures of verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, neglect, or bullying, by anyone. Abuse can be current or historical. Children can be abused by other children, as well as adults;
- Third party disclosures (abuse happening to someone else);
- Saying they want to tell you something but only if you keep it a secret;
- Hints about abuse in classwork, homework or e-mentoring conversations;
- Self-harm marks, bruises, burns or other injuries;
- Signs of disordered eating, anxiety or serious depression;
- Sudden change in behaviour, for example very withdrawn when previously confident and happy;
- Serious aggression or inappropriate behaviour towards other children and young people or UCL staff;
- Worrying language such as excessive swearing or sexualised comments;
- Seeming anxious about going home, or afraid of us calling their parents;
- Talking about being pregnant, or having an older girl or boyfriend.



Note: AWPO staff may occasionally have concerns about the wellbeing of a student worker, for example seeing self-harm marks or disordered eating.

We have a duty of care to our student workers. If a staff member is worried about a UCL student, they can speak to them and encourage them to use [UCL's Student Support and Wellbeing services](#).

If a staff member has a serious concern about a UCL student, they can discuss it with their manager and can choose to report it (either anonymously or with consent) through the [Student of Concern form](#).

Possible signs that an adult on an activity (UCL staff, student, alumni or an external individual) may have an inappropriate relationship with a child or young person:

- They are seen interacting with a child or young person on social

media, or have photos of them on their phone;

- They are seen exchanging contact details or meeting them alone outside of the activity;
- They have private conversations away from the main group without other people present;
- They are overheard having inappropriate conversations, for example about their romantic life;
- They are seen giving gifts to them;
- They are seen kissing, hugging or touching them.

Possible situations that could cause an adult working on the programme to be concerned that they, or another staff member, may be at risk of allegations of inappropriate conduct:

- Behaviour that suggests that a young person is becoming attracted to a staff member, for example repeatedly trying to



- contact them on social media, asking for contact details, asking to spend time with a staff member privately or trying to touch them;
- Becoming concerned that a young person may have misunderstood or misinterpreted something that a staff member has said or done.

Note: these examples are not exhaustive lists.

If something concerns you, but doesn't match the situations listed above, it should still be reported.

If you are in doubt, always report your concern.

12. Responding to and reporting a disclosure

If a child discloses abuse you should:

- Remain calm and receptive to what they are telling you;
- Listen carefully without interrupting;
- Take what the child is telling you seriously;
- Repeat back to the child what they have said using their own words in order to check your understanding;
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you;
- Reassure the child that nothing they have done is their fault;
- Explain to the child that you will have to tell somebody else;
- Complete the Concern or Incident Report Form as soon as possible and follow the procedure.

You should not:

- Show shock, disgust or anger;
- Express any emotions towards the alleged abuser;



- Interrupt the child or ask questions to elicit more information;
- Promise that you can keep anything a secret.

How to report

- Use a Concern or Incident Report Form to record your concerns (the staff member running the event will have blank forms, or you can download one from the [AWPO website](#));
- Where possible write down the child's own words: you can express an opinion relating to the child's presentation or demeanour but make it clear it is only your opinion;
- Be as specific as possible about the nature of the concern;
- Include information about dates and times and whether anyone else was present at the time of the disclosure;
- Do not ask the child to remove clothing to show injuries or marks,

but you can draw a body outline to indicate the location of marks;

- Sign, date and send the form as soon as possible and within 24 hours;
- The safeguarding contact will update you that action has been taken, but may not be able to share all information due to confidentiality.

13. Safeguarding reporting contacts

All AWPO Managers are Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs). Every activity has an assigned on-call DSO.

Child protection concerns which do not appear to involve a potential allegation against a UCL staff member or UCL student must be reported to an AWPO DSO.

Child protection concerns which involve a potential allegation against a UCL staff member or student must be reported directly to UCL HR, with an AWPO DSO copied in.



A Concern or Incident Report (CIR) form is completed for any child protection concern. Paper forms are available on all face-to-face activities, and on our [website](#). CIR forms are confidential and are securely stored.

Contact details for the UCL AWPO Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) can be found on our [website](#).

Contact details for the UCL Designated Staff Safeguarding Leads can be found on the [UCL HR website](#)



Other sources of advice

Camden Local Authority:

[Children's Safeguarding and Social Work](#)

NSPCC:

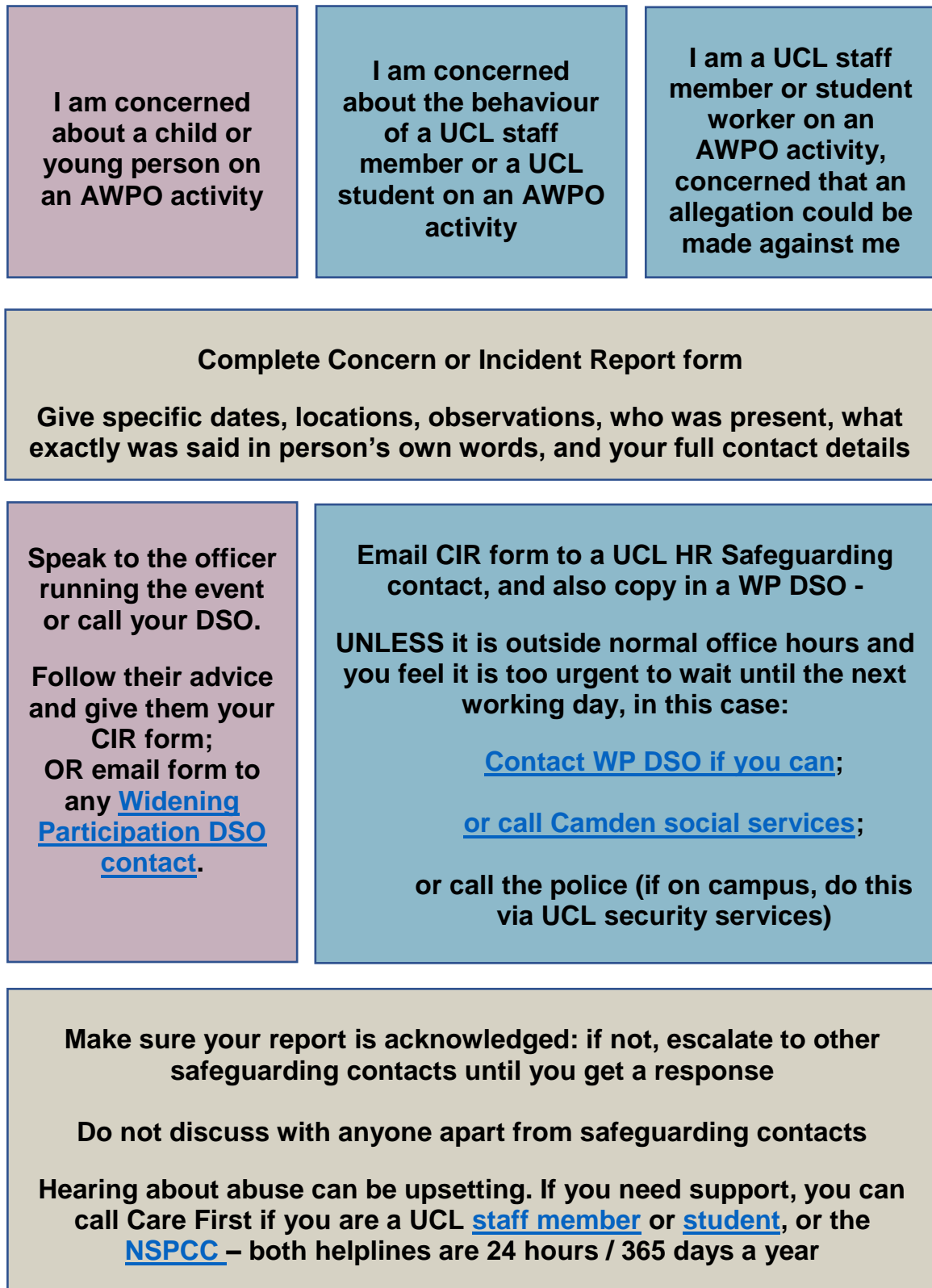
[24 / 7 advice helpline and email service for child protection concerns](#)

London Safeguarding Children Partnership:

[Contact details for social care teams in London boroughs](#)



14. Flowchart: How to report a child protection concern on a UCL AWPO activity



15. UCL's response to reports

UCL AWPO and / or HR safeguarding contacts investigate every child protection report that they receive.

The response may include liaison with police, local authorities, the family or school, UCL security or other departments.

If DSOs are unsure of the appropriate response they will contact the Local Authority where the child lives for advice.

If a child protection concern is raised against a UCL staff member or student, they will be removed from all UCL activities with children or vulnerable adults until the matter has been conclusively investigated.

UCL HR provide guidance to staff and students who have child protection allegations made against them.

After any incident or report, the safeguarding team review the efficacy of their response and complete any follow up, which may include updating this policy.

Sharing and storing child protection information

AWPO DSOs will inform parents or carers of concerns, unless there are indications that by doing so would place the child at greater risk of harm.

The safety and welfare of children is paramount and protecting confidentiality is not a barrier to sharing information in the case of child protection.

As much as possible, we will seek consent to share confidential information about a child's safety unless this would jeopardise the safety of the child.

Where a decision is made to share information without consent, this decision is taken by AWPO DSOs or the HR safeguarding contacts (not by other staff).

We follow the principles for sharing information set out in the UK government's [information sharing advice for practitioners working with children](#), updated July 2018.

All records relating to reports and investigations are securely stored in either the AWPO or the HR office as appropriate.