



**UHI** | WEST HIGHLAND  
GÀIDHEALTACHD AN IAR

# Safeguarding Policy

POL

Lead Officer (Post):	Head of Student Experience and Performance
Responsible Office/ Department:	Student Services
Responsible Committee:	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Review Officer (Post):	Head of Student Experience and Performance
Date policy approved:	13/12/2022
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date policy due for review:	18/05/2025
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	02/09/2022
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	Click or tap to enter a date.

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request. Please contact the Governance and Policy Officer on 01463 279000.

## Policy Summary

Overview	<p>Why is the policy required?</p> <p>This policy is required to fulfil the safeguarding obligations of UHI and all partners.</p>
Purpose	<p>What will the policy achieve?</p> <p>The policy will provide a unified approach to safeguarding across the university partnership and ensure parity of student experience.</p>
Scope	<p>Who does the policy apply to?</p> <p>The policy applies to UHI and all partners.</p>
Consultation	<p>Who has been consulted on the policy, and who will be notified?</p> <p>The policy has been developed by a group of practitioners from the university partnership to ensure that best practice is reflected in the policy and accompanying procedures.</p>
Implementation and Monitoring	<p>Who will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy, and what resources/ costs will be incurred?</p> <p>Partners are responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed in their own organisation.</p>
Risk Implications	<p>What are the risk implications of this policy?</p> <p>This policy will reduce risk for the university partnership by ensuring that best practice from across the partnership is being shared and followed.</p>
Link with Strategy	<p>How is this policy linked to University strategy?</p> <p>This policy supports the UHI's commitment to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all. It also aims to ensure that all partners meet legislative requirements on safeguarding and discharge their duty of care.</p>
Impact Assessment	<p>Equality Impact Assessment: Completed June 2022. No action required.</p> <p>Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a</p>

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The policy outlines our commitment to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all. In addition, the policy sets out strategies to manage known risk (and any potential risk) to ensure we do all we can to protect individuals from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 1.2 UHI West Highland recognise and comply with our legal and statutory obligations that arise from legislation including the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021, Prevent and CONTEST, and other relevant guidance and regulations.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **UHI and partners:** UHI is an integrated university, made up of a distinctive partnership of independent colleges and research institutions. The partners are: UHI Argyll, UHI Inverness, UHI Moray, UHI North Highland, UHI Outer Hebrides, UHI Shetland, UHI West Highland, Highland Theological College UHI, Orkney College UHI, Perth College UHI, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, and Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS).
- 2.2 **Safeguarding:** Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm. This includes making sure we meet our legislative requirements and ensuring the appropriate policies and procedures are put in place. Safeguarding includes child protection but goes further and extends to all vulnerable groups.
- 2.3 **Duty of Care:** Our responsibility to use professional expertise and judgement to protect and promote the best interests of students and staff, and to ensure that we exercise an appropriate level of care towards them, as is reasonable within the parameters of our relationship.
- 2.4 **Vulnerable Adults:** Vulnerable adults or adults at risk are adults who meet all 3 of the below criteria as detailed in the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007:
  - That they are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests;
  - That they are at risk of harm; and
  - That because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity they are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.
- 2.5 **Child / Children:** The term 'child' or 'children' refers to persons who have not yet attained the age of 18 years as stated in section 97(1) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 2.6 **Corporate parenting:** UHI West Highland has responsibilities as a corporate parent under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Please read and consider Appendix 1 for further important information and definitions that help partners fulfil their safeguarding duties.

## 3. Purpose

- 3.1. Safeguarding, and the emerging agendas connected to safeguarding and duty of care are posing ever increasing challenges and demands in tertiary education. It is a key part of our

remit and responsibilities to manage any real (or potential) risk we face, including in online environments, as a learning community and in our student halls of residencies.

- 3.2. Our duty is to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all users within a framework set out by Scottish and UK government legislation. The increasing demands and complexity of these responsibilities make it imperative that UHI and all partners utilise and develop shared expertise, models, systems and processes to meet these challenges.
- 3.3. The following underpinning principles are shared by UHI and all partners:
  - 3.3.1. We will utilise a system of named staff (Safeguarding Leads) in UHI and each partner with key responsibilities and duties linked to this role. Some partners also have Safeguarding Deputies to support Safeguarding Leads.
  - 3.3.2. Safeguarding Leads and Deputies are invited to join the UHI Safeguarding Group.
  - 3.3.3. Some partners have local safeguarding groups or practitioner networks.
  - 3.3.4. We are committed to continuing professional development and ongoing training for safeguarders.

### 3.4. Criminal Convictions

- 3.4.1 UHI and all partners have a Student Criminal Offence Data Policy which should be referred to alongside this policy.
- 3.4.2 UHI and UHI West Highland recognise the transformative power of education and do not consider criminal convictions and offences or related security measures to be insurmountable barriers to learning. Where possible, we are committed to supporting those with spent and unspent criminal convictions in our communities as part of their rehabilitation.
- 3.4.3 We encourage all applicants and students to disclose information about any criminal convictions or police proceedings which may affect their ability to complete key aspects of their programme or placement. This includes personal restrictions or other conditions arising from court orders or parole conditions e.g. travel, contact with others and use of equipment.
- 3.4.4 We will offer support and guidance to applicants/students disclosing with criminal convictions about course selection and career planning and advise on the scope for any potential course or placement adjustments.
- 3.4.5 We undertake to ensure that, by this policy and related procedures, we operate in consideration of all relevant statutory legislation and professional body requirements.

## 4 Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to UHI and all partners.
- 4.2 This policy applies throughout UHI and partner premises and campuses, including:
  - Student accommodation managed by UHI and partners directly
  - Sports facilities operated by UHI or UHI West Highland
  - Nurseries operated by UHI or UHI West Highland
  - Any other areas or facilities where UHI or partner activities are carried out
- 4.3 This policy applies to activities undertaken by all students as part of their studies, including but not limited to:
  - Work placements and work experience

- Summer schools, field trips and outreach activities
- 4.4 This policy applies in all environments, including physical and virtual (e.g. social media and online learning platforms).
- 4.5 HISA has their own Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures, but there is an expectation on behalf of both organisations to work collaboratively to safeguard our community.

## 5 Exceptions

- 5.1 This policy does not apply to accommodation advertised by or signposted to by UHI and partners (e.g. privately managed student accommodation or listings of private tenancies).
- 5.2 Third parties using UHI or partner facilities (e.g. Highlands and Islands Student Association (HISA), other academic institutes, external sports clubs and societies). It is expected the third party will have their own Safeguarding Policy but UHI and partners cannot be held responsible for the content of any external policies.
- 5.3 Students attending activities organised and hosted by another academic institute or body e.g. conferences, symposiums, sports tournaments and society gatherings.
- 5.4 Safeguarding considerations related to work placements should refer to the relevant policy (see Section 9).

## 6 Notification

- 6.1 All staff are responsible for safeguarding students through their student journey and will be made aware of any changes to the policy.
- 6.2 Safeguarding Leads and Deputies will be briefed and trained on the policy and procedures.
- 6.3 The policy will be publicly available on our website.
- 6.4 We will make information available about our Safeguarding Lead and Deputies and how to contact them. This information will be available both on UHI West Highland website and the UHI website.
- 6.5 The regional Student Support Group (SSG) will include any updates to the policy or procedure as an agenda item to ensure that staff group have a forum to discuss changes and best practice.

## 7 Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 Academic Partner Boards of Management/F&GPC are/is responsible for approving the policy, ensuring the legal compliance of the policy and ensuring that it is followed. UHI West Highland Boards of Management/ F&GPC are/is also responsible for ensuring the strategic effectiveness of the policy.
- 7.2 Principals and Senior Management Teams are responsible for operational compliance with the policy set by the UHI West Highland Board of Management/F&GPC and making recommendations to the Board about updates to the policy. Principals and Senior Management Teams are also responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for all staff.

- 7.3 Safeguarding Leads are accountable for responsibilities as detailed in the Safeguarding Procedures.
- 7.4 Line managers are responsible for ensuring staff participate in training and follow the policy in their day-to-day role.
- 7.5 All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and procedures.

## 8 Legislative Framework

- [Adults with Incapacity \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)
- [Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)
- [Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#)
- [Equalities Act 2010](#)
- [EU Directive of 5th April 2011 on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting its Victims](#)
- [Forced Marriage etc. \(Protection and Jurisdiction\) \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) 2018](#)
- [Getting it right for every child \(GIFREC\)](#)
- [Human Trafficking & Exploitation \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#)
- [Mental Health \(Care and Treatment\) \(Scotland\) Act \(2003\)](#)
- [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#)
- [Police Act 1997](#)
- [Police and Fire Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#)
- [Protection of Children \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#)
- [Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)
- [Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [Sexual Offences \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992](#)

## 9 Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- [Complaints Handling Procedures](#)
- [Fitness to Practise Guidelines \(course-specific\)](#)
- [IT Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [Placement and Externally Supported Learning Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Criminal Offence Data Disclosure Policy](#)
- [Support to Study Procedure](#)

## 10 Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Approved by	Amendment(s)	Author
0	March 2019	AP Board of Management	New single policy	UHI Safeguarding Group
1	May 2022	AP Board of Management	Minor spelling, grammar, formatting changes, in addition to changes related to the UHI rebranding. 1.1: Changed second sentence to include 'we do all we can to protect individuals'; 1.2: added ' National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021' and 'Prevent and CONTEST'; 2.1: New definition to reflect rebranding; 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5: revised definitions; 3.2 and 3.3: revised and combined into single 3.2; 3.3: new 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, previous 3.3.2 has become 3.3.4; 3.5: Section on criminal convictions revised and has become 3.4 due to removal of previous 3.3, new information related to Student Criminal Offence Data Disclosure Policy; 4.2: 'UHI or partner name' added to sports facilities and nurseries; 4.5: new section regarding HISA; 5.2: 'It is expected the third party will have their own Safeguarding Policy but UHI and partners cannot be held responsible for the content of any external policies' added to the end; 8: added National guidance for child protection in Scotland 2021; 9: updated policy list to reflect current policy names and framework.	UHI Safeguarding Group
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