

Safeguarding Guidance for Contractors/Freelance Workers

This guidance is for departments that engage with external contractors or freelancer workers for project work or to provide goods or services to the University, to ensure that these arrangements have due regard to the University's safeguarding obligations. Departments who engage with contractors or freelancers must ensure that they have appointed a Designated Safeguarding Contact who has completed the University's recommended safeguarding training so that they are able to appropriately respond to safeguarding concerns, disclosures and allegations. The Designated Safeguarding Contact will also be responsible for ensuring that the guidance below relating to contractors is adhered to.

Designated Safeguarding Contacts must ensure that if the work of contractors or freelancers will take place in an environment where they may be in the vicinity of children (under 18 years) or vulnerable adults that appropriate safeguarding controls are in place, such as risk assessments for activities or chaperones for contractors/freelancers.

Contractors or freelancers should be made aware that although University sites are primarily adult environments, there will be both children and vulnerable adults on site who are current students, prospective students, visitors, or who are otherwise participating in University related activities including our core activities of teaching and research, or for example are taking part in University-led sports, holiday schemes, volunteering projects, outreach and widening participation activities.

Contractors or freelancers should be made aware that the University has a fundamental responsibility to provide an environment in which individuals of all ages, whether staff, student or visitor, may work, learn and develop in a safe environment. This responsibility includes an ethical and moral duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults at any time when they are engaging with our staff, students, volunteers, and contractors.

Safeguarding Policy

Contractors and freelancers should have due regard to the [University's Safeguarding Policy](#) at all times. Where contractors or freelancers have their own safeguarding policies, these should be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Contact to ensure that they align with the University's Safeguarding Policy, and agreement reached about reporting responsibilities in the event of a safeguarding incident or concern (the Safeguarding team would expect that activities that take place on University premises, or which are led by University staff, would fall under the University's reporting/escalation process).

Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment principles should be adhered to when recruiting contractors or freelancers, to ensure that we are able to respond to concerns about the suitability of candidates during the recruitment process and are able to identify and reject individuals who are unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults. When recruiting contractors/freelancers, Departments should be mindful of the following:

- The recruitment process should ensure that you are confident that contractors/freelancers can establish and maintain professional boundaries and professional integrity
- The recruitment process should ensure that contractors/freelancers are able to establish and maintain relationships with children or vulnerable adults (where required by their role), and will take action to protect a child or vulnerable adult

- That any gaps or inconsistencies in the candidate's education/employment history are explored and any concerns followed up.
- That relevant suitability checks are completed, including self-declarations and DBS checks (where appropriate)
- Where the role requires contact or potential contact with children or vulnerable adults, references should ask about the candidate's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults, and their knowledge and understanding of child protection and safeguarding.
- Make sure the information provided in references is consistent with the information provided by the candidate and follow up any discrepancies, concerns or vague statements.
- Recruitment should involve identity checks, and when staff arrive on site their identity should be checked
- During any induction process, safeguarding responsibilities and expectations about behaviours should be clearly articulated
- When contractors/freelancers are in place, ensure that regular one-to-one meetings are in place that give an opportunity to explore their attitudes, values and behaviours
- Ensure that you have clear procedures in place so staff are aware of what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of a freelancer or contractor. Notify the [Safeguarding team](#) if any allegations are made regarding behaviour of a freelancer or contractor towards a child or vulnerable adult.

It is the responsibility of departments that engage with contractors or freelancers to ensure that contractors or freelancers have completed all necessary employment and safeguarding suitability checks, including DBS checks where relevant, and are able to provide assurance to the University that this has been done. Human Resources [publish guidance on DBS checks](#) and can provide further support on eligibility if necessary.

Behaviours and Expectations

Departments should ensure that the behaviours and expectations outlined below are clearly communicated to, and agreed with, contractors or freelancers. The Safeguarding team recommend that departments that regularly work with contractors or freelancers have an established code of conduct that encompasses the areas below and any other expectations relevant to their area of business, and clearly states the actions that will be taken if expected standards are not met.

Contractors or freelancers should be made aware that the University is a multi-cultural environment, and that the University's concept of diversity encompasses social inclusion, acceptance and respect. The University strives to create an inclusive environment where all people can contribute and reach their full potential, regardless of any protected characteristic, and contractors and freelancers should be aware that the University will not tolerate behaviour that contravenes our values. Contractors and freelancers must ensure that their operatives and any subcontractors are briefed appropriately to avoid behaving in an unacceptable manner.

Reporting Safeguarding Incidents/Concerns

Reporting an incident / disclosure / concern relating to the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults:

For immediate advice and support out of hours, please contact the Community Safety team on 02476 522083, noting that if any individual child or adult is perceived to be at serious risk of immediate harm off campus, the relevant emergency service should be contacted.

All incidents should also be reported to the Safeguarding team. Please provide as much information as you can on the Safeguarding Report Form: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/university-policies/safeguarding/reportform/>