



University
of Worcester

Safeguarding: Keeping Apprentices Safe

Keeping Apprentices Safe

At the University of Worcester, the safety of our students is paramount and we take our responsibility very seriously.

This extends beyond our full-time provision to students who have chosen to study at the University as part of an apprenticeship programme.

We are committed to working with those who employ apprentices to create a rewarding and cohesive learning experience, with a shared responsibility for the safety and well-being of apprentices.

Our Approach

The University has a clear commitment to safeguarding, demonstrated through a long established University Safeguarding Committee which is overseen by the Provost. They actively promote and implement the Safeguarding Policy, confirming that it is regularly reviewed and acted upon.

Additionally, University staff working with apprentices are trained in safeguarding and **PREVENT**. When appropriate, staff are able to access additional information and advice from the University Safeguarding Lead.



Employers' Duty

Employers have a duty to comply with all UK health and safety legislation and responsibilities. The apprentices' welfare in the workplace is the employer's responsibility however, employers should seek appropriate advice when they feel an apprentice may be at risk in their personal lives.

For many employers this can be a complex and confusing area. Please refer to the following pages, which outlines the support the University can provide and some information you may wish to incorporate in your internal procedures whilst employing an apprentice.

Safeguarding

The umbrella term used to describe the protection of well-being, health and human rights of individuals is referred to as safeguarding. All stakeholders involved in apprenticeships have to take reasonable action to minimise risks to apprentices to meet government legislation. This applies to facets of the apprentice experience, both in and outside of the workplace, as well as during attendance at university.

The University's Role

- Provide employers with information and guidance to raise awareness of their safeguarding obligations.
- Provide apprentices with an awareness of safeguarding, understand how to access university support services and be aware of the process for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Provide safeguarding training for all University staff working with apprentices.
- Ensure that staff working with young and vulnerable apprentices are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (where applicable).
- Communicate safeguarding concerns related to individual apprentices with the relevant employer by maintaining sensitive and appropriate channels of communication.
- Ensure that relevant government legislation is familiar to employer staff working with apprentices.

Safeguarding includes protection from:

- Abuse (emotional and physical);
- Bullying (including online);
- Discrimination;
- Forced marriage;
- Mental ill-health;
- Modern day slavery;
- Neglect and self-harm;
- Radicalisation and extremism

The Employer's Role

- Understand what safeguarding means in practice at their organisation, in the context of the responsibilities they have for the people they employ.
- Ensure that staff working with apprentices are appropriate for the role that brings a position of trust and do not present any danger or threat.
- Ensure that DBS have been completed if people are working with young people or vulnerable adults.
- Identify a person to coordinate safeguarding across the organisation that an apprentice can speak to if they have safeguarding concerns.

The Apprentice's Role

- Attend safeguarding training.
- Familiarise themselves with the University and employer's process for raising and/or reporting a safeguarding concern.

PREVENT

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, University apprenticeship provision must have regard ‘to the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism.’

Identification of a person who may be susceptible to extremist ideology, is often made through a culmination of influences rather than through one single factor.

All apprentices studying at the University, will be expected to attend PREVENT sessions as part of their training programmes.



The University’s Role

- Ensure that staff at the University understand the obligations it has under the PREVENT duty.
- Provide relevant training for University staff so that they know how to manage risks and concerns.
- Apply clear procedures so that concerns are raised with the University safeguarding lead (or external agencies as required) and dealt with rapidly.
- Provide embedded training at School level for apprentices at induction and at regular intervals in their programmes.
- Provide a contact for any further information regarding the PREVENT duty.
- Create an environment that encourages respectful free speech in which apprentices can express views in a non-extremist way.

The Employer’s Role

- Demonstrate a shared responsibility and commitment to the principles underpinning the PREVENT duty.
- Seek specialist support if any concerns are raised.

The Apprentice’s Role

- Express views in a non-extremist way.
- Seek specialist support if concerned about a peer.

British Values

The promotion of British Values is an important part of PREVENT, protected by legislation such as the Equality Act 2010.

British values are the norms that shape our society and are described as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect
- Tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

Exploration of apprentices’ ideas are stimulated in an environment where these values are recognised and respected.



The University’s Role

- Promote British Values throughout an apprentice’s programme.
- Provide training to explore and define British Values and their influence in society.
- Facilitate the application of apprentice’s knowledge to relevant situations and environments.
- Promote respect amongst apprentices, recognise difference and have regard for protected characteristics.

The Employer’s Role

- Adhere to legislation as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Demonstrate a commitment to British Values.

The Apprentice’s Role

- Act respectfully.
- Demonstrate tolerance of those from different faiths and different beliefs.

Staying Safe Online

Online content and interaction can be accessed and engaged with in many ways. Individuals need to have the skills to use digital technology and the internet safely and develop appropriate online behaviours.

Individuals need to know how they can protect themselves online and keep their personal data secure.

The University's Role

- Evaluate the risk of harm associated with apprentices being online or using digital technology.
- Deliver appropriate training to keep apprentices safe online.
- Empower apprentices to discern the validity and authenticity of information held online.
- Ensure that University staff receive training to identify and deal with online safety concerns.
- Provide clear guidance on what is acceptable use of the internet at University.
- Seek specialist support if any concerns are raised.

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Dangers can include:

- Bullying and abuse
- Revenge porn
- Grooming
- Identity theft
- Scamming
- Fraud
- Viruses

Developing discerning critical thinking is an important part of an apprentice's programme and will help apprentices examine and appraise the authenticity and validity of online content and information.

The Employer's Role

- Raise the apprentice's awareness of the organisation's policies on the acceptable use of the internet and other digital technologies whilst in the workplace.
- Act to minimise risk and understand the dangers apprentices face when using technology in the workplace.
- Communicate concerns about apprentice safety online to the University.

The Apprentice's Role

- Familiarise and work within the policies for acceptable use of the internet, social media and digital technologies at University and the workplace.

Safeguarding in Action

The University is able to provide you with support in managing safeguarding concerns whether you are an employer or apprentice. If you are presented with a scenario and are unsure of how to deal with it, then do not hesitate to contact us.

Apprentices may feel more comfortable talking to some individuals than others about their concerns. If an apprentice chooses to talk to a member of staff about a safeguarding concern they might have, the University will endeavour to be as transparent with employers as possible whilst retaining the apprentices trust

Warning Signs

- **Absence** - missing work or not turning up at university
- **Changes in appearance**
- **Changes in behaviour and character** - becoming quiet or loud, aggressive or withdrawn
- **Changes in emotional health** - crying, anxiety or low mood
- **Excessive alcohol consumption**
- **Physical injuries** - cuts or bruises
- **Poor living conditions**
- **Self-harm**

and adhering to confidentiality policies of the University.

As part of the apprentice programme, regular progress reviews should encompass a check on the apprentice's welfare so that action can be taken where concerns might arise.

Often an apprentice will not seek any help for a safeguarding concern, but there are common signs which can help you identify if something is wrong. However, in an emergency or when you suspect a serious issue we recommend that you contact the appropriate authorities in the first instance.

- **Use of drugs**
- **Withdrawing from certain activities** - reluctance to go online, sudden changes in use of technology

NB: The existence of these characteristics is not a definite sign that something is wrong.

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Who to contact

If you have a concern about a student or member of staff, you are advised to contact the University Safeguarding Lead via: safeguarding@worc.ac.uk

Alternatively, for matters related to health and wellbeing of students you can email: studentlife@worc.ac.uk

For course related support you are advised to contact the Apprenticeship Office via: apprenticeships@worc.ac.uk
Concerns may be escalated as necessary to the Head of School

If you have a concern about a member of staff or student in the context of Prevent please email: prevent@worc.ac.uk

For further guidance please refer to
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>