

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING - CODE OF PRACTICE

COLLEGE POLICY

1. This Code of Practice (including annexes) complements the Child Protection and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy and provides more detailed guidance for staff on protecting children from harm.

RESPONSIBILITIES

2. **The Provost**. The responsibility for oversight of the College's Child Protection and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy rests with the Provost, with delegated responsibility to the Director of Safeguarding and College Projects with direction from the College's Safeguarding Committee.

3. **The Director of Safeguarding and College Projects** Delegated responsibility for oversight of the College's Child Protection and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy with direction from the College's Safeguarding Committee.

4. **Child Protection Officer**. Guidance issued under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 suggests that educational establishments should have, "a senior member of the establishment's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with the local authority, and working with other agencies". The College has two nominated Child Protection Officers – the Director of Safeguarding and College Projects and the Director of Student Services. The local safeguarding officers and referral routes are set out in an annex to this Code of Practice.

5. **Lead Safeguarding Officers**. Act as the main contact in the College for the protection of children and adults at risk. Responsible for making referrals to the DBS, the Police and/or the Local Authority Designated Officer as appropriate.

6. **Local Safeguarding Officers**. Act as the main contact in their area for the protection of children and adults at risk and the person to whom staff should report concerns. Responsible for escalating concerns to Lead Safeguarding Officers as appropriate.

7. **Staff Compliance team**. The Staff Compliance team has a responsibility for obtaining DBS checks for members of staff, prospective staff, casual workers, volunteers and honorary contracts in liaison with the individual and/or department concerned, and for handling any disclosures made as a result. See below for information regarding student DBS checks, and/or checks relating to non-staff volunteers working with the Student Recruitment and Outreach Department.

8. **The College's Safeguarding Committee**. The Safeguarding Committee is chaired by the Director of Safeguarding and College Projects. The membership includes representatives from across College who have lead responsibility for activities involving under 18s or vulnerable adults. The Committee meets on a termly basis to (1) agree protocols and procedures that reflect a best practice approach to safeguarding (2) ensure clear accountability and training for those with responsibility for safeguarding (3) share learning and casework developments to improve awareness and compliance.

9. **Faculty Deans, Heads of Departments/ Divisions**. Faculty Deans and Heads of Department/ Divisions and all other managers have delegated responsibility in their own areas supported by Faculty Operation Officers and Faculty Senior Tutors and research leads.

10. **Individual staff members**. Individual members of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the Policy, undertaking the online safeguarding training and informing colleagues and/or managers of their particular requirements, for example regarding further training.

REGULATED ACTIVITY AND THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS

11. It is a criminal offence for an employer to knowingly place staff (including casual workers) or volunteers who have been barred by the DBS in posts working with children and/or adults at risk where the staff or volunteer will be carrying out regulated activity, and it is a criminal offence for individuals barred by the DBS to work in or apply to work in those positions. The DBS is responsible for maintaining a list of individuals barred from working with children and/or adults at risk and for processing requests for DBS checks (criminal record checks). The College is registered with a third party provider for DBS checks and will ensure that a check is conducted when required.

A DBS check is needed for all staff and students who are engaged in, or will engage in, “regulated activity”⁽¹⁾ and the College is also entitled to carry out DBS checks on individuals in certain other roles to which an exception under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 applies. The College will usually arrange for a DBS check to be carried out when it is legally entitled to do so, even if this is not a legal requirement. There are four levels of check: Basic (only carried out by College in specific circumstances) Standard, Enhanced and Enhanced with Barred List Checks. The Staff Compliance team has procedures in place for obtaining the requisite clearance from the DBS for staff. The online DBS application form requires input from both the individual requiring the DBS check (the “applicant”) and the Staff Compliance team. The DBS will send a copy of the disclosure certificate directly to the applicant. The applicant will need to show the original certificate to Staff Compliance or a person delegated by Staff Compliance with authorisation to view this. For posts where DBS checks are an essential and ongoing requirement, the individual will be required to subscribe to the DBS update service which will allow the Staff Compliance team to carry out regular checks on the individual’s DBS status.

When recruiting an overseas candidate, it may be necessary to ask the candidate to apply for a [criminal records check overseas](#) or certificate of good character.

STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

12. The College has a duty of care towards students who are defined as children. For these students, good practice means that the College will:
- a. Inform parents and guardians that it does not act in the place of a parent;
 - b. Have a list of the student’s emergency contact details, in particular those of parents and guardians;

1. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 set out the activities and work considered to be “regulated activity”, which a barred person must not do. The Protection of the Freedoms Act 2012 amended the definition.

With regard to activity relating to children, regulated activity “*comprises in summary:*

(i) unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children;

(ii) unsupervised work for a limited range of establishments (‘specified places’) with opportunity for contact: for example, schools, children’s homes, childcare premises, children’s nurseries, children’s hospitals.

Work under (i) and (ii) is regulated activity only if done regularly.”

“Regular” means carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period (or overnight (2am to 6am)).

- c. Inform the student that he/she may not enter licensed premises or hold office;
- d. Undertake risk assessments of activities involving children, and
- e. If concerns arise, take appropriate action to safeguard the welfare of such students, taking into account their age.

13. To ensure the above measures are implemented, the procedures set out in the *Imperial College London [Policy and Procedure for Admitting Students Under 18 Years of Age](#)* will be followed and the applicable declaration completed and signed.

14. **Academic Staff.** Within Departments/ Divisions, academic staff will have the primary contact with students under 18. It is the responsibility of the relevant Head of Department/ Division to identify at the earliest possible opportunity children who will be studying in the Department/ Division, and to notify the appropriate members of staff of these students, as well as ensuring that the steps in the paragraph above are carried out including ensuring risk assessments are in place for all activities. The Head of Department/ Division will have the responsibility to ensure that any staff within the Department/ Division undertaking, or due to be undertaking work that requires DBS clearance are DBS checked using the process put in place by Staff Compliance. Those who will be subject to DBS checks may include (depending on the course and level of study) personal tutors, academic tutors, admissions staff and supervisors). When interviewing students for places on degree programmes, given the short, one-off nature of such interviews, it will be permissible for members of interviewing panels not to have been DBS checked, although as a matter of good practice such interviews should not be carried out by one sole interviewer. Risk assessments should be in place.

15. **Halls of Residence Staff.** Where a student under the age of 18 is admitted to the College and is to be placed in a College Hall of Residence, Wardens, Sub-Wardens, Assistant Wardens and any staff at student residences engaged in caring for, supervising or providing advice or guidance to children on a regular basis are likely to be carrying out regulated activity and will therefore be subject to a DBS check for a Child Workforce including the Children's Barred List check. Where the Halls of Residence Staff do not have their own separate front door to their own accommodation, any person aged 16 or over who lives with them will also need a DBS Check at the same level. For all Halls of Residence staff, including those who do have their own separate front door to their own accommodation, work with students under 18 should not take place within the staff's accommodation and to do this would require a DBS check at the aforementioned level for anyone aged 16 or over who lives with them. The Director of Student Services will advise the Staff Compliance team of new personnel to ensure that necessary checks are made prior to commencement of employment.

16. **Contractors.** The Campus Services Department will notify Estates Facilities to any students under the age of 18 who are staying in Halls of Residence. If a visit by maintenance, security or cleaning staff to a room being inhabited by a child under 18 is necessary, then these staff (either in-house or contracted) must either be:

- a. accompanied by a member of the Residences team; or
- b. DBS checked, where the College is entitled to request a DBS check.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 16

17. If any of the staff are not able to be DBS checked in time (for example, student choices of modules may not be known in time to ensure that relevant staff have been DBS checked) it is acceptable to have different arrangements for students under 16. For example requiring under 16s to be accompanied by a designated adult/ chaperone at all times, with the student's funding body/ family/ guardians meeting the costs of such arrangements. It is College Policy not to accommodate students under the age of 16 in Halls of Residence. For details of the additional steps in the admissions process relating to students aged under sixteen on entry, see the *Imperial College London - [Policy and Procedure for Admitting Students Under 18 Years of Age](#)*.

CHILDREN IN THE EARLY YEARS EDUCATION CENTRE

18. All staff working at the Early Years Education Centre are required to be enhanced level DBS and Children Barred List checked before commencing work.
19. Visitors to the Early Years Education Centre will be supervised at all times.
20. The Early Years Education Centre has in place its own detailed [child safeguarding policies](#) relevant to the activities undertaken and the recruitment of staff.

CHILDREN AND/OR ADULTS AT RISK USING THE COLLEGE'S SPORTS FACILITIES

21. Staff working at College sports facilities who are or will be engaged in teaching, training, instructing, caring for, supervising or providing advice or guidance to children on a regular basis are required to be DBS checked before commencing work. However, a DBS check cannot be requested if the service is provided and designed for adults, so the presence of a child is incidental, for example an exercise class that is run for adults and attended by some students under 18 years of age. Risk assessments should be in place.
22. External organisations engaged in providing sporting opportunities for children and/or adults at risk, the latter must be specifically working with vulnerable adults because of their age, illness or disability, must ensure that they have their own child protection and safeguarding procedures in place, and where appropriate have completed DBS checks on their staff. The College will undertake periodic checks to ensure the appropriate policies and risk assessments are in place.

CHILDREN ENGAGED WITH STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES SUCH AS OPEN DAYS, SUMMER SCHOOLS MENTORING AND TUTORING AND OTHER WIDENING PARTICIPATION SCHEMES

23. All staff (both employees and casual workers) and students who are employed or volunteer to undertake a project with Student Recruitment and Outreach who are or will be engaged in caring for, supervising or providing advice or guidance to children on a regular basis will be required to undergo a DBS check unless they are assisting with a work experience placement. Student Recruitment and Outreach offer a DBS checking service for student volunteers and workers engaged with their programmes to use, whereas staff will need to use the service provided by Staff Compliance.
24. Where outreach activities involving children are organised by the Imperial College Union, the Union Managing Director, in co-operation with the Union President, will ensure that those staff and students involved in regulated activity undergo the relevant checks. The Union will have in place its own DBS checking measures
25. The Student Recruitment and Outreach division will have in place its own detailed [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) relevant to the activities undertaken.

CHILDREN AND/OR ADULTS AT RISK WITH WHOM COLLEGE STAFF AND STUDENTS COME INTO CONTACT AS A RESULT OF STUDIES INCLUDING PLACEMENTS, RESEARCH AND VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES AND CHILDREN ON WORK EXPERIENCE

26. As a condition of admission, students applying for subjects or postgraduate research where they will come into contact with children are required to be checked through the DBS. The same will apply where contact with vulnerable adults (For DBS purposes a vulnerable adult is 18+ years old and is elderly, ill or disabled, Illness is defined as someone in receipt of Healthcare) is at a level requiring DBS clearance. Medical Students on clinical placements are required to be DBS checked and to comply with requirements of the relevant NHS Trust. The relevant Head of Department/ Division will be responsible for ensuring that the relevant checks are carried out in conjunction with the Registry. Staff who undertake work or research with such groups may need to be DBS checked if they have unsupervised, regular access to children or vulnerable adults. Staff who supervise children under 16 who are on work experience placements within the College will require a DBS check if they will be supervising the child for more than three days in a 30 day period and they will not themselves be supervised by someone in regulated activity. In addition, a risk assessment must be undertaken, and suitable arrangements implemented in light of the results of the risk assessment. DBS checks are not required for staff who supervise children on work experience who are aged 16 or over. Please view [guidance on work experience placements](#) at Imperial. Further guidance on safeguarding considerations for research activity is available on the College's safeguarding webpages.

27. The Imperial College Union will undertake DBS checks where student volunteers are undertaking regulated activity organised by the Imperial College Union, or where it is requested by a host organisation. Where the Imperial College Union works with a partner organisation to provide student volunteers in roles working with children or vulnerable adults (as per the DBS definition), it is the partner organisation's responsibility to undertake DBS checks. This requirement will be stipulated in the agreement with the partner organisation.

CHILDREN USING FACILITIES THROUGH COMMERCIAL EVENTS

28. The College will ensure, through its procurement process, that all commercial activities involving children and/or adults at risk have appropriate safeguarding policies in place that meet the College's policy and guidance, including risk assessments of space. All commercial clients will be required to disclose any safeguarding issues or concerns that have emerged in connection with any activity on or linked to College premises.

CHILDREN VISITING COLLEGE EVENTS OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

29. When arranging an event that may involve child visitors, organisers should ensure that appropriate measures are put in place in line with the College's policy and guidance on working or volunteering with children.

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

30. It is recommended that staff and students who have access to children and/or adults at risk, including students under 18, take steps to ensure that they do not put themselves in a position where an allegation can be made against them. Such staff and students must give special consideration to ensuring that they do not become involved in circumstances where an allegation can be raised. Such consideration might involve, but is in no means limited to:

- a. Treating children with respect and dignity at all times, reflecting their age, background, culture and special needs;
- b. Ensuring that interaction with children occurs in the company of others wherever possible to ensure that an allegation of improper behaviour does not arise;

- c. Retaining a professional approach to children which will involve behaviour such as not divulging home telephone numbers or addresses, refraining from any social media interaction, ensuring that there is no physical contact, avoiding inappropriate familiarity, including discussing matters of a sexual nature, maintaining self-control and being sensitive to issues that can be misconstrued; and
- d. Seeking guidance on their own interactions with children if they have any concerns about their appropriateness or the possibility of them being misconstrued from a College Safeguarding Officer, Faculty Senior Tutor, or (if the concern relates to a student under 18) a Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Under no circumstances should a member of staff or student ever:

- a. Engage in rough/boisterous, physical or sexually provocative games with a child, including horseplay;
- b. Share a room with a child;
- c. Engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- d. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child;
- e. Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child;
- f. Do things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves; or
- g. Invite or allow a child to visit or stay at their home unsupervised.

Further advice on appropriate conduct can be found in the [Safer Recruitment Consortium's Guidance](#). Any employee or volunteer at the College who comes into contact with children under the age of 18 is considered to be in a position of trust, whether or not they meet the strict legal definition, and any sexual activity between an employee or volunteer and a child with whom the employee or volunteer has come into contact through activities carried out in the course of his or her employment or volunteering will be treated as a very serious disciplinary matter. Anyone who meets the legal definition of "position of trust" under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and who engages in any sexual activity with a person under 18 is also committing a criminal offence, and such cases will be reported to the Police. The College has a legal duty to report to the DBS any individual whom it believes ought to be placed on the list of individuals barred from working with children.

These guidelines for staff and students will always apply in the context of coming into contact with children, including students under the age of 18 years, and adults at risk. The reporting and escalation procedures in this code of practice should also be used where there are wider safeguarding concerns and the Lead Safeguarding Officers will direct to the appropriate procedure based on the individual circumstances.

A brief guide for staff and students on how to respond to allegations / suspicions of abuse or harm can be found in an annex to this code of practice. Guidance on what to do if staff or students are concerned that a member of the College community (including a child) has indecent images of children in their possession can also be found in the annexes to this code of practice.

LINKED POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

The following policies and guidance are included for reference in line with the College's wider duty of care beyond children and adults at risk. Any question about the appropriate policy or procedure to be used may be raised with the Director of Safeguarding and College Projects (l.lindsay@imperial.ac.uk).

Harrassment and Bullying Procedures

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/harassment-bullying--victimisation/>

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/sexual-harassment-sexual-misconduct-and-sexual-violence-/>

Linked Guidance

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/personal-and-familial-relationships/>

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/alcohol-and-substances/>

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/secretariat/what-we-do/prevent/>

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/finance/purchasing/related-policy-statements/modern-slavery/>

Raising Concerns

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/secretariat/what-we-do/prevent/referral-of-concerns/>

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/research-integrity/public-interest-disclosures/>

Mental health and wellbeing

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/counselling/mental-health-guidelines/>

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing/>

Approved by the College's Safeguarding Committee March 2018

Approved by the Provost's Board March 2018

Updated July 2020

Updated November 2020

Updated April 2021