



UNDEB ABERYSTWYTH STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the statutory safeguarding responsibilities of Undeb Aberystwyth (the SU) in relation to children and adults at risk in Wales. It is guided by legal obligations under Welsh safeguarding law, principally the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and its accompanying guidance “Working Together to Safeguard People” as well as other relevant UK legislation. Statutory safeguarding in this context refers specifically to protecting those groups defined by law as particularly vulnerable, namely children (individuals under 18, often identified as children *at risk* when harm or abuse is suspected) and “adults at risk,” from abuse or neglect. All other wellbeing and safety matters (for example, general student welfare or mental health support) fall under the SU’s broader duty of care and are not covered by this policy. In other words, this document focuses only on **statutory** safeguarding; any non-statutory wellbeing concerns will be managed through separate SU policies and support services, not through this safeguarding framework.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all Undeb Aberystwyth activities, interactions, programs, and events that involve children (under 18 years of age) or adults at risk as defined by applicable legislation. This includes any context on or off campus where SU staff, officers, volunteers, or student groups may come into contact with these vulnerable populations. Examples in scope include (but are not limited to): students under 18, SU-led volunteering projects with local youth, mentoring schemes involving school children, events open to community families, or disclosures from individuals about others who fit the statutory definition of a child or adult at risk. It also covers initiatives involving adults who require care and support (for instance, outreach involving adults with disabilities or older adults in the community).
- 2.2. Importantly, this policy does not extend to general student wellbeing or support services for the broader student population. Safeguarding duties here are confined to the legal definitions of children and adults at risk. Concerns about the welfare of adult students who do not meet the “at risk” criteria (for example, an adult student’s mental health issue or personal distress) are outside the scope of statutory safeguarding and are handled under separate SU duty of care and student support policies. All SU personnel must understand this distinction so that statutory safeguarding issues are identified and handled under this policy, while other concerns are referred to the appropriate support channels.

3. Statutory Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply, in line with Welsh law and guidance:

- 3.1. **Child:** A person under the age of 18. In safeguarding law, anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday is considered a child. This policy therefore covers any SU member or service user who is a minor, as well as any under-18s involved in SU activities (e.g. school students attending an event).

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- 3.2. **Child at Risk:** Under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, a “*child at risk*” is defined as a child who (a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and (b) has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met). The use of the term “at risk” means that actual abuse or neglect does not need to have occurred for a child to be considered a child at risk, if there is reasonable cause to suspect potential harm and the child has care/support needs, early intervention is warranted.
- 3.3. **Adult at Risk:** In Wales, an “*adult at risk*” is defined in law as an adult (18 or over) who (a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, (b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. This definition comes from the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and replaces the older concept of a “vulnerable adult.” In practice, it includes adults who require additional support (for example, due to disability, illness, or age-related conditions) and who may be targeted for abuse or neglect as a result. An adult student does not automatically qualify as an “adult at risk” simply by being a student; the criteria above must be met (i.e. the individual has care/support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse, and cannot protect themselves because of those needs).
- 3.4. **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** While not a term defined in legislation, within the SU this refers to the appointed staff member (or members) responsible for managing safeguarding concerns. The DSL is a trained individual who serves as the primary point of contact for reporting safeguarding issues and has the authority to take appropriate action. (All references to reporting in this policy imply reporting to the DSL.) The DSL coordinates the SU’s response to any safeguarding incidents and liaises with external agencies and the University as needed. There may also be a Deputy DSL to cover or assist as required.

4. Statutory Responsibilities

Undeb Aberystwyth will ensure that all its statutory safeguarding responsibilities are met in full. This commitment includes, but is not limited to, the following core responsibilities:

- 4.1. **Protective Reporting:** Promptly reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures regarding children or adults at risk to the appropriate authorities. In Wales, under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, there is a clear duty for organisations to report a child or adult at risk to local authorities so that protective action can be taken. This means the SU will refer concerns to the relevant statutory agencies, for example, to Ceredigion County Council’s Social Services (Children’s or Adults’ Services as appropriate) or to the police in line with legal requirements and the *Wales Safeguarding Procedures* that standardise practice across Wales. Undeb Aberystwyth recognises its duty to consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk in all its functions, and will act on any concerns that someone is suffering or likely to suffer harm. Failure to report a serious concern could not only endanger an individual but also breach the law. (Note: This reporting may be done in coordination with the University; in some cases, the University’s DSL may make the external report on the SU’s behalf, as described later in this policy, but the key point is that the information will be passed to the statutory authorities without delay.)

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- 4.2. **Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Maintaining a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (and deputy DSL as needed) who is responsible for overseeing safeguarding within the SU. The DSL's duties include monitoring compliance with this policy, keeping safeguarding knowledge up-to-date, and serving as a liaison with external agencies. The DSL will also coordinate closely with the University's safeguarding officers on any cases that involve the wider institution, ensuring alignment with the University's safeguarding channels and procedures. In practice, the SU works in partnership with the University so that any concern is shared with the appropriate University safeguarding lead or team according to agreed protocols. Additionally, the DSL will maintain links with local Welsh safeguarding bodies to ensure effective multi-agency cooperation. This means the SU's DSL can seek advice or escalate issues through the regional safeguarding network if needed, in line with Welsh safeguarding practices.
- 4.3. **Safe Recruitment and Training:** Conducting required background checks (e.g. DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service checks) on SU staff, elected officers, or volunteers who will be working in *regulated activities* with children or adults at risk. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as updated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) provides the legal framework across the UK for these vetting and barring checks. Undeb Aberystwyth will ensure that no individual barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is placed in a role that involves such contact, in full compliance with the law. Additionally, the SU will provide appropriate safeguarding training to its staff and volunteers, commensurate with their roles. All those involved in SU activities are expected to understand how to recognise and respond to potential safeguarding concerns.
- 4.4. **Records and Confidentiality:** Maintaining secure records of all reported safeguarding concerns and actions taken and handling all data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR). Safeguarding records will be stored confidentially, and access will be limited to those who need to know, in line with data protection principles.
- 4.5. **Compliance and Monitoring:** The SU's Chief Executive Officer and its Board of Trustees will oversee adherence to this policy as part of their governance duties. The Board is responsible for setting and monitoring the SU's safeguarding strategy and for seeking assurance that effective measures are in place. The DSL will provide reports to the senior leadership team and/or the trustees on safeguarding matters, ensuring transparency and accountability in how the SU meets its legal obligations.

5. Safeguarding Procedures (Reporting and Response)

- 5.1. All safeguarding concerns involving children or adults at risk must be reported immediately to the SU's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or University DSL in their absence. No member of SU staff or any student involved in SU activities should ever hesitate to report a safeguarding issue for fear of "getting it wrong," breaching confidentiality, or overreacting. If someone is in immediate danger, you should first contact the emergency services (dial 999) and then notify the DSL as soon as it is safe to do so.
- 5.2. **Confidentiality:** While the SU respects individual privacy, it is critical to understand that confidentiality must never be a barrier to safeguarding. In situations where a child or adult at

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risk may be harmed, the normal expectation of keeping information confidential is overridden by the duty to protect vulnerable people. Data protection laws (Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR) are not intended to prevent the sharing of information for safeguarding purposes; rather, they permit and encourage information sharing “*for the right reasons*” to protect individuals from harm. Therefore, if a student or any person discloses a risk of abuse or neglect, SU staff must inform the DSL, even if the person asks for the information to be kept secret. Staff or volunteers receiving such disclosures should explain gently that they cannot keep potentially dangerous information confidential and that it will only be shared with those who need to know in order to help. Never promise absolute confidentiality to someone who is telling you a safeguarding concern. In summary, protecting individuals from harm takes priority over confidentiality. Information will be handled in line with privacy laws, but safety comes first, necessary details will be shared with appropriate authorities to safeguard those at risk.

- 5.3. **Reporting Process:** When a safeguarding concern arises, for example, a disclosure of abuse, or signs of possible neglect or exploitation, the person who becomes aware of it should take the following steps:
 - 5.3.1. **Immediate Safety:** If the situation is urgent and someone is at immediate risk of harm, call the emergency services without delay. Do what you can to ensure the immediate safety of the child or adult at risk, if possible, while waiting for emergency responders.
 - 5.3.2. **Notify the DSL:** As soon as possible, contact the SU’s Designated Safeguarding Lead to report the concern. This should ideally happen *immediately* (e.g. via phone or in person) and be followed up with a written report. If the SU’s DSL is not available at that moment, you should contact the University’s DSL or Safeguarding team for guidance, but you must not delay reporting. Provide the DSL with all relevant details, including who is at risk, what has been observed or disclosed, who is allegedly involved, and any evidence or context available.
 - 5.3.3. **Record the Concern:** The staff member or student reporting the issue should also make a factual record of the concern as soon as possible. Document what was said or seen, including dates/times and witnesses, using the individual’s own words where applicable. This written record (which could be an email from your work account, a signed note, etc.) should be submitted to the DSL. The DSL will maintain these records securely. Make sure the record is dated and, if written by hand, signed. If by email, the timestamp will serve this purpose.
 - 5.3.4. **Do Not Investigate Yourself:** It is not the responsibility of individual SU staff or students to investigate suspicions or allegations of abuse. In fact, attempting to investigate without proper authority can compromise evidence or put people at further risk. The role of SU personnel is to report the concern and let the DSL and the appropriate statutory agencies handle the investigation. Do not attempt to formally question the victim or the alleged perpetrator beyond initial clarification of the basic facts, and do not confront any alleged abuser. Simply gather enough information to know there is a concern, then report it, leave the in-depth inquiries to police or social services professionals.

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5.4. **DSL Actions:** Upon receiving a report of a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the information and decide on the next steps. Typically, these steps include consulting with or reporting to external authorities, as per Welsh safeguarding procedures:

5.4.1. **If the concern involves a child (under 18):** The DSL will contact the appropriate local authority Children's Services department (for Aberystwyth and surrounding areas, this is Ceredigion County Council's Children & Families Social Services). This referral will be made in line with local child protection procedures and the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Children Board (CYSUR) protocols, as set out in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. In essence, the SU's DSL will alert the Council's social services team that a child is suspected to be at risk, providing all relevant information. The DSL may also inform the University's Safeguarding Officer (especially if the child is a University student or if University resources/personnel are involved) so that the University can coordinate support and response. Once the referral is made, the statutory authorities (social services, possibly in conjunction with police) will lead any investigation or protective action, with the SU cooperating as needed.

5.4.2. **If the concern involves an adult at risk:** The DSL will contact the local authority Adult Safeguarding team (through Ceredigion County Council's Social Services for adults) to report the concern, or directly inform the police if a crime (such as physical or sexual assault) is alleged. This process follows the protocols of the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Adults Board (CWMPAS), ensuring that the report is handled according to regional adult protection procedures. The University's safeguarding contacts may also be informed as appropriate, particularly if the situation overlaps with the University community or facilities. Once the report is made, the local authority will decide whether to initiate a Section 126 inquiry (the term in Wales for looking into an adult at risk report) and will involve the police if a criminal offense is suspected. Again, the SU will defer to the statutory agencies for investigation, while remaining involved for support and follow-up as needed.

5.4.3. **Notification to Regulators (if applicable):** In either case (child or adult concern), if the situation might also constitute a serious incident for the purposes of charity regulation (since the Students' Union is a registered charity), the DSL will inform senior management. The CEO or Board of Trustees may have an obligation to report it to the Charity Commission as a serious incident. For example, a serious safeguarding incident that occurs in the SU's activities or on its premises could be notifiable to the Charity Commission. The DSL will provide the necessary information to the SU's leadership so that required regulatory reports can be made in a timely manner.

5.4.4. The DSL will seek guidance from external agencies (and from the University) whenever in doubt about the proper course of action. It is always better to consult and err on the side of caution in safeguarding cases.

5.5. **Following Institutional Protocols:** Undeb Aberystwyth will follow any agreed safeguarding protocols in place with the University and with local authorities. Typically, this means the SU's DSL will also report internally within the University structure if the case involves any

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University members, and will cooperate with any University-led actions. The SU recognises that it is part of a wider community and a wider safeguarding system in Wales. This cooperative approach ensures that handling of any case is coordinated and effective. The SU adheres to the principle that safeguarding is a shared responsibility.

- 5.6. **Support for Affected Individuals:** Throughout the process, the SU will ensure that the child or adult at risk, as well as any student or person who reported the concern, is offered appropriate support. This may include emotional support and reassurance, referrals to counselling services, or other wellbeing resources. The safety and welfare of the individual at risk is the paramount consideration. The SU will work with the University or external services to make sure support mechanisms are in place (for example, helping a student access pastoral support, or arranging for an independent advisor in cases of sexual violence, etc.). Our aim is to ensure that individuals involved in a safeguarding case do not feel abandoned or isolated during the process.
- 5.7. **Confidential Record-Keeping:** The DSL will document all steps taken in response to a report, including communications with external agencies, decisions made, outcomes, and any follow-up actions. These records will be kept confidentially. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR requirements, records will be maintained securely and only shared with authorised persons. (Maintaining confidentiality of records is crucial for privacy; however, as noted, necessary information sharing with authorities is permitted by law and by local safeguarding protocols in order to protect individuals.) Records of safeguarding cases will typically be retained for a period specified by data protection and safeguarding record guidelines, and will not be disclosed to others in the SU except on a need-to-know basis.

By following these procedures, Undeb Aberystwyth ensures that safeguarding concerns are handled swiftly, lawfully, and effectively. Remember: safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If any staff member or student involved with the SU has a concern, they must not hesitate to act on it. Never assume that someone else will report it. It is far better to report a concern that turns out to be unfounded or minor than to miss a chance to protect a vulnerable person from harm.

6. What Should You Be Looking For?

It is important for all SU staff and volunteers to be vigilant and aware of possible signs of abuse or neglect. Below is a non-exhaustive list of examples which could be indicators of a safeguarding issue you might observe or have disclosed to you. You might also receive information second-hand, for example, a student might tell you about difficulties their younger sibling or an adult relative is experiencing. Keep in mind that there could be children or adults at risk who are unable to advocate for themselves, so noticing signs might be their only hope of getting help. If you're ever unsure about what to do or whether something constitutes a concern, please speak to your DSL.

6.1. Physical indicators:

6.1.1. Unexplained injuries such as bruises, fractures, burns, or bite marks.

6.1.2. Frequent injuries or patterns of injury with inconsistent explanations (e.g. different stories about how an injury happened) or injuries at different stages of healing.

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6.1.3. Wearing clothing that covers up injuries (for instance, long sleeves on a hot day), which may indicate an attempt to hide marks.

6.1.4. Signs of neglect in appearance: poor personal hygiene, significant weight loss or malnutrition, untreated medical issues, or clothing unsuited to the weather (e.g. shorts in winter or very dirty, ill-fitting clothes).

6.2. Behavioural, emotional and psychological indicators:

6.2.1. Sudden changes in behaviour or personality, such as becoming withdrawn, anxious, depressed, or extremely fearful, without an obvious environmental cause.

6.2.2. Aggressive, disruptive, or noticeably oppositional behaviour that is out of character for the individual.

6.2.3. Excessive fear of making mistakes or fear of certain people (which could indicate someone has been berating or abusing them).

6.2.4. Reluctance to go home or to a particular place; a child might dread the end of the school day, or an adult might avoid going back to a certain environment.

6.2.5. Avoidance of specific individuals or situations for unclear reasons.

6.2.6. Self-harm signs or expressions of suicidal thoughts.

6.2.7. An unexplained lack of trust in adults or caregivers, or conversely, excessive compliance and fearfulness around them.

6.2.8. A child or adult at risk seeming very detached or numb, or showing a lack of emotional attachment to caregivers.

6.2.9. Sudden speech disorders or regression (e.g. a previously verbal child suddenly becoming mute or an adult losing communication abilities without medical reason).

6.3. Other indicators:

6.3.1. **Financial abuse** (for adults at risk) might show up as sudden changes in financial circumstances, unexplained loss of money or personal belongings, or an adult having unpaid bills and lack of basic necessities despite having adequate income or benefits.

6.3.2. **Self-neglect** (particularly for adults at risk) could manifest as extremely poor living conditions (unsanitary or unsafe home environment), hoarding behaviour, or an inability/unwillingness to manage personal affairs and health.

6.3.3. **Modern slavery or trafficking** might be indicated by someone having no personal identification documents, appearing to be controlled or under the influence of others in their daily activities, or working excessively long hours for little or no pay.

6.3.4. **Domestic abuse/Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence:** indicators can include frequent injuries with unlikely explanations, a person becoming

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isolated from friends/family, or mention of controlling/violent behaviour by a partner or family member.

6.3.5. **Sexual abuse or exploitation:** a child might have knowledge of sexual matters inappropriate for their age, display sudden changes in behaviour, or show physical signs of trauma; an adult at risk might have unexplained injuries in genital areas, sexually transmitted infections, or changes in demeanour such as unusual secrecy or fear.

6.3.6. **Radicalisation:** This involves a person being influenced or coerced into adopting extreme political, religious, or ideological views that could lead them to support terrorism or violent extremism. Indicators may include sudden or intense changes in beliefs or behaviour, expressing strong intolerance towards others, isolating themselves from friends or usual activities, or showing increased interest in extremist materials or groups (especially online). In a University context, a student may voice or post concerning opinions, withdraw from diverse social groups, or appear to be under the influence of others promoting extremist ideologies. It's important to approach such signs sensitively and refer any concerns through safeguarding procedures via the University rather than attempting to intervene directly.

These indicators do not prove that abuse or neglect is occurring, but they should raise concern. One sign alone may not confirm abuse, but several signs together, or repeated occurrences of the same sign, should be taken seriously. Always err on the side of caution: report observations or disclosures to the DSL so that experts can assess the situation. Remember, you are not expected to diagnose the problem, your role is to notice potential red flags and pass the information on to the safeguarding lead.

7. Legal Framework

This policy is guided by and adheres to the following key legislation and statutory guidance regarding safeguarding, with an emphasis on the Welsh context:

- 7.1. **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014:** This Act provides the legal framework for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of people who need care and support in Wales. It is the cornerstone of Welsh safeguarding law, setting out duties for local authorities and relevant partners to prevent abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk. The Act defines “adult at risk” and provides for the reporting duties (e.g. the duty for certain agencies to report a child or adult at risk to the local authority), and it established the system of Regional Safeguarding Boards (for children and for adults) across Wales. Undeb Aberystwyth aligns its safeguarding practices with the requirements of the 2014 Act. In essence, the SU’s obligations under this Act replace the frameworks of the Children Act 2004 and Care Act 2014 as they apply in England – the SSW(W)A 2014 is the law that shapes how we safeguard children and adults at risk in Wales.
- 7.2. **Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019):** These are the national safeguarding procedures for Wales, covering both children and adults at risk. They provide detailed, standardised guidance for all practitioners on how to implement the Social Services and Well-being Act in practice. The Procedures outline essential roles and responsibilities and describe the steps to take when there are concerns about abuse or neglect, ensuring consistency across all regions

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of Wales. Undeb Aberystwyth staff and volunteers are expected to follow these procedures when raising or handling safeguarding concerns. For example, the Wales Safeguarding Procedures detail how to make a referral to social services, how strategy meetings are convened, and how different agencies (police, health, education, etc.) coordinate, the SU's actions will fit into this all-Wales process. By adhering to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures, we ensure our local practice meets the national standards and legal requirements.

- 7.3. **Working Together to Safeguard People (Welsh Government guidance):** This is a suite of statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Government under Part 7 of the 2014 Act (often published in multiple volumes covering different aspects of safeguarding). It serves as the Welsh equivalent to the former *Working Together to Safeguard Children* guidance used in England, but in Wales it encompasses both children and adults and reflects devolved legislation. For example, Volume 5 covers handling individual cases for children at risk, and Volume 6 covers adults at risk. This guidance outlines how agencies should collaborate and what procedures should be followed for effective safeguarding. Undeb Aberystwyth takes into account the principles and protocols in Working Together to Safeguard People in all our safeguarding work, ensuring we cooperate appropriately with multi-agency partners. Whenever this national guidance is updated by Welsh Government, the SU will review its policy to integrate any new recommendations or requirements.
- 7.4. **Data Protection Act 2018 (UK General Data Protection Regulation):** This Act governs the processing of personal data and is the UK's implementation of the GDPR. Importantly, it is not a barrier to information sharing in safeguarding situations, the law allows for necessary and proportionate sharing of personal information to protect individuals at risk. Undeb Aberystwyth handles all personal information in line with this law, ensuring that data is shared responsibly and only with the appropriate authorities or personnel when safeguarding requires it. All records of safeguarding cases are managed in a manner consistent with the Data Protection Act 2018, meaning they are kept secure and confidential, and retained only as long as needed for safety and compliance purposes.
- 7.5. **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006:** This UK-wide legislation establishes the framework for the vetting and barring scheme (the Disclosure and Barring Service, DBS). It created the system of barred lists for people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults. Undeb Aberystwyth complies with this Act by ensuring that any staff or volunteers in regulated activity undergo the appropriate DBS checks, and by not permitting anyone who is barred from working with children or adults at risk to hold a role that involves such contact. In practice, this means the SU works with the DBS service to screen individuals, and if a check reveals that an individual is on a barred list, we will not recruit or will remove that individual from the relevant role.
- 7.6. **Protection of Freedoms Act 2012:** This Act reformed the vetting and barring system established by the 2006 Act. Notably, it merged the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority into the single Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). It also refined the definition of "regulated activities" i.e., those roles which require enhanced DBS checks with barred list information. Undeb Aberystwyth follows the current DBS guidelines that arose from these reforms, ensuring we correctly identify which positions in

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the SU (staff or volunteer) require an enhanced DBS check. For example, a student volunteering role that involves weekly mentoring of children would be classified as a regulated activity and thus requires full vetting, whereas a one-off event volunteer might not; we refer to the definitions set by this law and subsequent guidance.

- 7.7. **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty):** This UK Act includes the Prevent duty, which requires specified authorities (such as universities, local authorities, schools, health bodies, etc.) to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” While Undeb Aberystwyth is not one of the statutory authorities in its own right, we operate within an institution (the University) that is subject to this duty. We acknowledge that safeguarding individuals from radicalisation is part of our broader safeguarding remit. In Wales, the Prevent strategy is implemented through local multi-agency panels (known as *Channel* panels) and in coordination with devolved services like education and local government. Undeb Aberystwyth is committed to playing its part in the Prevent agenda by remaining vigilant to signs of radicalisation among students or the community and by reporting any concerns about potential extremist exploitation to the appropriate channels. We will typically liaise with the University’s designated Prevent Lead and, if necessary, with local Prevent coordinators or the police. Our approach aligns with the UK Government’s Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales, as well as Welsh Government initiatives (such as the Respect and Resilience program for educational settings) that support community cohesion and countering violent extremism.

All SU officers, staff, and volunteers should be familiar with the implications of the above laws and guidance. If anyone is unsure how a particular law or guideline applies to their role, they should seek guidance from the DSL or from the SU’s Leadership. Relevant legislation and guidance are accessible online (for example, at legislation.gov.uk for Acts of Parliament and gov.wales for Welsh Government guidance documents) for further reference. The SU will also provide training and resources to help ensure everyone understands these requirements.

8. Review and Monitoring

- 8.1. This Statutory Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up-to-date and effective. At a minimum, the policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis (once every academic year). It will also be reviewed promptly in response to any significant changes in legislation or guidance, for instance, if new safeguarding laws are enacted or existing laws are amended, or if national guidance is updated (such as a revision to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures or the issuance of new Welsh Government safeguarding guidance), the policy will be adjusted accordingly to reflect those changes.
- 8.2. **Monitoring:** The implementation of this policy is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the SU’s Chief Executive. The DSL will keep records of all safeguarding incidents and outcomes and will produce periodic summaries or reports (for example, termly or annual safeguarding reports) that aggregate information about issues handled, while preserving individuals’ confidentiality. These reports help the SU’s leadership and Board of Trustees to gauge how well the policy is working in practice and whether any improvements are needed. The Board of Trustees has ultimate oversight of safeguarding in the SU and will monitor performance indicators such as training completion rates, the

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promptness and appropriateness of responses to incidents, and compliance with legal duties. The Board requires assurance that the SU is fulfilling its safeguarding obligations under Welsh law and best practice.

- 8.3. **Continuous Improvement:** After any serious incident, or at each formal review point, the SU will reflect on lessons learned. Policies and procedures will be refined as necessary to improve safeguarding measures. Any changes made to this policy between formal review dates will be approved by the senior management and communicated to all relevant parties (staff, volunteers, student leaders) promptly.

9. Case Study Examples (Illustrative Scenarios)

To further clarify how this policy works in practice, the following examples describe hypothetical scenarios and the appropriate SU response in each case. These case studies illustrate the distinction between statutory safeguarding situations and other welfare issues, and demonstrate how SU staff should act:

Case Study 1: Under-18 Student Disclosing Abuse:

Scenario: A first-year undergraduate student, aged 17, confides in an SU staff member that she has been suffering physical abuse at home by a relative. She begs the staff member *not* to tell anyone else.

Response: The SU staff member explains to the student, kindly but clearly, that they cannot keep this a secret because of the seriousness of the issue and the duty to protect her. The staff member assures her that the information will only be shared with professionals who need to know in order to help. Following the policy, the staff member reports the disclosure immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL treats this as a child protection concern. In line with procedures, the DSL promptly contacts Ceredigion County Council's Children's Services to refer the case, providing all relevant information about the alleged abuse. This fulfils the legal duty to report a child at risk. The DSL also notifies the University's safeguarding officer (since the student is enrolled at the University) so that the University can offer additional support and coordinate any necessary actions on campus. Throughout the process, the student is kept informed of the steps being taken and is offered support, for example, assistance from the University's Student Support services, counselling, and help exploring safe accommodation options if she cannot return home.

Why this is the right approach: A 17-year-old is legally a child, even though she is a university student, and the law requires that suspected abuse of a child be reported for safeguarding. The SU staff member did the right thing by not promising confidentiality and by activating the safeguarding procedure. The statutory authorities (social services, police) will now take forward the investigation and protection plan, with the SU continuing to support the student. This example highlights that anyone under 18 is considered a child in the eyes of the law, even a university student, and thus falls under child protection duties. It also underscores that while the SU is supportive, it cannot handle such cases internally or quietly; it must involve the proper authorities to ensure the young person's safety.

Case Study 2: Student Concern for a Sibling (Child at Risk in the Community)

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Scenario: A university student approaches the SU Advice Centre, worried about his younger sister who is 15. The student says he believes his sister is being neglected or abused by their guardian back home (outside the university setting). He isn't sure what to do and seeks the SU's help.

Response: Even though the at-risk person in this scenario (the 15-year-old sister) is not a member of the University or SU community, the information given constitutes a serious safeguarding concern about a child in the community. The SU staff member handling this knows that *any* child at risk must be safeguarded, regardless of their direct affiliation with the University. The staff member explains to the student that the SU has a duty to act on such information. With the reporting student's consent if possible (but even without it if he hesitates, the child's safety is paramount), the matter is referred to the DSL. The DSL treats the information as a child safeguarding issue and makes a referral to the local authority where the sister lives (if the sister is in Ceredigion, it would be to Ceredigion Children's Services; if in another county, to that area's social services). The DSL provides all details known about the sister's situation. The DSL may also coordinate with the University's safeguarding team to ensure the student who reported this gets support for himself as hearing about a sibling's abuse can be distressing, and to check if the University has any additional information or role to play.

Why this is the right approach: This example shows that the SU's statutory safeguarding role isn't limited to protecting enrolled students; it can extend to facilitating protection for any child or vulnerable person that an SU member is concerned about. The SU is part of the wider community and can act as a conduit to get help for someone outside the University. By reporting the concern through proper channels, the SU helps ensure that the child will come to the attention of the authorities who can investigate and intervene. The SU does not attempt to investigate the family situation itself, it simply performs its duty to refer the concern to those legally mandated to protect the child.

Case Study 3: Student Volunteers Working with Children/Adults at Risk

Scenario: The SU's Volunteering Society runs a weekly outreach program in partnership with a local community centre. In this program, student volunteers visit the community centre to mentor two groups: children (ages 10–16) and adults with learning disabilities. One of the student volunteers comes to the SU's Activities Coordinator after a session, concerned that a 12-year-old child in the program may be suffering abuse at home; the child had bruises and showed extreme anxiety about going home that day.

Response: This scenario involves an SU-organised activity that directly engages both children and potentially adults at risk, so all safeguarding measures apply. First, as a preventative step, the SU ensures that all volunteers in such programs have had appropriate DBS checks and basic safeguarding training before they start (per our Safe Recruitment responsibility). Upon the volunteer reporting the specific concern about the 12-year-old, the Activities Coordinator immediately contacts the DSL to relay the information. The DSL gathers the details (what was observed, any conversation with the child, etc.) and then takes action on two fronts: (1) The DSL contacts the community centre's own safeguarding lead to inform them of the concern and to coordinate efforts, since the programme is a collaboration and the centre may have additional context or responsibility for the child while on their premises. (2) The DSL makes a formal report to the local authority's Children's Services, alerting them that this child may be at risk, and provides all relevant details (this fulfils the SU's duty to report under Welsh law). After reporting, the DSL documents the incident and follows up as necessary, staying in touch with both the community centre and the statutory authorities.

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Why this is the right approach: This example underscores several points: (a) The importance of vetting and training volunteers who work with vulnerable groups (prevention). (b) The procedure of reporting up the chain, the volunteer did the right thing by notifying the SU coordinator, who notified the DSL. (c) Multi-agency partnership; the SU doesn't operate in isolation but coordinates with the partner organisation (the community centre) and with statutory services to address the concern. (d) Keeping proper records and following through. It highlights that when SU activities extend into the wider community, the SU's safeguarding responsibility extends there as well, and it will work hand-in-hand with external organisations to protect participants.

Case Study 4: Wellbeing Concern vs. Safeguarding Issue

Scenario: An SU Officer is approached by a 21-year-old student who is struggling with severe anxiety and depression due to academic pressures. The student does not have any known care or support needs beyond what a university counselling service might handle, and they do not report any abuse, self-harm, or suicidal intent, they are just feeling very overwhelmed and ask for help. There is no indication that the student is being abused, nor that they are unable to care for themselves; they are not seeking protection, just support.

Response: The SU Officer recognises that this situation, while concerning and deserving of support, is not a statutory safeguarding case. The student is an adult who does not fit the definition of an "adult at risk" (they have no particular care and support needs and are not at risk of abuse or neglect by another person), and there is no allegation or suspicion of abuse, exploitation, or neglect. This is a mental health and wellbeing matter. The officer still takes the situation seriously and responds supportively, for example, by listening empathetically, then referring the student to appropriate support services such as the SU Advice team, University's Student Wellbeing and Counselling services, possibly the GP or mental health charities. Importantly, the DSL is not involved in this case, because there is no safeguarding trigger (no abuse or risk of harm by others, no incapacity due to care needs). The Officer documents the interaction according to wellbeing support procedures (not safeguarding records).

Why this is the right approach: This example highlights the boundary between *statutory safeguarding* and other types of support. The student's issue is genuine and serious, but it falls under the SU's general duty of care rather than this Safeguarding Policy. By not treating it as a safeguarding case, the SU respects the student's autonomy (no report to authorities is needed as there's no crime or abuse) and addresses the problem through support and health resources. However, the SU still provides help and the concern is not ignored.