



Optimum Skills
Limited

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism Policy

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1. Statement

- 1.1.1. Optimum Skills We are fully committed to preventing extremism and radicalisation to all our stakeholders and we are committed to ensuring it meets the statutory duties and responsibilities and to ensure we provide a safe and secure environment for our learners.
- 1.1.2. The following national guidelines should also be read when working with this policy:
- PREVENT Strategy HM Government
 - Home Office Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 1st April 2021
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2023
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children HM Government 2018
 - Channel Guideline
- 1.1.3. This policy applies to all staff and anyone who meets adults, children, and young people. As a workforce we have a duty to ensure we embrace British Values and safeguard the welfare of all stakeholders by creating an environment that protects from harm and risks from being exposed to violence, extremism, and radicalisation.
- 1.1.4. It is our aim to:
- Ensure all stakeholders are protected regardless of, sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, maternity, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership.
 - Ensure all staff are appropriately trained in the Prevent duty, understanding extremism and radicalisation and their duties in their role to ensure all risks are reported and referred proactively.
 - Ensure that appropriate supervision is given.
 - Inform all staff of the relevant policies and procedures.
 - Take all suspicion and allegations extremely seriously and respond to concerns timely and diligently.
 - Work in partnership with local boards including the Channel multi-agency panel.
 - Comply with relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidance.
 - Have designated safeguarding and prevention officers in place to advise on and manage any concerns and referrals made.
 - Educate all learners on the Prevent duty and their role to play in society to protect themselves and others around them.



Diane Shakespeare

Managing Director – Optimum Skills Limited

2. Purpose

- 2.1.1. Optimum Skills have a legal responsibility to fulfil the Prevent duty.
- 2.1.2. The Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 came into force on 1 July. This new piece of legislation places a duty on FE organisations “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Under the Act, we have new responsibilities for protecting learners from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. This is known as the ‘Prevent Duty’.
- 2.1.3. The Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy is intended to provide a framework for dealing with issues relating to vulnerability, radicalisation, and exposure to extreme views. To fulfil the ‘Prevent Duty’ we recognise that all staff must be able to identify learners who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting learners from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties.
- 2.1.4. All Optimum Skills staff will understand what radicalisation and extremism is and why we need to be vigilant. All staff will know what the company policy is on tackling extremism and radicalisation and will follow the policy guidance swiftly when issues arise. All learners will be educated and understand the dangers of radicalisation, and exposure to extremist views; building resilience against these, including the grooming processes of radicalisation, and knowing what to do if they experience them.

3. Definitions

3.1. Radicalisation

- 3.1.1. Defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

3.2. Extremism

- 3.2.1. Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas” (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2015)

3.3. Risk Indicators

- 3.3.1. There are a number of behaviours which may indicate a child/young person is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extreme views. These include:
 - Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
 - Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group

- Their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group, or cause
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group, or cause
- Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause
- Communications with others that suggests an identification with a group, cause, or ideology
- Using insulting derogatory names for another group
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include physical or verbal assault, provocative behaviour, damage to property, derogatory name calling, possession of prejudice-related materials, prejudice-related ridicule or name-calling, inappropriate forms of address, refusal to co-operate, attempts to recruit to prejudice related organisations, condoning or supporting violence towards others.

3.4. Indicators of vulnerability

3.4.1. Identity

- the learner is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences;
- discomfort about their place in society;
- personal crisis – the student/pupil may be experiencing family tensions;
- a sense of isolation;
- low self-esteem;
- they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends;
- they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.

3.4.2. Personal Circumstances

- migration;
- local community tensions; and
- events affecting the student/pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy

3.4.3. Unmet Aspirations

- the learner may have perceptions of injustice;

- a feeling of failure;
 - rejection of civic life
- 3.4.4. Experiences of Criminality
- involvement with criminal groups
 - imprisonment; and
 - poor resettlement/reintegration on release
- 3.4.5. Special Educational Needs
- social interaction
 - empathy with others
 - understanding the consequences of their actions; and awareness of the motivations of others
- 3.4.6. More critical risk factors could include:
- being in contact with extremist recruiters.
 - accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
 - possessing or accessing violent extremist literature; using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
 - justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
 - joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
 - significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour.
 - experiencing a high level of social isolation, resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. The role of the Curriculum

- 4.1.1. Our programmes will provide a broad and balanced curriculum so that our learners are enriched, understand, and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive and feel valued. Our learners are encouraged to share their views and recognise that they are entitled to have their own beliefs which should not be used to influence others.
- 4.1.2. We will also aim to build learners' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British Values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that we will not stop students from debating controversial issues. What we will do is provide a safe space in which our learners and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. We also ensure that our learners are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet by establishing appropriate levels of filtering.

- 4.1.3. All learners will receive dedicated learning from their tutor on radicalisation, extremism, staying safe online and British Values. Hot topics are produced monthly that promote current affairs in relation to Prevent and a quarterly newsletter is produced for learners to provide further information and learning around key learning points.
- 4.1.4. Optimum Skills have appointed Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officers to have overall responsibility for issues relating to Prevent. These individuals are responsible for acting as a source of advice on all matters relating to safeguarding, coordinating action in relation to safeguarding and ensuring all Optimum Skills staff are up to date with current legislation and policy. These individuals are as follows:

Lead Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Stephanie Hudson – Head of Quality
Deputy Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Barbara Robson
Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Terri Williams
Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Elisha Reilly
Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Scott Lightfoot
Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Christine Gregory – Auditor

- 4.1.5. The DSPO will also ensure that:
- Written records about a child/young person or adult at risk are retained securely on record.
 - All such records will be stored confidentially and securely. This will be monitored and managed by the DSPO
 - Ensure that all staff receive regular updates on child protection, adults at risk and safeguarding, and that they receive refresher training as required. The DSPO, alongside two Deputy DSPOs act as team and ensure:
 - They are the first point of contact for all staff to go to for advice if they are concerned about children, young persons and/or 'Adults at Risk'.
 - They have a higher level of safeguarding training and knowledge than the other staff within the organisation.
 - Safeguarding policy and procedures are kept up to date and regularly reviewed.

- Adherence to safe recruitment procedures for new staff members and support their induction.
- Assess information from staff regarding concerns about children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk', and make decisions about whether staff concerns are sufficient to notify First Contact or whether other courses of action are more appropriate.
- Concerns are logged and stored securely.
- For the promotion of a safe environment for children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk';
- They know the contact details of relevant statutory agencies e.g. Local Authority Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff, Durham Constabulary for Prevent, anti-radicalisation issues etc
- That staff are aware of this policy and the associated procedures, identifying any appropriate training that staff may require
- That adequate staff training is provided and taken up and compliance is monitored and accurately recorded on an ongoing basis. It is not the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Team to decide whether children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' have been abused or not, that is the responsibility of investigative statutory agencies such as DCSP, SAB or the police.

4.2. All staff have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of and implement our policy on Prevent Duty.
- Promote a safeguarding ethos; provide a secure and supportive environment for all learners.
- If they work with young people or adults at risk undertake staff development appropriate to their role.
- All staff should be prepared to identify young people who may benefit from early help or where behaviours have changed, highlight these early.
- Educate stakeholders on the Prevent Duty and their understanding of extremism and radicalisation.

4.3. All management have a responsibility to:

- Embrace a holistic approach to preventing radicalisation and extremism.
- Ensure staff are aware of the policy and procedure and that they have been given appropriate training to undertake their roles effectively.
- Ensure this policy and procedure is implemented in their departments.

4.4. The Directors have a responsibility to:

- Oversee the implementation of this policy across Optimum Skills.

4.5. Training for staff

- 4.5.1. Newly appointed staff will have an induction and training record in line with our probation policy over a 6-month period. We ensure that all employees are made aware of the standards expected of them and implement the appropriate support, and training feedback to achieve these standards.
- 4.5.2. Employees will be made aware of the relevant Safeguarding and Prevent procedures as part of that induction program and will be given a copy of our Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism.

Individual / Group	Training	Frequency
All new staff and existing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • Prevent Duty • Anti-Counter Terrorism (Act) • Policies (internal and external) 	At induction and annual updating or at time of changes
Safeguarding Leads (DSPO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified essential reading • Designated Safeguarding Officer Training • Specialism reading/training 	Updated in line with requirements

5. Bullying and Harassment

- 5.1.1. Bullying and harassment must be reported to the line manager and then overseen by the DSPO. The individuals involved must be separated where possible or appropriately supervised until the outcome of the complaint is resolved and agreed actions are taken. In the instance that the victim or perpetrator is under 18 the learner's guardians must be informed and kept aware of the actions taken to resolve the issue.
- 5.1.2. Police may be notified in instances of harassment with the consent of the guardian of the child or the adult affected. Efforts to resolve low-level bullying must be made by educating the learners on the consequences of bullying and the bully's personal circumstances must also be considered to understand the reason for their behaviour support must be offered to help the learner if they themselves are vulnerable or a victim of abuse. This would be in addition to an appropriate disciplinary relative to the nature of the bullying or harassment. All processes are outlined in the Bullying and Harassment Policy

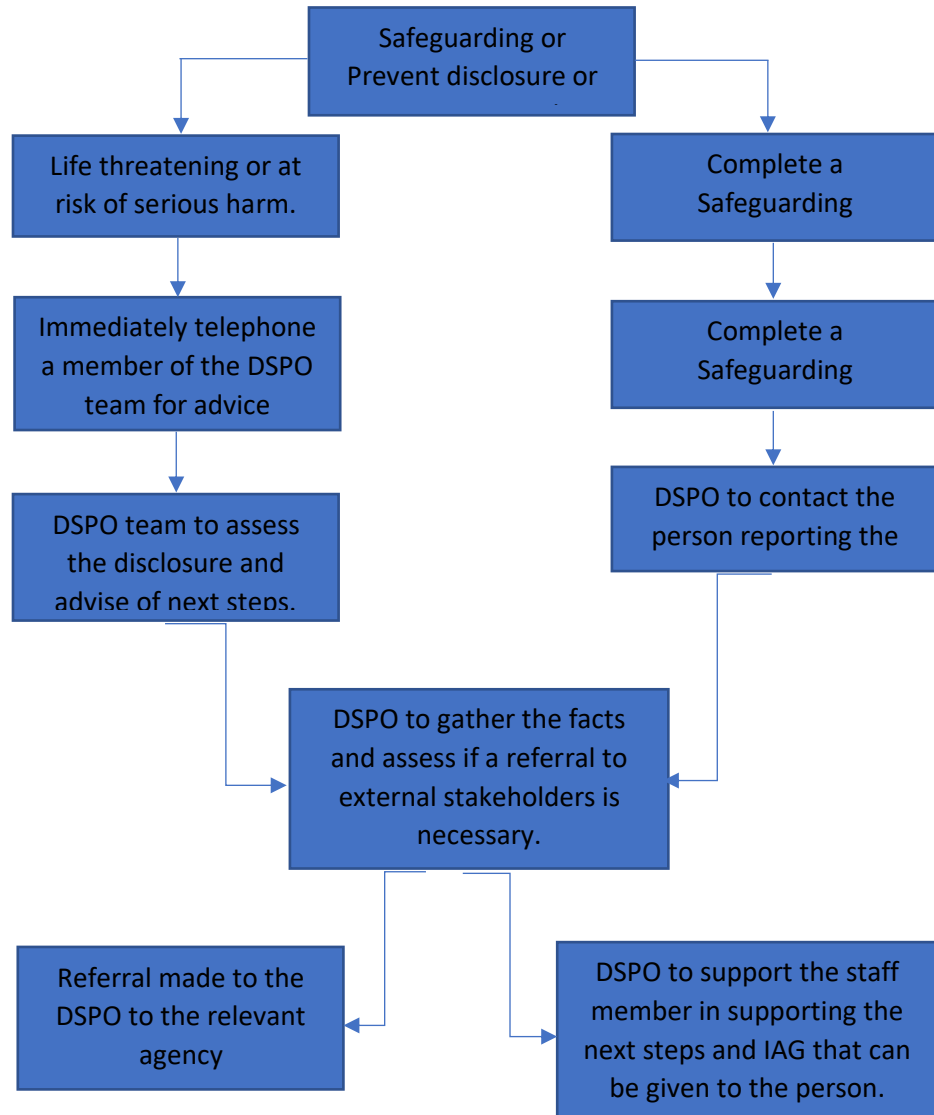
6. Referral Process

- 6.1.1. The following process must be followed by staff:
- Recognise the signs of abuse
 - Respond to the sign and react accordingly
 - Make notes of all disclosures

- Report the disclosure to the DSPO immediately. All referral forms must be forwarded to the DSPO within 24 hours
- Refer (to the emergency services or Social Services or through the Channel process) in situations where an individual may be at risk of immediate harm.

7. Procedure for Staff

7.1.1.



8. External Speakers/Visitors

- 8.1.1. If any member of staff wishes to invite an external speaker into any of the delivery sessions, they must complete and submit External Speaker form.
- 8.1.2. Vulnerable learners are NEVER left unsupervised with external visitors. If an agreement is made to allow external organisations or guest speakers to use the premises, appropriate checks will be made before agreeing to the contract. Usage will be monitored and in the event of any behaviour not in-keeping with the Prevent Policy, we will contact the police and terminate the agreement.

9. Whistleblowing

- 9.1.1. Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. To ensure that we uphold high standards and quality procedures we encourage a culture of openness and accountability which is essential to safeguard both employees and learners from coming to harm.
- 9.1.2. This policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those cases, you should use the Grievance Procedure or Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate.
- 9.1.3. Whistleblowing reports must be disclosed to your line manager or in the event that this isn't appropriate the employee must report the suspected wrongdoing or danger at work to the company Directors.