

1.7 CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT POLICY

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Version Control			
Previous Version	New Version	Date	Update/Notes
V4.1	V4.2	14-04-2026	Added details in the establishing safeguarding and prevention of radicalisation/extremism arrangements across all campuses.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

IVY Academic Network is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and supportive environment for all members of its community. Safeguarding is an institutional responsibility and forms part of the Network's commitment to protecting individuals from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment, violence and other forms of harm.

IVY recognises that safeguarding responsibilities apply to children and young people under the age of 18 as well as adults aged 18 and above. The nature of support and protection may differ according to age, circumstances, level of vulnerability and individual needs. Particular safeguards will therefore apply where concerns involve a person under 18, while appropriate protection and support will also be provided to adults who may be experiencing or be at increased risk of harm.



This Policy provides a consistent framework for preventing harm, identifying concerns, responding to disclosures and incidents, making appropriate referrals, and promoting safe professional practices across the Network.

POLICY AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all members of the IVY Academic Network community and to activities undertaken by, for or on behalf of the institution. It applies regardless of whether a safeguarding concern arises within institutional premises, during an organised activity, through an external placement or event, or through digital communication and online interaction.

The Policy covers:

children and young people under 18;

adults aged 18 and above, including adults who may be at increased risk;

students, applicants and prospective students;

academic, administrative and support staff;

volunteers, contractors, consultants and visitors; and

external organisations or individuals working with or on behalf of IVY.

Safeguarding arrangements will be applied proportionately, taking account of the circumstances of the individual and the seriousness of the concern. Where a person is under 18, additional protective measures and appropriate involvement of parents or guardians will be considered.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that safeguarding is embedded within the culture and day-to-day operation of IVY Academic Network. The institution aims to create an environment where concerns can be raised without fear, where individuals know how to seek help, and where staff understand their responsibility to respond appropriately.

The Policy seeks to:

protect individuals from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm;



establish clear arrangements for recognising and reporting concerns;

ensure that concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately;

promote safe professional relationships and boundaries;

provide appropriate support and referral;

address safeguarding risks arising through online activity;

reduce risks associated with exploitation, grooming, radicalisation and violent extremism

strengthen safeguarding through training, monitoring and continuous improvement.

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

IVY will approach safeguarding with the understanding that concerns may present differently from one individual to another. Staff are not expected to determine whether abuse or harm has occurred; their responsibility is to recognise concerns, respond appropriately and ensure that the matter reaches the person responsible for safeguarding action.

The following principles will guide the implementation of this Policy:

Safety: immediate risks to an individual's safety will receive priority.

Respect: individuals will be treated with dignity, fairness and sensitivity.

Early intervention: concerns will be addressed at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

Proportionality: the response will reflect the nature and seriousness of the concern.

Professional responsibility: staff will maintain appropriate boundaries and act within their professional role.

Confidentiality: information will be handled sensitively and shared only where there is a legitimate safeguarding reason to do so.

Shared responsibility: safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole institutional community.



RECOGNISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

A safeguarding concern may arise from a direct disclosure, an observation, information received from another person, a change in behaviour or circumstances, or information identified through online activity. A concern does not need to be proven before it is reported.

Safeguarding concerns may relate to physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment, exploitation, domestic or interpersonal violence, inappropriate relationships, grooming, coercion, financial exploitation, trafficking, online harm, radicalisation or other circumstances that may place an individual at risk.

Particular attention should be given where an individual appears unusually fearful, distressed, isolated, controlled by another person, subject to inappropriate contact, or exposed to circumstances that may compromise their safety or wellbeing.

SAFEGUARDING ACCOUNTABILITY

Safeguarding responsibilities are embedded across the Network rather than being limited to a single department. The institution will maintain designated responsibility for coordinating safeguarding matters while ensuring that staff at all levels understand their role in identifying and reporting concerns.

Role	Responsibility
Network Safeguarding Lead	Provides overall safeguarding coordination, advice and oversight, and coordinates serious or complex cases.
Campus/Institute Leadership	Ensures appropriate local implementation and timely escalation of safeguarding matters.
Student Support/Pastoral Teams	Provide initial support, identify concerns and facilitate appropriate referrals.
Academic and Teaching Staff	Maintain professional boundaries, remain alert to concerns and report them appropriately.
HR/Recruitment	Supports safer recruitment, staff conduct and appropriate safeguarding checks.
Students	Raise concerns affecting themselves or others and cooperate



Parents/Guardians

with appropriate safeguarding arrangements.

Where appropriate, support safeguarding arrangements for students under 18 and cooperate with the institution.

All members of staff have a responsibility to act when they become aware of a concern. No member of staff should assume that another person will report it.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 18

IVY recognises that children and young people under 18 require additional protection because of their age, developing independence and potential dependence on adults within their educational environment.

Where a safeguarding concern involves an individual under 18, the institution will consider the child's immediate safety, age, maturity, circumstances and support needs. Appropriate supervision and professional boundaries will be maintained, and parents or guardians will be involved where this is appropriate and consistent with the safeguarding response.

Staff working with under-18 students must:

maintain clear professional boundaries;

use approved institutional channels for communication;

avoid inappropriate private or personal relationships;

report concerns promptly; and

follow any additional safeguarding arrangements established for under-18 students.

Where a child or young person makes a disclosure, staff should listen calmly, avoid leading questions and avoid making promises that the information will remain completely confidential.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AGED 18 AND ABOVE

Safeguarding responsibilities continue when an individual reaches the age of 18. Adults may experience abuse, exploitation, harassment, coercion, violence, neglect or other circumstances that affect their safety and wellbeing.



Some adults may be at increased risk because of their individual circumstances, including dependency, disability, communication difficulties, significant personal circumstances or other factors affecting their ability to protect themselves from harm.

IVY will seek to balance protection with respect for an adult's dignity, privacy and autonomy. Where a serious or immediate risk exists, appropriate safeguarding action may be taken even where this requires referral or information sharing with an external authority.

SAFER RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

IVY recognises that effective safeguarding begins with appropriate recruitment and professional standards. The institution will take reasonable steps to ensure that individuals appointed to roles involving responsibility for students are suitable for their positions.

Depending on the nature of the role, recruitment processes may include verification of identity and qualifications, references, employment history and appropriate background or character checks. Safeguarding expectations will form part of staff induction and professional conduct requirements.

All staff, volunteers and representatives are expected to maintain appropriate boundaries with students. Any behaviour that may constitute abuse of authority, exploitation, inappropriate conduct or a safeguarding risk will be addressed through the relevant institutional procedures.

SAFEGUARDING DURING ACTIVITIES AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

Safeguarding considerations will form part of the planning of institutional activities where students or other members of the community may be exposed to additional risks. The level of assessment and supervision will depend on the nature of the activity and the circumstances of those participating.

For activities such as visits, events, placements, internships or engagement with external organisations, consideration may be given to supervision, transport, venue arrangements, emergency contacts, individual support needs and the safeguarding expectations of external providers.

Where an external organisation is responsible for a student for a period of time, IVY will take reasonable steps to establish appropriate arrangements for raising and responding to safeguarding concerns.



ONLINE AND DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding responsibilities extend to digital environments used by students and staff. Online communication can create risks including cyberbullying, harassment, grooming, inappropriate contact, exploitation, distribution of harmful material and threats to personal safety.

IVY expects staff and students to use institutional digital platforms responsibly and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in online communication. Concerns arising through social media, messaging platforms, email, learning platforms or other digital channels should be reported through the same safeguarding arrangements as concerns arising in person.

Where appropriate, digital safeguarding concerns may also be addressed under institutional disciplinary, complaints or information technology procedures and applicable Pakistani legislation.

REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

Any member of the IVY community who has a safeguarding concern should report it as soon as reasonably possible. Individuals should not attempt to investigate an allegation themselves or wait until they have sufficient evidence to prove that harm has occurred.

Concerns may be raised with the Network Safeguarding Lead, designated safeguarding representative, Campus Leadership, Student Support, an appropriate academic staff member or another responsible member of staff who can ensure that the concern is escalated.

Concerns can also be reported directly to Student Support at studentsupport@rootsivy.edu.pk, which is monitored during normal working hours. Where a concern is urgent and arises outside working hours, the emergency provisions set out in the Fitness to Study Policy apply.

Where there is an immediate threat to life or serious physical safety, the appropriate emergency service or competent authority should be contacted without delay, followed by notification to the relevant IVY safeguarding authority.

When receiving a disclosure, staff should listen carefully, remain calm, record the information accurately and explain that information may need to be shared where necessary to protect the individual or others.



Concerns may be raised anonymously, although this may limit the institution's ability to investigate or follow up effectively. IVY will not tolerate victimisation of any person who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith, even where the concern is not subsequently upheld. A report made maliciously or known to be false may be addressed through the relevant disciplinary procedure.

RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Once a concern has been reported, the appropriate safeguarding personnel will consider the circumstances and determine the action required. The priority will be to ensure immediate safety and provide appropriate support.

Depending on the circumstances, the response may include:

immediate protective measures;

pastoral or student support;

involvement of parents or guardians where appropriate for under-18 students;

referral to professional support services;

consultation with or referral to police or another competent authority;

liaison with a partner or placement organisation; and

ongoing monitoring and follow-up.

IVY will not undertake criminal investigations. Where a matter may involve criminal conduct, the appropriate competent authority will be engaged.

CONFIDENTIALITY, INFORMATION SHARING AND RECORD KEEPING

Safeguarding information is sensitive and must be handled responsibly. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and only where necessary for safeguarding, support, institutional action or compliance with applicable requirements.

Complete confidentiality cannot be promised where information may need to be disclosed to protect an individual or prevent serious harm.

Safeguarding records should provide a clear and factual account of the concern and actions taken. Records should normally include the date, nature of the concern, relevant



individuals, information reported or observed, action taken, referrals made and any necessary follow-up.

All safeguarding records must be stored securely and accessed only by authorised personnel.

Safeguarding records are retained securely for a minimum of six years from the date a concern is closed, or for as long as required by an active case, investigation or applicable legal requirement, after which they are reviewed for secure disposal.

PREVENTION OF EXPLOITATION, RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

IVY promotes an environment based on respect, tolerance, lawful conduct, peaceful engagement and respect for the rights and dignity of others. The institution recognises that individuals may be exposed to manipulation, grooming, coercion or exploitation that can place them at risk of involvement in harmful or violent activities.

Concerns relating to radicalisation or violent extremism will be considered within the wider safeguarding framework. This includes credible indications of recruitment, grooming, coercion, promotion of violence, incitement or exploitation.

Legitimate academic discussion, critical thinking and debate will not in themselves be treated as safeguarding concerns. Action will focus on circumstances where there is a credible risk of harm, violence, exploitation or involvement in unlawful activity.

Where necessary, IVY may seek advice from or refer matters to the appropriate competent authorities.

EXTERNAL SPEAKERS AND VISITORS

IVY expects external speakers, visitors and organisations to maintain appropriate standards of professional and lawful conduct. Where an external individual is invited to participate in an institutional activity, reasonable arrangements will be made to manage any identified safeguarding or safety concerns.

Activities must not be used to promote violence, abuse, exploitation, hatred or the recruitment of individuals into harmful or violent activity. At the same time, legitimate academic discussion and differing viewpoints should be supported within appropriate professional and lawful boundaries.



TRAINING AND AWARENESS

IVY will ensure that staff receive appropriate information and training to understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Training will be proportionate to the individual's role and level of contact with students.

Safeguarding awareness will cover recognition of concerns, reporting arrangements, professional boundaries, online safety and appropriate responses to disclosures. Staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities will receive additional guidance appropriate to their role.

Training and awareness requirements will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain relevant to the institution's needs.

STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN AWARENESS

Students will be provided with clear information about safeguarding arrangements and the ways in which concerns can be raised. Safeguarding information may be communicated through induction, student handbooks, institutional policies, student support services and other appropriate communication channels.

Students should be encouraged to seek assistance whenever they experience or observe behaviour that causes concern, even where they are uncertain whether it constitutes a safeguarding matter.

For students under 18, appropriate information will also be made available to parents or guardians, and their involvement will be considered where safeguarding circumstances require it.

WORKING WITH EXTERNAL AUTHORITIES AND PARTNERS

IVY will cooperate with appropriate external authorities and organisations where specialist intervention, professional advice or statutory action is required.

Depending on the circumstances, this may include police and emergency services, relevant child protection authorities, health and welfare services, education authorities, professional bodies and partner organisations.

Information will be shared responsibly and only to the extent necessary to support the safeguarding response, protect individuals and meet applicable requirements.



RISK MANAGEMENT

Safeguarding risks will be considered within the Network's wider institutional risk management arrangements. Where appropriate, risk assessments will be undertaken for activities, events, placements, external engagements, digital environments and situations involving identified safeguarding concerns.

Risk controls may include changes to supervision, communication arrangements, access, staffing, activity design or additional support. Safeguarding risk assessments will be reviewed when circumstances change or when lessons are identified from incidents.

MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

IVY will monitor the implementation of this Policy to ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain effective and appropriate. Information arising from safeguarding concerns, training, feedback, reviews and identified risks may be used to strengthen institutional practice.

The Policy will normally be reviewed annually, or earlier where there is a significant incident, change in applicable requirements, change in institutional activities or an identified weakness in existing arrangements.

The review process will consider whether improvements are required in areas such as:

safeguarding procedures;

staff training and awareness;

reporting and referral arrangements;

supervision and risk management; and

student and staff support.