



SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

For use within

BANGOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

as approved by the Trustee Board 23rd January 2025

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Safeguarding Policy

Section 1 - Safeguarding Policy Statement

- 1.1 Bangor University Students' Union is committed to ensuring the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of all students, staff, and stakeholders who engage with our services, events, and activities. We recognise our duty to create a safe environment where individuals feel protected and supported. This policy outlines our approach to safeguarding and demonstrates our commitment to preventing and responding to harm, abuse, and neglect.
- 1.2 We recognise that:
- The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount
 - All people regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
 - Working in partnership with children, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting our service users' welfare
- 1.3 The Purpose of the Safeguarding Policy is:
- To provide protection for the children and vulnerable adults who take part in all Bangor University Students' Union activities, including staff, union members and service users and where appropriate their children or relatives
 - To provide staff and union members with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or is at risk of, harm
- 1.4 This policy applies to all staff and members of Bangor University Students' Union, volunteers and anyone else working with or on behalf of Bangor University Students' Union. This policy applies to all Students' Union activities and facilities involving children, young people, and vulnerable adults. The policy covers all activities held both on union and university premises, and those held off campus on non-University premises. It also covers activities held online through platforms.
- 1.5 We will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:
- Valuing them, listening to, and respecting them.
 - Adopting safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and union members.
 - Recruiting staff and union members (who intend to work with vulnerable groups) safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
 - Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with staff and union members, parents and children and vulnerable adults and carers.

- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving staff and union members, parents and children and vulnerable adults and carers.
- Providing effective management for staff and union members through supervision, support and training

1.6 Bangor University Students' Union commits to review this policy **every 3 years** however any significant changes in the law or guidance may prompt earlier reviews. The Director of the Students' Union, as the Designated Person will be responsible for keeping this policy up to date.

Section 2 – Definitions

2.1 Vulnerable Adult

In this policy, 'Adult' refers to anyone aged 18 years or older.

A broad definition of 'Vulnerable Adult' referred to the 1997 consultation 'Who Decides?' issued by the Lord Chancellors department is a person:

"Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation"

Bangor University Students' Union, however, considers the term 'Vulnerable Adult' to refer to any person over the age of 18 who may be vulnerable to abuse or neglect for any reason and consideration will be shown, in line with the values of the union, to any individual involved in union activity who may benefit from some form of support or protection to engage fully with the organisation's activities.

2.2 Child or Children

Bangor University Students' Union recognises that anyone under the age of 18 years is defined as a child.

Bangor University Students' Union may, when appropriate, refer to groups falling into this age group as children and/or young people.

2.3 Vulnerable Groups

The term 'Vulnerable Groups' refers collectively to anyone involved in Bangor University Students' Union activity that may be defined as children or vulnerable adults.

2.4 Staff and Union Members

'Staff' refers to anyone employed to work in or with Bangor University Students' Union whether on permanent or short-term contract or arrangement.

'Union Members' refers to any student or affiliate member of Bangor University Students' Union. In the context of this policy, 'Union Members' will mainly refer to any student or affiliate member who is working with or will come into contact with vulnerable groups.

2.5 Working with Vulnerable Groups

The term 'working with vulnerable groups' refers to any occasion(s) when a member of staff or union member is taking part in activities organised by Bangor University Students' Union where individuals considered to be vulnerable, or children are involved. In as much as this refers to services provided in the form of Student Volunteering Bangor projects, any activity where staff and union members come into contact with individuals considered vulnerable will be governed by this policy.

Working with vulnerable groups could include, but is not limited to, occasions where the business of a club, society or volunteering project will bring them into contact with vulnerable groups such as a member bringing their child to an activity, or a special event or series of events organised by a union group aimed at providing a service to a vulnerable group.

Working with vulnerable groups can also include aspects of the business of the Academic Representation Unit in issues of welfare and support.

Section 3 – Areas of Activity Involving Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults

3.1 The following are identified as areas where the Union may have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults both face to face and in an online environment (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Volunteering projects which include projects, with children, the elderly, and some service users of projects with external partners;
- The activities of sports clubs and societies and networks such as competitions, excursions, public lectures and other social events;
- Students and individuals who attend our events;
- Support of students;
- Union staff employed by the University;
- Individuals undertaking work experience at the Union;
- Individuals who are on the Union premises on non-University organised events, for open days, or other Undeb-organised events;

Section 4 – Safeguarding in the Online Environment

4.1 Student Support and Engagement

Providing services online allows the Union to have a wider reach, and to support, engage hold activities and carry out focus groups online with student members and service users that may also be with children, young people, and vulnerable adults. These activities may include:

- Clubs, societies, and volunteering activities;
- Course Rep and Student Forum webinar and meetings
- Research activities and focus groups;
- Forums;
- online 1-2-1 mentoring and buddy scheme meetings;
- online academic advice service.
- chat and instant messaging;
- live streaming

- 4.1.1 Staff and students undertaking online activity on behalf of the Union must always ensure that they use age-appropriate language in their communications and must also make sure that all communications are relevant to the work they are involved in.
- 4.1.2 Staff and students must use Bangor University and Union accounts to communicate with children, young people and / or vulnerable adults. This includes via email, or social media. In addition, wherever possible individuals must use a Bangor University or Union device to communicate.
- 4.1.3 In addition, staff and students must ensure that they understand how the different means of communication platforms work, and what their age limits (where this is relevant). For example, Facebook has a lower age limit of 13 years old. Checking with NetAware will allow staff to find out what the age restrictions are on various social media platforms.
- 4.1.4 It is essential that staff and students always ask for appropriately informed consent from parents / guardians / carers / legal representatives if they wish to take and/or share photos of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult for any purpose.
- 4.2 Live Streaming
 - 4.2.1 Live streaming is a valuable way for the Union to connect with its wider community, however staff and students who are considering live streaming an event must be aware of the safety and wellbeing of any children, young people and vulnerable adults who are part of the event.
 - 4.2.2 In particular staff and students must ensure that all participants, but particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults, are fully aware of the nature of the event, the fact that it will be live streamed, and that any comments they make will be seen by others.
 - 4.2.3 It is essential to ensure that all participants, but particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults, are reminded not to share any personal information during the live streaming event, and not to respond to communication / contact from individuals they don't know. Where possible access to the live streaming should be carefully controlled and the use of a login and password is recommended so that the audience can be restricted.
 - 4.2.4 Participants should be made aware who to contact if they see or hear anything upsetting or inappropriate, and staff and students must ensure that, whichever platform they are using, that they understand the privacy settings and know how to report any offensive or abusive content.
 - 4.2.5 If members of staff and students are asked to contribute to an external party's live streaming event, they should ensure that they know what content will be used during the event, whether it is appropriate for the age of the participants, and who the audience members will be.
 - 4.2.6 Onward use of the live stream once broadcast must be agreed and communicated to all participants, prior to the event.

Section 5 - Safeguarding Procedures

5.1 The Purpose of the Procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure a speedy and effective response to dealing with concerns about the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children or vulnerable adults, or their neglect.

5.2 Reporting the allegation or suspicion to the Designated Person / Authority

The Designated Person is the Director of the Students' Union, and they have nominated Membership Development Manager to whom any concerns or allegations of abuse or suspected abuse should be reported to.

In an emergency, please contact the police on 999 or call Gwynedd Social Services 24 Hour team.

Gwynedd Social Services Children's Team

Telephone

01766 772577

Email

cyfeiriadauplant@gwynedd.gov.uk

Out of Hours

01766 771000

5.3 Responding to allegations of abuse against a Staff or Union Member

The same procedure as in section 5.2 should apply if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer. In the event that the allegation is concerning the Designated Person, the Students' Union Director should be informed. If the allegation concerns the Director of the Students' Union, please inform the University's Safeguarding Officer.

The Student Union Director should then assume the responsibilities of the Designated Person and follow the procedures set out in this document.

5.4 Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Union Members

For robust recruitment, selection and management of staff and union members who, due to their role within the Students' Union will come into contact with vulnerable groups, the following procedure will be followed when recruiting.

5.4.1 An application form will:

- Make it clear that disclosures will be sought from the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Ask prospective staff and union members to supply names of two referees

5.4.2 At interview, the staff or union member will be asked to:

- Declare past convictions

5.4.2 It is the policy of Bangor University Students' Union that no-one shall work or volunteer to work with children or vulnerable adults within or on behalf of them who:

- have been convicted of or have received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children as listed in the First Schedule of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933; or
- have been convicted of or have received a formal police caution concerning an offence against a vulnerable adult or
- have been convicted of or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against a child or vulnerable adult.

5.5 Code of Conduct and Good Practice

Children and vulnerable adults should be given every opportunity to learn that no-one has the right to do anything to them that makes them feel uncomfortable. The following guidelines should be followed by all Bangor University Students' Union staff and members.

- 5.5.1 All activities which bring staff and/or union members into contact with vulnerable groups should be noted by the relevant department head so that compliance with this policy can be monitored.
- 5.5.2 Staff and union members should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children or vulnerable adults, away from others. Contact with individual children or vulnerable adults should take place as openly as possible.
- 5.5.3 Staff and union members should not have unnecessary physical contact with children or vulnerable adults. There may, however, be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable or necessary such as providing comfort to a distressed child or physical support to an individual. As a rule, contact should only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose should be made clear. Always keep contact to non-sensitive areas, that is, away from the 'swimsuit' region.
- 5.5.4 In the event that unavoidable physical restraint is used by a member of staff or union member (please note that it should only be in circumstances where the actions of a child or vulnerable adult are putting themselves or others at risk of serious harm) an incident report form must be completed.
- 5.5.5 There should be always at least two staff/union members with a child or group of children. For children under the age of 8, a minimum ratio of 1:5 (adults to children) should be observed and for children over 8, a ratio of 1:8
- 5.5.6 Staff and Union Members should never
 - Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
 - Make inappropriate or lewd comments in the presence of children or vulnerable adults
 - Let allegations by a child or vulnerable adult pass without recording and reporting them
 - Deter children or vulnerable adults from making allegations
 - Do things of a personal nature for a child or vulnerable adult that they can do themselves
- 5.5.7 If an accident or incident occurs, an accident and incident reporting form will be completed and submitted to Bangor University Health and Safety Services and to the relevant

department head. The parent or carer of the person involved should also be informed as soon as possible.

- 5.5.8 Any unknown person who enters a location where work with children or vulnerable adults is taking place or is hanging around the children should be challenged, even other members of University staff.
- 5.5.9 Children should never be left unsupervised.
- 5.5.10 The parents/guardians of all children taking part in activities organised by Bangor University Students' Union must complete a Child Registration Form before their first activity. For all activities taking place outside of the usual project location, such as trips, an Out of Centre Consent Form should be completed and signed by the parent beforehand.
- 5.5.11 If a parent/guardian does not come to collect their child from an activity, or is not in when the child is taken home, the emergency contact telephone numbers must be called and every effort taken to locate the parent. Children must never be left with an alternative adult, not already identified on the child's registration form. If after a period of half an hour, the parent cannot be located, the local authority 'Out of Hours' Social Services department or the police will be called.
- 5.5.12 Where a partner organisation is involved in regulated activity with a vulnerable group, a partnership agreement will be created, clarifying the responsibilities of both parties with regard to Safeguarding issues.

5.6 Confidentiality

The legal principle that the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult is paramount means that the considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations in the organisation should not be allowed to override the rights of any person to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated and information pertaining to the suspected abuse should only be shared with the Designated Person and appropriate authorities, the police, and/or social services.

5.7 Record Keeping

Records relating to safeguarding concerns or concerns about possible risk posed by staff or union members should be kept, retained and stored as follows.

If Bangor University Students' Union has concerns about the welfare or safety of a person or concerns about the behaviour of an employee or union member, all relevant details, regardless of whether or not the concerns are shared with either the police or social services should be recorded to include:

- Date and time of incident / disclosure
- The parties who were involved, including any witnesses to an event
- What was said or done and by whom
- Any action taken by the organisation to look into the matter
- Any further action taken
- Where relevant, the reasons why a decision was taken not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency

- Any interpretation / inference drawn from what was observed, said, or alleged should be clearly recorded as such
- Name of person reporting the concern, name and designation of the person to whom the concern was reported, date and time and their contact details.
- The record should be signed.

Records should be stored and destroyed as per Bangor University Students' Union's Data Protection Policy.

Section 6 – The Role of the Designated Person

The Designated Person or any nominee is responsible for dealing with allegations or safeguarding concerns within Bangor Students' Union.

The role of the Designated Person is to:

- Receive and record information from staff, union members, children or vulnerable adults, parents and carers who have safeguarding concerns
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate
- Consult initially with a statutory child and vulnerable adult protection (Safeguarding) agency such as the local social services department or the NSPCC help line to test out any doubt or uncertainty about the concerns as soon as possible
- Make a formal referral to the statutory agency or the police without delay (within a working day)
- Provide information and advice about Safeguarding within the organisation
- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are implemented
- Liaise with children's services authorities and other agencies as appropriate

It is not the role of the Designated Person or the organisation to decide if a child or vulnerable adult has been abused or not.

Section 7 – Supervision, Support and Training

Bangor University Students' Union will ensure that training and resources are available to encourage the development of staff and union members' knowledge of Safeguarding.

7.1 Staff and Union Member Induction (For those it is known will be working with vulnerable groups)

An Induction will be carried out by a relevant person. During the induction, a copy of the Safeguarding Policy will be provided, and the member of staff or union member will be taken through it. The inductor will then ensure that the policy is read and understood.

7.2 Supervision and Support

Supervision will take place regularly for all members of staff and union members who will be or are working with vulnerable groups. Safeguarding will be discussed at these points and staff and union members will be given the opportunity to share any concerns about the work. Training needs will also be identified during supervision.

7.3 Safeguarding Training

There will be different levels of Safeguarding Training required depending on the roles and responsibilities of staff and union members. For example, the needs of those in leadership roles will differ to that of regular staff and union members and the Designated Person will need to undergo training to maintain a high level of knowledge of Child Protection and Protection of Vulnerable Adults legislation. More detail on the different levels of training can be found in appendix 1.

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Training

1.1. Basic Safeguarding Training for Staff and Union Members

Basic Safeguarding Training will include the following areas:

- Definitions of Children, Vulnerable Adults and Vulnerable Groups
- Definitions of abuse
- Legal and procedural context
- Signs and indicators of abuse
- Vulnerability of disabled children
- Myths and stereotypes about perpetrators and victims
- Impact of abuse
- Responding to a person disclosing abuse
- What to do – organisational procedures
- Overcoming barriers to taking action
- Child sexual abuse – perpetrators and victims
- Historical abuse and disclosure
- Child protection process and inter-agency working

1.1.2 Safeguarding Training for Department Managers

Safeguarding training for those who are responsible for areas of work where other staff and union members are coming into contact with vulnerable groups will cover all the areas mentioned in 6.3.1 plus:

- Recording activity where staff and union members are coming into contact with vulnerable groups.
- Responsibilities under this policy.
- The role of the Designated Person.
- Making a referral to a Safeguarding agency.
- Delivering safeguarding training.
- Working in the aftermath of an allegation or safeguarding concern.

1.2 Responsibility for Training

Department managers will be responsible for ensuring that all staff and union members within their department receive relevant Safeguarding training. Departments should keep lists of those working with vulnerable groups so that it can easily be determined who has and who has not received the required training. Training should be carried out as soon as is practicably possible after their work commences.

Appendix 2

Definitions of Abuse

1.1 What is Abuse?

The following definitions are based on those from *the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008*.

1.1.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, misuse of medication, restraint or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

1.1.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to the person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing the person frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or, the exploitation or corruption of children and vulnerable adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a person, though it may occur alone.

1.1.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts or acts to which the individual has not consented or could not consent or was pushed into consenting. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving a person in looking at (or in the production of) pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging the person to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

1.1.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect the person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a person's basic emotional needs.

1.1.5 Financial or Material Abuse

This could include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with will, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

1.1.6 Discriminatory Abuse

Discriminatory abuse can include any form of harassment, slurs or similar treatment based on an individual's age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity

2.1 Recognising Abuse

Bangor University Students' Union understands that recognising abuse is not easy. The following list includes some of the indicators that may be apparent if abuse is taking place. The lists indicate signs of abuse in children and/or adults. It is important to remember that not all these indicators could be signs of abuse, but for staff and union members who are working with vulnerable groups to be mindful of the potential for abuse to have been the cause of some or more of them.

Physical Abuse in Children and/or Adults

- Bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- Multiple bruises in clusters or uniform shape
- Any sign of unexplained pain or illness
- Cigarette burns
- Adult bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Fear of parents or carers being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Depression and/or Anxiety
- Withdrawn behaviour or withdrawal from regular activities and social contact
- Fearfulness

Emotional Abuse in Children and/or Adults

- A failure to thrive or grow
- Sudden speech disorders
- Developmental delay
- Neurotic behaviour
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm

Sexual Abuse in Children and/or Adults

- Pain or itching in the genital / anal areas
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond a child's age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance misuse

- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence or adulthood)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way

Neglect in Children and/or Adults

- Constant hunger and sometimes stealing food from others
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or constantly under weight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions
- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised

2.3 Responding to Signs or Suspicions of Abuse

2.3.1 Responding to a person making an allegation of abuse or situations of concern which stops short of a clear disclosure of abuse

If a person makes an allegation of abuse it is important that you remain calm and listen carefully to what is being said to you. At the earliest opportunity make it clear to the person that it is likely that you will need to share the information they are giving you with someone else and under no circumstances should you promise to keep secrets.

Allow the person to continue at their own pace, and only ask questions for clarification and at all times avoid questions which may prompt a particular answer. Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you. Tell them what you are going to do next and with whom the information may have to be shared. Put down in writing what was said using the person's own words, as soon as you can. Include dates, times, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given. Ensure that you sign and date the record and then contact the Designated Person.

As the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse you are not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional safeguarding agencies following a referral to them.

The above should also be considered when there may be situations of concern that stop short of a clear disclosure of abuse. If a member of staff or union member suspects that a person is being abused, they must report this immediately to the designated person.

If any person has knowledge, concerns or suspicions that a person is suffering, has suffered or is likely to be at risk of harm, it is their responsibility to ensure that the concerns are referred to social services or the police, who have statutory duties and powers to make enquiries and intervene when necessary.

The All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008

Appendix 3

Working with the Aftermath of an Allegation or Safeguarding Concern

Bangor University Students' Union recognises that following an allegation of abuse or when there are concerns that a person has suffered abuse, there are likely to be strong feelings from staff, union members, parents and service users and possibly within the wider community.

- 1.1 The Designated Person will debrief all staff and union members involved in the case. Referral to the University Counselling Service may take place and those involved will be encouraged to address any concerns that remain.
- 1.2 If the press are involved, it is the policy of Bangor University Students' Union to adhere to their policy on the matter of the media. The Designated Person will liaise with the Union Director and the Students' Union President before releasing any comments to the media. Bangor University Students' Union should discuss the matters with any investigating bodies such as the police or the local authority so as not to prejudice any ongoing investigation or court proceedings. Every care will be taken to protect the identity of victims or alleged victims of abuse which will include the victim of the alleged perpetrator even if they are not involved in the allegations. Every care will be taken by Bangor University Students' Union, to not disclose any information pertaining to an individual's identity if they are in any way involved in an issue of safeguarding.

Appendix 4

Checklist for Reporting Suspected Abuse to be completed jointly by the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse and the Designated Person.

Name of Child or Vulnerable Adult: _____	
Age and Date of Birth: _____	First Language: _____
Does the person have any disability? (If so, please provide details) _____	
Parents / Carers Names: _____	
Home Address: _____	
Telephone Number: _____	
Are you reporting your own concerns or those of someone else? _____	
Brief description of what has prompted the concerns including dates, times etc. of any specific incidents: _____ _____ _____	
Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs? _____ _____	
Have you spoken to the person? If so, what was said? _____ _____	
Have you spoken to the parents or carers? If so, what was said? _____ _____	
Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? _____ _____	
Have you consulted anybody else? _____	
Your Name and Position / Role _____ _____	
Signature _____	Date _____