

Online Safeguarding Procedures

Introduction

This document is designed to provide King's College London staff and students with guidance and a set of procedures to follow to ensure that they adhere to the university's policy on the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults. The Procedure is written in line with the [Online Safety Act 2023](#).

Safeguarding concerns can take many forms which may include: bullying and cyber bullying, sharing inappropriate online content, child sexual exploitation/trafficking, domestic abuse, emotional abuse, grooming, neglect, online abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse. Abuse could be by adults or other children/young people.

This procedure refers to all KCL staff involved in the delivery and supervision of online work, including Graduate Teaching Assistants, and where under 18s or adults at risk will be participating. Please see the Student Services Online article "[Staying Safe Online](#)" as well as the [KCL Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#) for further guidance on:

- Reporting a Safeguarding concern
- Guidance on Good Practise
- Safeguarding roles

A risk assessment may be required in some cases where under 18s are involved. Please speak to your [Faculty Designated Safeguarding Officer](#) about whether you need to conduct a risk assessment.

Online platforms

Microsoft Teams is the preferred University-supported platform. If you need guidance or support on using Microsoft Teams, please speak to IT on 020 7848 8888 or 8888@kcl.ac.uk. If you choose not to use Teams, any online activity should take place on approved online platforms only and the Faculty will need to ensure:

- The platform must be appropriate for all ages of participants, including under 18s where necessary.
- Access to the platform is enabled only for the intended participants.
- Personal information (including full names, contact details and email addresses) is only accessible to those with the right permissions and is not publicly viewable.
- Staff can remove people from the platform if necessary.
- Participants can comply with any safeguarding policies belonging to the platform and the overarching KCL Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Procedure for delivering online activity

This procedure refers to the following activity:

- Non-interactive livestreaming, such as, live streaming video or webinars where participant video/audio is not enabled.
- Interactive livestreaming where video/audio participation is enabled, such as, small group work sessions, meetings or seminars.
- Pre-recorded lectures or information via video

KCL member of staff responsibilities

Prior to running a session, the member of staff should:

1. Familiarise themselves with the university's [Safeguarding Policy and procedures](#).
2. Ensure they have the contact details of their Faculty Designated Safeguarding Officer.
3. Ensure they are using an institutional account (not a personal account).
4. Ensure that all staff supervising the activity are familiar with the platform and understand how participants will be using it, **including privacy settings and how to report offensive or abusive content**.
5. Ensure participants or speakers are advised in advance if a webinar will be recorded.
6. Plan the structure and content of the activity carefully to ensure that discussions remain on topic and that content is appropriate for participants who are under 18.
7. Ensure students do not respond to contact requests from people they do not know and know who to contact if they hear anything upsetting or inappropriate.
8. Ensure students know they can contact you via a Microsoft Teams call or Teams chat (if a student wants to disclose something about the home environment, they may not have the privacy to do this via a call).

During a live session:

9. At the start of the session, remind participants about general expectations of behaviour and remind them of the ground rules. This includes:
 - Not sharing any personal details, such as, bank details, passwords, login information, (even if inadvertently) and understanding that this will need to be reported to Information Compliance if a breach does occur.
 - Encourage students to have their cameras on at appropriate points during the lesson (with the background blurred or using a background template).
 - Remind participants not to take photographs of the screens or share any images of the online session.

10. Challenging behaviour or inappropriate comments should be dealt with immediately. This may involve the lead KCL member of staff responsible for the session muting or removing the offender from the platform.
11. If the virtual platform being used is hacked/bombed by an external person, the KCL member of staff is responsible for ending the session immediately and reschedule the meeting.
12. **Please note:** Staff should avoid being in a private video call on their own with a young person unless they have DBS clearance. If this happens by accident (someone else loses signal etc.) they should immediately come out of the breakout room/chat and end the session.

General Staff and Student expectations of behaviours during a session

- When using cameras, the background should be blurred, or a template should be used. Be mindful of your surroundings and use an appropriate room for video calling. Preferably this would be a communal living space or a designated workspace and **not** a bedroom. Video calls should not be carried out from a bedroom unless the background is concealed.
- When on a video call you must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household whilst the call is taking place.
- Language must always be professional and appropriate, including other members of your household that may pass in the background.
- Photographs or screenshots of a video call must only be taken with verbal consent.
- If screens are shared at any point, the individual must ensure that all extraneous tabs or browsers have been shut down.

This is not an exhaustive list. Please see the Student Services Online article, "[Staying Safe Online](#)" for further information.

Procedure for online personal tutoring and 1-2-1s

This section refers to a long-term online engagement with under 18s or adults at risk in a tutoring or 1-2-1 context. All staff working in this context should complete the Safeguarding at King's e-module, be familiar with the [Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#) prior to starting their work supporting students, and should be clear on how to report concerns. Most students under the age of 18 will be assigned a DBS-checked Personal Tutor; however, this will not always be the case.

The following guidance has been produced to assist non-DBS checked personal tutors to undertake their personal tutoring duties. DBS-checked Personal Tutors should meet with their tutees as normal, bearing in mind they may be working with under 18 students. The Personal Tutor Dashboard will provide information on the age of your tutees.

Guidance for non-DBS checked personal tutors holding 121 meetings with students under the age of 18:

In-person meetings – should be held in a public place (e.g. university café, common room) that is agreed on by both parties. Alternatively, a private office space, meeting room etc can be used but the door should be kept open, and another member of staff should be made aware the meeting is taking place (include their details, along with the location, in your meeting notes).

Online 1-2-1 meetings – give the student the option of having a member of their household present (in the same room or close by), or the member of staff must record & share the session with the student. Share the recording by email and save a copy of the email. Make a note of the provision put in place (named member of household present or meeting recorded) in your notes for the meeting.

Please note: Staff should never be in an unrecorded private video call on their own with a young person. If this happens by accident (someone else loses signal, the recording fails etc.) they should immediately come out of the breakout room/chat and end the session.

Suggested introductory text to use at start of 1-2-1 meeting with a student under the age of 18, if agreed provision is to record the meeting:

"As you are currently under 18 there are some additional safeguarding measures that we need to have in place. We have agreed to record this meeting, and I will share a copy of this recording with you straight after. This will be useful should you want to recap anything that we discussed."

"Should you wish to discuss anything particularly personal that you are not comfortable having recorded, we can pause the recording, but please be aware that I will need to keep a brief written record of what was discussed (this will be shared with you) or submit a [Student of Concern form](#) if required. Alternatively, we can arrange a separate meeting where we can be joined by the Faculty Safeguarding Officer or Senior Tutor and have a conversation which will not be recorded. Please be aware that I cannot keep anything private if I believe that there is a potential danger to you or another person, and processes such as Student of Concern are in place to ensure that you get the support required if I have a serious concern about anything that you share with me."

"There are a number of other organisations that you can provide support outside of King's as well, which you can find on crisis support. I can share the link with you to signpost you to these services."
<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/student-life/counselling/crisis-support>.