

Oxford SU Advice

Safeguarding Policy

1. Principles

1.1 Oxford SU Advice is committed to providing a safe environment for all adults at risk and children. Oxford SU Advice may encounter adults at risk or those under the age of 18 through its casework or outreach activities. This policy seeks to ensure our support is offered appropriately and to offer assurances to staff, students, volunteers and visitors that safeguarding will be dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.

1.2 Oxford SU has a Designated Safeguarding Officer who will work with the Universities two Safeguarding Officers, who work with other agencies where appropriate to achieve their aims. Details of these officers and how to contact them can be found [here](#).

2. Scope of Policy

2.1 Oxford SU Advice recognises the following groups of individuals within this policy:

- Adults at Risk: defined by the Department of Health as "those who are or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illnesses; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself [or themselves], or unable to protect him or herself [or themselves] against significant harm or exploitation".
- Child: a 'child' is any person under the age of 18; 'children' are to be construed accordingly. Particular care shall be afforded to a child under the age of 16.

2.2 The term 'adult at risk' has been used in place of the term 'vulnerable adult' in line with the University of Oxford definition. This is because the term 'vulnerable adult' may wrongly imply that some of the fault for the abuse lies with the adult abused. The term 'adult at risk' is used as an exact replacement for 'vulnerable adult' as used throughout existing government guidance to local authorities.

3. Dealing with suspicions or allegations of abuse

3.1 Oxford SU Advice staff may:

- Have alleged abuse disclosed to them
- Suspect abuse is being carried out
- Be accused of abusing those they are in contact with

3.2 The Advocacy Manager will act as the nominated safeguarding contact for SU Advice. They are responsible for ensuring that concerns and allegations are escalated appropriately without delay.

3.3 Advisers should immediately raise concerns with the Advocacy Manager. If the nominated safeguarding contact for SU Advice is unavailable, then they may seek advice from the SU Designated Safeguarding Officer or the appropriate University Safeguarding Officer.

3.4 The nominated safeguarding contact for SU Advice may seek informal advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the appropriate University Safeguarding Lead before making a formal disclosure.

3.5 Contact details for these individuals will be available on the SU website.

3.6 This escalation shall be to the following routes:

- Risk of immediate serious harm to a child or adult at risk: The adviser will contact the emergency services via 999 or the police via the 101 service. Anybody can make a referral in these circumstances. The relevant University Safeguarding Officer and nominated safeguarding contact should then be notified of the case.
- Suspicions of abuse involving students who are considered to be an adult at risk or are under 18 years of age, with no immediate risk of serious harm: reported to Director of Student Welfare and Support Services
- Suspicions of abuse involving a member of Collegiate University staff who is considered to be an adult at risk or is under 18 years old, with no immediate risk of serious harm: reported to the University's Director of HR
- Suspicions of abuse involving under 18's not part of the Collegiate University community, with no immediate risk of serious harm: reported to [Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub](#) or relevant local authority
- Suspicions of abuse involving adults at risk not part of the Collegiate University community, with no immediate risk of serious harm: reported to [Oxfordshire County Council](#) or relevant local authority
- Allegations made against a student in relation to abuse, with no immediate risk of serious harm: reported to Director of Student Welfare and Support Services
- Allegations against a member of Collegiate University staff, non-student volunteers or academic visitors: reported to University's Director of HR
- Allegations against a member of Oxford SU Advice: reported to the SU's Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.7 Where both students and staff may be involved, the disclosure shall be made to both University Safeguarding Officers who will jointly agree the most appropriate response. Where allegations relate to one of the Safeguarding Officers, the other Safeguarding Officer should be contacted.

3.8 The Universities Safeguarding Officers will then take next steps in line with the Universities Safeguarding Code of Conduct: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/safeguarding-at-risk-adults-and-children#collapse1406566>.

4. Supporting students under the age of 18

4.1 Oxford SU Advice is aware that the Collegiate University recruits a number of students each year who are under 18 when they commence their studies. We are committed to supporting these students fully, and our staff are subject to enhanced DBS checks.

4.2 Students under the age of 18 are considered a 'child' under British law, and steps will be needed to be taken to ensure their safety. All appointments, whether virtual or not, held with those under 18 will be held with two staff members present.

4.3 Oxford SU Advice recognises the autonomy of all students, and so will not ordinarily share or discuss personal information of students under 18's with any third parties. This includes parent(s)/guardian(s) unless the student has submitted a written request asking for us to share their personal information with another named person. Further information including exceptions to this principle are found in the [Confidentiality Policy](#).

5. Record Keeping

5.1 Appropriate records will be retained in accordance with Oxford SU Advice's [Data Protection Policy](#) and the Universities Data Protection Policy if a referral is made.