

Child Protection Policy – Richmond the American International University in London

University Responsibilities

The University has existing stringent policies and procedures in place designed to safeguard the welfare of all of its students. Ensuring a safe environment for students is a responsibility that is essential to the educational mission of the University. Current safeguarding measures include: 24-hour security staffing; a professional student affairs staff, two of who live near campus and are “on-call” for emergencies; a system of “residential directors” and “residential advisors”, students who are hired and trained to act in a pastoral and disciplinary capacity on-campus; three university counselors who are available to meet students on an appointment basis at short notice; a “silent witness” system of anonymously reporting any incidents or concerns; and a President whose residence is on the Richmond campus.

Under UK law, however, the Child Protection Act (1998) requires specific additional protection for any “individual under 18 years”, which the Act defines as a child. Additional protection is also required for those defined as “vulnerable adults”.¹

Although the University admits relatively few students under the age of 18, it has a particular legal and moral responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of any such students. It therefore is committed to compliance with the CPA (1998) in specific attention to the safety and welfare of those students in its care under the age of 18.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

The university is already committed to checking the suitability of some staff and students working directly with children or vulnerable adults (for example, any faculty member teaching on the “Summer Advantage” programme for high school students has a DBS check as a matter of course). However, many other staff across the university are in regular or significant occasional contact with under-18s in the course of their teaching or other work, or are in positions of significant trust (eg. Student Affairs staff, security guards, academic advisors).

DBS checks are designed primarily for those in a position of employment involving “substantive unsupervised access” to under-18s. The University is committed to ensuring that such staff have CRB checks in compliance with UK law, and good HR practice, in order to ensure that their suitability to work with under-18s is confirmed.

Specific guidance on whether staff or students should be subject to a DBS check can be obtained from HR.

¹ A vulnerable adult is defined as: 'A person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type
i) a substantial learning or physical disability
ii) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or
iii) a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.'

Child Protection Procedures

The University has appointed a Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO). This senior member of the University's Student Affairs team has responsibility for coordinating the University's safeguarding practice. The CPLO is assisted by several "Designated Officers" to ensure that there is always safeguarding cover available at all times. The contact details of these staff will be held by HR and will be published on the University website.

All University staff must contact the CPLO or a designated officer if they have any cause to believe that a child is in any way at risk.

The designated officer will contact the relevant Social Services department in accordance with the requirements of the SSCB (Surrey Safeguarding Children Board), and will follow their instructions.

Vulnerable Adults

Where possible, the University identifies vulnerable adults and ensures that there are appropriate support measures in place. This is formalizing a reporting arrangements that are already in place in Student Affairs, and which most often occur when the student presents to, or is referred to, Student Affairs, with mental health difficulties or a disability that would meet the legal definition of "vulnerable".

Any member of staff across the University with concerns regarding an adult student whom they believe or know to be vulnerable must contact the Vice-President for Student Affairs who will liaise with the CPLO if necessary. Where the concern involves a vulnerable adult, the CPLO will consult with relevant staff in order to determine the most appropriate course of action. Where abuse is suspected, Sussex Social Care will be informed in accordance with SSAB (Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board) guidelines.

Guidance to Staff

The following general principles are to be adhered to by all staff:

- It is the responsibility of any staff member to report any concerns with regard to child safety to a Designated Officer.
- If staff, in the course of their work for the university, become aware of an issue with regard to child protection, either through direct observation of abuse or if it is brought to their notice, or if they have any cause for concern, they must treat this as a priority, and address it immediately.
- If staff wish to seek advice with regard to a specific incident or area of concern, they may consult the Designated Officer, or the SSCB.

Training

The University ensures that the CPLO and Designated Officers receive appropriate training. This training will be passed on by Student Affairs to Residential Advisors and Residential Directors, and any interested staff and faculty members in in-house training sessions.

The University also provides information to raise awareness to ensure that all staff understand what to do if they become aware of a child protection issue.

Relationships with Young People Aged 16-17

It should be noted that whilst a child can consent to sexual activity once they reach the age of 16, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for a person over 18 (teacher, student peer leader, academic staff etc.) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

Any such relationship would constitute “gross misconduct” by a staff or faculty member, and the usual procedures with regard to such an offence will be followed.

Recruitment Activities and Admissions

As noted above, the University actively recruits in schools both in the UK and in other countries. There will therefore be contact on the part of admissions officers with applicants under the age of 18. Appropriate guidance and training will be provided for admissions officers in the issues surrounding safeguarding children and the University’s policies.

On average, the university admits approximately twenty students under the age of 18 each academic year. Offers of admission will only be made to those applicants who undertake to comply with the University’s child protection procedures, and this will entail notification of the University’s policies and procedures in this regard, and a requirement that the student agrees to follow any guidelines (e.g. providing details of next of kin in the event of concerns about their welfare.).

Residence Life

Where a student under the age of 18 is placed into University residence, the RAs and RDs should be made aware of the situation, and ensure that all child protection policies are followed.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Records are kept of all referrals to the Designated Officers and their outcomes, and these will be securely held by the CPLO in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act and now the General Data Protection Regulation.

It should be noted that consent is still required from under-18s in the same way as for adults with regard to the disclosure of personal information to a third party, however in accordance with statutory requirements, *where child protection issues are concerned, it is not possible to offer confidentiality to a person under 18, as any disclosures must be reported.*

Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy and associated guidance and procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis, in accordance with any changes in legislation.

Further Information

For further information on Child Protection legislation and policy implementation, see:

Burke, J. and A.M. Ingram. *Aim higher, Aim safer: A Framework for Safeguarding Children and Young People in Higher Education Institutions*. (2005).

DfES. *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*. (2006)

Department of Health. *What To Do If You're Worried About a Child Being Abused*.

(2003). HM Government. *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. (2006)

Appendix 1 – Information re: Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding Children at Richmond The American International University in London

The University has existing stringent policies and procedures in place designed to safeguard the welfare of all of its students. Ensuring a safe environment for students is a responsibility that is essential to the educational mission of the University.

Under UK law, however, the Child Protection Act (1998) requires specific additional protection for any “individual under 18 years”, which the Act defines as a child. Additional protection is also required for those defined as “vulnerable adults”.² Richmond is therefore committed to compliance with the CPA (1998), and expects all staff to share this commitment. The requirements outlined below are specific to this age group, and are in addition to the existing policies and procedures of the university dedicated to the welfare of all students.

Richmond’s Child Protection Policy and procedures are referred to in the University Catalog and on the website. All staff must ensure that they are aware of these procedures. Parents, carers, and students are welcome to read the Policy upon request.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a young person’s welfare. We will ensure that our concerns about our students are discussed with him/her and his/her parents/carers first, unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the welfare of the student concerned.

Our Child Protection Liaison Officers (CPLOs) are:

*Allison Cole-Stutz, Dean of Students – Primary CPLO
Jamie Macleod, Associate Dean for Student Leadership – Designated Officer
Dan O’Meara, Associate Dean for Student Support & Career Services—Designated Officer*

² A vulnerable adult is defined as: 'A person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type

i) a substantial learning or physical disability

ii) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or

iii) a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.'

If you are concerned about the welfare of a student under the age of 18, please record your concern, and any observations or conversations heard, and report to one of the CPLOs as soon as possible the same day. DO NOT conduct your own investigation.

If your concerns relate to the actions or behaviour of a member of staff (which could suggest that she or he is unsuitable to work with children) then you should report this to one of the CPLOs in confidence, who will refer the matter to the President (or to the Board of Trustees if the concern relates to the President)—who will consider what action to take.

Appendix 2 – Guidance for Staff

Code of Conduct

The safety and welfare of all students at Richmond is vital. However, staff may find it helpful to have a particular Code of Conduct for dealing with students under the age of 18. Providing guidance about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors with such students represents good practice, and can assist staff in making themselves aware of particular issues with regard to this age group.

It is important that staff do the following:

- Treat all students with fairness and respect
- Act as a good role model, and challenge any unacceptable behaviour
- Report all allegations or suspicions of abuse
- Remember that your actions may be misinterpreted, no matter how well-intended.
- Avoid situations where there is only one adult/staff member present. In individual advising sessions, leave the door open.
- Be aware that sexual relationships with students under the age of 18 are prohibited by law (whilst a child can consent to sexual activity once they reach the age of 16, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for a person over 18 (teacher, student peer leader, academic staff etc.) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual)
- With regard to staff with responsibilities in student accommodation: do not enter a student's bedroom without permission except in an emergency. In the event of an emergency, ensure that someone accompanies you.

Child in Need of Protection Procedures

These procedures provide step-by-step guidance on how to respond to a concern about a child's welfare.

Causes for Concern

Concerns may arise because:

- A young person discloses abuse
- There are suspicions or indicators that a young person is being abused.
- There are observable changes in a young person's behaviour that may be related to abuse.
- A young person may abuse another young person
- The behaviour of a member of staff towards a young person causes concern or there is suspicion that a staff member or volunteer is harming a child.

The basic premise of a child protection procedure is to ensure that children who are suffering from harm, abuse and neglect are identified, and that information is shared appropriately to afford them protection and ensure access to requisite services.

How to Respond if a Young Person Discloses Abuse

- Stay calm, listen and re-assure the young person.
- Check with the young person that you have their consent to share the information. If consent is withheld then be clear about the rationale for any decision to override this.
- Record information and ask the young person if what you have recorded accords with what they have said.
- Invite the young person to be party to any discussion with the designated person
- Make a report to the CPLO (Child Protection Liaison Officer_
- Designated Officer to decide upon next steps: seeking further advice, informing parents, informing children's social care.
- Advise the young person what is going to happen and should it be decided to make a report to children's social care, seek their consent wherever possible.
- Advise the young person of the outcome of any conversations with outside agencies and what will happen next.

How to respond if there are suspicions a young person is being abused

- Speak to the CPLO
- Keep records of conversations and decisions
- Wherever possible, involve the young person in conversations and keep them informed of any actions or possible outcome.
- Where a referral has been made to children's social care, they must receive a written report within 48 hours.

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How to respond if there are genuine suspicions a staff member or volunteer is harming a young person

- Contact the CPLO
- The designated officer should speak to the young person about any actions taken and offer support and advice about what will happen next.
- Senior managers to implement press strategy, and internal investigation in consultation with children's social care and police.

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Recording information

- The designated officer should photocopy the pro forma report and recording forms and store them in an accessible location.
- The member of staff who raises the initial concern must record what they have observed or what the young person disclosed.
- The designated officer should record any subsequent actions, decisions or conversations
- The designated officer is responsible for forwarding written referrals to children's social care.
- The designated officer is responsible for storing information in a secure area and ensure that only authorised staff have access to this.
- Timescales for passing on information. The government guidance '*What to do if...*' (DoH 2003) sets timescales for action. A telephone referral to children's social care should be

followed up in writing within 48 hours. The guidance timeframes should be incorporated into any procedures.

Categories of Concern About a Young Person's Welfare

The definitions below are brief, and reproduced from the government guidance *What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused* (DfES, 2006):

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Bullying is the persistent, intentional harming of another person within an unequal power relationship. The types of bullying fall into a number of categories:

- Verbal – threatening or intimidating behaviour with consequences, spreading rumours, excluding, calling names, teasing, making sexual, racial, sectarian remarks, picking on physical appearance
- Physical – kicking, punching, hitting, spitting, biting, tripping
- Emotional – isolating, talking behind backs, staring out, writing nasty notes/letters/graffiti

Appendix 3 – Child Protection Policy Consent Form

Richmond the American International University in London
Consent to the Conditions in relation to the Admission of Students Under 18 Years of Age

Name of Student: _____

Applicant Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Nationality: _____

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1. I have read and understood the letter and information sheet from Richmond the American International University in London (henceforth referred to as “Richmond” or “the University”) outlining its policies and procedures in relation to students who are under 18 years of age.
 2. I understand that Richmond will not act *in loco parentis* for the above named student, and in cases of emergency during the time the above named student remains a minor, the University will always endeavour to contact the appointed Guardian of the above named student.
 3. I consent to Richmond acting on medical advice in the best interests of the above to authorize emergency medical treatment if it is not possible to contact the nominated guardian within a reasonable time.
 4. I understand that Richmond is an adult environment and that the above named student will generally be treated as an adult.
 5. I understand that Richmond will only release information relating to the above named student’s academic progress or personal life if consent has been given in the Release of Information form *signed by the above named student*.
 6. I have provided full name and contact details of the person living in the UK who will act as Guardian in the case of an emergency, and will update the University immediately regarding any changes in the name or contact details so provided.

I (name) _____, Parent/Guardian (please delete as appropriate) of the above named student declare that I have read and accept the above conditions.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 5 – Admissions letter for those students under 18

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian:

As your son/daughter is starting as a student at Richmond the American International University in London, and s/he is under the age of 18, we are writing to inform you about Richmond's policy and procedures in relation to his/her protection and safety, which address the requirements of current legislation. The document *Information for Students Who are Under 18 and their Parents/Legal Guardians* is attached and we would ask you to ensure that you discuss the contents of this important document with your son/daughter/ward.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 6 – Information for Students Who are Under 18 and their Parents/Legal Guardians

University Responsibilities

The University has stringent policies and procedures in place designed to safeguard the welfare of all of its students. Ensuring a safe environment for students is a responsibility that is essential to the educational mission of the University. Under UK law, however, the Child Protection Act (1998) requires specific additional protection for any “individual under 18 years”, which the Act defines as a child.

Although the University admits relatively few students under the age of 18, it has a particular legal and moral responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of any such students. It therefore is committed to compliance with the CPA (1998) in specific attention to the safety and welfare of those students in its care under the age of 18.

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Checks

DBS checks are designed primarily for those in a position of employment involving “substantive unsupervised access” to under-18s. The University is committed to ensuring that such staff have DBS checks in compliance with UK law, and good HR practice, in order to ensure that their suitability to work with under-18s is confirmed.

Child Protection Procedures

The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) is a multi-agency organization which has established child protection policy and practice for Sussex, in compliance with UK law and statutory regulations. The University works within the policy framework of the SSCB, and in particular, will comply with the *SSCB Manual of Child Protection Procedures* (March 2007). <http://www1.surreycc.gov.uk/cafis/manual/>

In accordance with this, the University will appoint a Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO). This will be a senior member of the University’s management structure, and will have responsibility for coordinating the University’s safeguarding practice. The CPLO will be assisted by several “Designated Officers” to ensure that there is always safeguarding cover available at all times. The contact details of these staff will be held by HR and will be published on the University website.

All University staff must contact the CPLO or a designated officer if they have any cause to believe that a child is in any way at risk. The designated officer will contact the relevant Social Services department in accordance with the requirements of the SSCB, and will follow their instructions.

Guidance to Staff

Guidance for staff who may come into contact with under-18s in the course of their work, will be produced and distributed by HR. The following general principles should be adhered to by all staff:

- It is the responsibility of any staff member to report any concerns with regard to child safety to a Designated Officer.
- If staff, in the course of their work for the university, become aware of an issue with regard to child protection, either through direct observation of abuse or if it is brought to their notice, or if they have any cause for concern, they must treat this as a priority, and address it immediately.
- If staff wish to seek advice with regard to a specific incident or area of concern, they may consult the Designated Officer, or the SSCB.

Residence Life

Where a student under the age of 18 is placed into University residence, the RAs and RDs will be made aware of the situation, and ensure that all child protection policies are followed.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Records will be kept of all referrals to the Designated Officers and their outcomes, and these will be securely held by the Child Protection Liaison Officer (the Dean of Students) in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation.

It should be noted that consent is still required from under-18s in the same way as for adults with regard to the disclosure of personal information to a third party, however in accordance with statutory requirements, *where child protection issues are concerned, it is not possible to offer confidentiality to a person under 18, as any disclosures must be reported.*

Parental/Guardian Responsibilities

Richmond encourages and welcomes the involvement of parents and guardians in the educational process of students under the age of 18. Parents and Guardians are valuable partners in promoting responsible social behaviour and academic commitment.

Parents/Guardians may wish to monitor the academic progress of students under the age of 18, but as noted in the Child Protection Policy Consent form, Richmond will only release information relating to the student's academic progress if consent has been given in the Release of Information form *signed by the student.*

Parents/Guardians of students under the age of 18 should also note carefully all of the other provisions outlined in the Child Protection Policy consent form. If they have any questions, in the first instance they should contact the Admissions Officer with whom they have been dealing. They may also contact the Child Protection Liaison Officer for the University, the Dean of Students.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy and associated guidance and procedures will be reviewed when it has been in operation for a full academic year. The Child Protection Liaison Officer will ensure that this policy is reviewed if there are any legislative developments that are relevant.

Appendix 7 – Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form Child/Young

Person's Details

Name

DOB

Gender

Ethnicity

Person with Parental Responsibility

The Incident

Describe briefly the facts of the incident or concern. Please record with whom you spoke and when.

Contextual Information

Is there anything you have observed that might assist in understanding the concern?

What action has been taken internally to support the young person?

What action (if any) has been taken internally?

Have the young person's parents or carers been informed?

Has the young person/parent or carer given their consent for you to share the information?

If they have not consented, please state why a decision has been taken to override this.

What external agencies (if any) have been informed?

If a referral has been made to children's social care – has a copy of this report been sent to them within 48 hours?

Has the incident been recorded promptly and stored safely?

Appendix 8 -- Suggested Categories for DBS Cover at Richmond

All Senior Administrative Staff The President and Provost, the vice-presidents, the department chairs, the Registrar and Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Head of HR should all have CRB checks, as a matter of good practice, and because of potential one-to-one contact with students under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults.

All FYP Instructors As faculty members teaching on the First-Year Programme also act as academic advisors to all first-year students, most under-18s will fall under their care. Advising sessions are ordinarily one-to-one, so there is therefore significant unsupervised contact between FYP instructors and their students.

All Full-Time Faculty Even though the official advisors for first-year students are FYP instructors, undergraduates are entitled to see any advisor in their area of study, which means that all full-time faculty are in the position of potential occasional unsupervised access to under-18s, as well as to vulnerable adults. It will therefore be good practice for all full-time faculty members to be DBS checked.

Head of Estates and Facilities and Security Guards. The role of the Head of Estates and Facilities entails regular access to student residences, and therefore potential access to students under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults. Security guards have a considerable role in ensuring the safety and welfare of all students, and as such, should be subject to DBS checks.

All Student Affairs Staff. Because of the nature of the duties enacted by those in student affairs office, there are many occasions on which there may be unsupervised access to a student under the age of 18 or to a vulnerable adult by a student affairs staff member.

Admissions Staff The University actively recruits in schools both in the UK and in other countries, and there will therefore be regular unsupervised contact on the part of admissions officers with applicants under the age of 18.

Residential Advisors, Residential Directors and FYP Student Peer Mentors. RAs and RDs are students who supervise residence halls, and FYP Student Peer Mentors engage on academic and personal levels with first-year students via an official association with the First Year Programme.

RAs and RDs act in both a disciplinary and a pastoral capacity. They are trained by the Office of Student Affairs to assist residents in settling into University accommodation. All RDs and RAs are training in fire safety and first aid. In addition they take part on-going training throughout the academic year for conflict resolution, community development, social adjustment issues and more. They therefore potentially have significant unsupervised access to under-18s and vulnerable adults, depending on the ages and conditions of those living in their particular halls of residence.

There is a difficulty in obtaining meaningful DBS checks for most student employees, however, in that, as the university is an international institution, very few of Richmond's undergraduates are UK citizens. CRB checks would therefore not represent a meaningful index of suitability for such students to perform these roles. Richmond should request that any such student employees obtain equivalent checks from the authorities in their country of residence.