

Safeguarding Policy

SUMMARY

The policy outlines procedures for safeguarding the wellbeing and safety of all students, especially those under 18 and vulnerable adults, ensuring they are protected from harm and have access to necessary support services. OELS registers students under 18 on its degree programmes and not on the study abroad programmes.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

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PART ONE: Preliminary Information

1. INTRODUCTION

We treat everyone with respect; we will not tolerate sexual misconduct, violence, or abuse; and we will take all reasonable and necessary steps to keep our campus and community safe. It is also a principle that “we” means all of us, students, lecturers, and staff.

We recognise that we have a fundamental responsibility to provide an environment in which individuals of all ages, whether member of staff, student, lecturer, or visitor, may work, learn, and grow in a safe environment. This responsibility includes an ethical and moral duty to safeguard children and adults at risk at any time when they are engaging with our staff, students, lecturers, volunteers, and contractors in school-led activities, whether on or off our campus. This core value is at the heart of our interaction with our wider community and acknowledges that in all our interactions with children and adults at risk, their welfare is of paramount importance.

This document sets out the policy and procedures of OMNES Education London School (OELS) to ensure a safe environment for children and adults at risk.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all OELS staff, applicants, students, volunteers, lecturers, anyone representing the school, and its visitors. It adheres to all activities involving contact with children or adults at risk. The policy includes face to face activities and activities delivered online.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following OELS policies that support the school’s commitment to safeguarding our community:

- Welfare and Wellbeing Policy
- Student Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom
- Complaints and Appeals Policy

3. DEFINITIONS

A **‘student’** is any person enrolled on an OMNES Education London School programme of study.

‘Children’ are people under the age of 18 years.

‘Adults at risk’ are defined by government as people over the age of 18 years who receive assistance or support in the form of a Regulated Activity.

‘Regulated Activity’ includes health care; personal care; social work; daily assistance; teaching, training or instructing and advice or guidance provided mainly for children

In the context of Higher Education, we also recognise that there may be adults within the school community who may be at risk but who fall outside the government definition of Regulated Activity.

“Sexual Misconduct” relates to all unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual harassment (as defined by Section 26 (2) of the Equality Act 2010).
- Unwanted conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).
- Assault (as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003).
- Rape (as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003).
- Physical unwanted sexual advances (as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Sexual harassment and the law, 2017).
- Intimidation, or promising resources or benefits in return for sexual favours (as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Sexual harassment and the law, 2017).
- Distributing private and personal explicit images or video footage of an individual without their consent (as defined by the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015).

“Radicalisation” refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Radicalisation may co-exist with other forms of child abuse and neglect.

“Extremism” is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as “The holding of extreme political or religious views; fanaticism,” and an extremist is “a person who holds extreme religious (or political) views, especially one who advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme actions.”

PART TWO: Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

We believe all individuals have a right to learn and grow within a safe environment and are committed to protecting children and adults at risk from harm. We are not however ‘in loco

parentis' (having the legal status of a parent) and cannot accept the responsibilities of guardian to any member of its community.

2. OUR COMMITMENT

We believe that it is always unacceptable for a child, young person, or adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all by a commitment to practice which protects them.

We recognise that all people, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

We recognise our responsibilities to protect staff, lecturers, students, and volunteers against unfounded allegations of abuse.

We will seek to safeguard children and vulnerable adults through:

- Adopting a broad approach to its safeguarding responsibilities which encompasses well-recognised forms of risk and abuse such as sexual misconduct but also considers issues such as self-harm and the causes and risks of radicalisation or extremism.
- Appointing and training staff with specific responsibilities for Safeguarding (Designated Safeguarding Officers).
- Promoting safe staff and volunteer recruitment strategies, ensuring all necessary checks are made (DBS for permanent Staff and references for our Lecturers).
- Providing effective management for staff and lecturers through supervision, support, and training.
- Providing basic safeguarding awareness training to give information and guidance to staff, and students about how to recognise potential abuse, how to respond appropriately and how to report it, and by making staff aware that they have a responsibility to report any concerns they are aware of regarding a safeguarding matter to the appropriate person.
- Managing an effective internal process for dealing with reported concerns:
 - We strongly encourage students to bring any concerns they may have to the attention of our team. This can be done either verbally or by submitting a report through our anonymous reporting form, which can be accessed here: <https://forms.office.com/e/j7Tfg61KcY>. We treat student concerns with the utmost seriousness, just as if we had received personal information.
 - All concerns raised are promptly forwarded to the OELS Director, who collaborates with the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Director of Academic Programmes to determine the appropriate course of action. It is important to note that all reports and subsequent follow-up actions are transparently communicated to the Board of Directors.
- Sharing information about concerns within the Home School (for Study Abroad students) and with external agencies where appropriate, whilst complying with GDPR.

- Working in partnership with the Psychological Coach & Counsellor, ensuring that all parties recognise their responsibilities to each other, act upon them, and accept collective responsibility for safeguarding arrangements.
- Reviewing policy and supporting processes annually, through the Student Experience Committee.

We do not own or manage any residential accommodation. Arrangements with student and private accommodation providers are the responsibility of the student and their parents or guardians.

Regular risk assessments will be conducted to identify any potential areas of concern specific to children or vulnerable adults, such as accommodation, social activities, and field trips. These assessments will help in implementing necessary adjustments to our programmes and activities to ensure a safe and inclusive environment.

This Policy provides the overall framework and statement of principles regarding our approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

We know that there may be circumstances when a student would like to contact us anonymously. If so, we will treat student concerns just as seriously as if we had received personal details. As soon as the report form has been received, it will be shared with the Director of OELS who will decide on follow up action. All report will be shared with the Board of Directors. For anonymous report, you can use the following form: (<https://forms.office.com/e/j7Tfg61KcY>).

Document title: Safeguarding Policy		
Owner: OELS Director		
Approving Body: Student Experience Committee	Date of approval: Jul-2025, Jul-2026	
Version 4 Contact details and approving body updated	Next review date: Jul-2027	
Public use: no	Staff use: yes	Student use: yes