

**Royal Holloway Students' Union
Board of Trustees / 6 September 2018**

Safeguarding Policy

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Purpose: To approve the organisation's Safeguarding Policy

1. Background Information

Safeguarding issues are increasingly in the media, as a number of charities have failed in their duty to protect vulnerable individuals in their activities.

The Students' Union does not currently deliver services or activities centrally that fall within the 'regulated activities' definition, and we only have a very small number of under 18 year olds as members. Some of our activities, however, are higher risk than others – and so it is appropriate for us to consider how we might best ensure any potential safeguarding issues are managed effectively.



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Audience: All Staff

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PeopleHR / Company Documents

1. Background Information

RHSU represents and provides services and activities for all students at the Royal Holloway, University of London. Whilst the vast majority of students are aged 18 years or over, our membership also includes a limited number of individuals classed as from a 'vulnerable group' (i.e. those under 18, and those over 18 as defined in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012).

As such, our Safeguarding policy sets out our approach guided by two key principles:

- 1.1 The Students' Union must endeavour to ensure that all members have access to as many of the Students' Union services as possible - putting in place the appropriate policies and procedures to mitigate any risk.
- 1.2 This must take into account all the relevant legal requirements, as well as sit within the broader approach taken by Royal Holloway.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1 Responsibility for ensuring this policy is adhered to shall rest with the Students' Union's Senior Management Team, with delegated tasks to Line Managers for specific activities within teams.
- 3.1 The Chief Executive shall take specific responsibility regarding the investigation and reporting of suspicions/allegations of abuse of vulnerable persons to the relevant authorities.

3. Overall Policy Statement

- 3.1 In accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and associated legislation, RHSU has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children or to protect the safety and welfare of vulnerable groups and recognises that:
 - i. The safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults is of paramount importance.
 - ii. Everyone who works with children and vulnerable adults has a responsibility to safeguard their welfare and report any concerns.
 - iii. Staff, students and volunteers must be protected from unsubstantiated allegations of abuse.
 - iv. Allegations of abuse or poor practice should be responded to quickly and appropriately.
 - v. Confidentiality should be maintained in accordance with relevant legislation.
 - vi. Anyone who is unsuitable to work with children and/or vulnerable adults should be identified by whatever legal means is available to the Students' Union and prevented from doing so.
 - vii. It is necessary to work with other agencies providing services for vulnerable groups to combat and prevent abuse occurring.

4. Central Union Activities

- 4.1 The Students' Union does not currently undertake any central activities formally defined as 'regulated activity' with vulnerable persons. If this changes, this policy shall be subject to immediate comprehensive revision and review.

4.2 Two activities within the Students' Union have been identified as higher risk for vulnerable persons, and therefore specific procedures have been developed in order to manage this effectively.

Venues & Late Night Entertainment

4.3 Information on new members, including date of birth, is provided by the College to the Students' Union under our data sharing agreement. This allows all under students under the age of 18 to be identified at the start of each academic year.

4.4 All students under the age of 18 at the point where the new academic term starts will receive a direct communication from the Students' Union, informing them of their right to access all our venues, but setting out specific the terms of their entry.

4.5 Specific terms of entry include:

- i. The requirement for them to complete and sign a declaration form detailing the fact they are unable to purchase or consume alcohol in our venues, or enter the venues after having done so elsewhere.
- ii. The requirement for them to make door staff aware of their under 18 status at the point of entry. This is automatically flagged by our door entry system, but the act of declaration enforces the standard of behaviour we expect.
- iii. The requirement for them to wear an alternative wristband, which clearly identifies them as under 18 and prevents bar staff from serving them alcohol.

4.6 Any student found to have breached this process will be automatically banned from entering the venue, and will be process via our Venues Disciplinary Procedure.

Student Group Activities

4.7 Student groups run a wide range of activities on both a planned and ad-hoc basis. This means we need to take a bespoke approach to each group.

4.8 For the limited number of under 18s, they are automatically prevented from joining any student group via the MSL platform.

4.9 If an under 18 year old (or vulnerable person) wishes to join a student group, the staff team will work alongside the relevant committee to establish:

- i. If any regulated activity might be taking place
- ii. What action the group needs to take to manage this
- iii. What restrictions might be added to the individual regarding their participation (for example not being able to attend overnight events)

4.10 Once these actions have been agreed in writing, the student is then free to join the group and participate as required.

5. Accusations and Reporting of Abuse

NB. The Union has already established a formal 'Whistleblowing Policy', which should be read in conjunction with this document.

5.1 Any concerns or accusations of abuse should be reported directly to a staff member in the first instance. Usually this should be the direct supervisor of the individual. In other cases, a member of the Union's Senior Management Team should be made aware.

5.2 When an accusation has been made, the Chief Executive (working with a member of the SMT and an Officer Trustee) will initiate an investigation under the jurisdiction of one of the following procedures:

- i. Members' disciplinary process
- ii. Staff disciplinary policy

5.3 The Chief Executive will take responsibility for liaising directly with any relevant authorities, and for making statutory reports as required.

6. Monitoring & Reporting

6.1 The Board will receive an update and report at each meeting if any major safeguarding issues have been identified and investigated.

6.2 The Board will receive an annual safeguarding report at its June meeting.