



Safeguarding Policy

V2.4 June 2024



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1. Purpose

BCS is committed to protecting the welfare of all children and vulnerable people who access our programmes or use our services, and engage with BCS at any level.

BCS wishes to ensure the maintenance of a safeguarding culture which protects not only children and vulnerable people but also BCS members, clients, volunteers, candidates and staff who have responsibility for them.

This policy is designed to protect children and vulnerable people who participate in any BCS workshops, programmes and events organised by BCS, its subsidiary organisations, or by our Member and Specialist Groups and also to provide guidance to our Centres who delivery training.

It provides the guidelines that all BCS employees, volunteers, members and BCS Accredited Centres must adhere to when working with children and vulnerable people on behalf of BCS.

This document forms part of our Management Systems and compliance is mandatory for all staff and contractors. If you find any weaknesses in the document or examples of non-compliance, please report it to the Compliance Team at compliance@bcs.uk.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all BCS staff, volunteers and members, wherever they are in the world, when participating in BCS activities or undertaking BCS business. It also offers guidance for BCS Accredited Centres.

3. Legislative Governance

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards, and other advice, all of which are designed to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm. In drawing up this policy BCS has consulted and reviewed this legislation and the requirements and recommendations of the Charity Commission. BCS has also drawn upon the advice and recommendations of the NSPCC in its publication "firstcheck" (in which all relevant legislation is listed and summarised).

4. Quick Reference Contacts Guide

	Name	Contact Phone Number
BCS Safeguarding Officer	Shelley Decker	01793 417 417
BCS Deputy Safeguarding Officer	Anneka Edmonds	01793 417 417
BCS Deputy Safeguarding Officer	Sam Cahill	01793 417 417
BCS Deputy Safeguarding Officer	Helen Allison	01793 417 417

Police	101 / 999
NSPCC Whistle-blowing Helpline	0800 028 0285
Local Authority Designated Officer / Designated Officer for Allegations	<u>Workers and Volunteers - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership</u> or 01793 463854

5. Principles

The needs and rights of children and vulnerable adults are paramount. Any suspicions of and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

It is the duty of all BCS members, members of staff, and volunteers to safeguard, to the best of their ability, the welfare of children and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact during their duties and voluntary activities, and also to protect them from assault and from physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

It is the duty of any BCS member, member of staff, or volunteer who has concerns about possible abuse to children or vulnerable adults to report such concerns immediately through the standard whistleblowing procedures or to the Safeguarding Team at BCS safeguarding@bcs.uk.

6. BCS Responsibilities as an Awarding Body

BCS in its capacity as an Awarding Body has a role in ensuring the welfare of candidates taking our assessments. BCS will endeavour to ensure safeguarding by:

- Appointing a Safeguarding Officer who will record and monitor any safeguarding issues reported to us and ensuring appropriate action is taken;
- Actively encouraging a climate through which protection issues are regarded as an essential element of relevant activities and events;
- Ensuring our Accredited Centres have appropriate Safeguarding Policies and procedures;
- Adopting protection guidelines that give clear procedures, volunteer selection and vetting criteria, and a written code of conduct for members in Branches, Specialist Groups and other member organisations which may from time to time be created;
- Adopting a rigorous staff recruitment and selection policy which includes full risk analysis and appropriate vetting, reference and disclosure processes for appointments that will necessitate interaction with children and vulnerable adults;
- Adopting protection guidelines and procedures, and a written code of conduct for staff who interact with children and vulnerable adults;
- Planning all relevant activities so that protection issues are properly addressed;
- Sharing information on protection and good practice with members and staff;
- Issuing step by step guidance on the action to take in the case of concerns or allegations of abuse;
- Providing appropriate training for members and staff who interact with children and vulnerable adults, and appropriate awareness training for member committees and members of staff;
- Having effective mechanisms in place to record and monitor safeguarding issues and ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- Monitoring and reviewing this policy and the associated procedures on a regular basis, at least annually.

7. Responsibilities of BCS Accredited Centres

BCS expects its Accredited Centres to have appropriate mechanisms to ensure safeguarding is embedded into its culture this includes PREVENT policies. Centres have the primary responsibility for the welfare of their candidates but BCS will ensure that it is satisfied that any issues have been acknowledged and dealt with appropriately during audit. All Accredited Centres are required to have an appropriate Safeguarding Officer. Cases involving the conduct of Centre staff will be investigated and will involve statutory protection authorities if appropriate.

England Centres

The roles and responsibilities of centres in England are defined in: Keeping children safe in education – Statutory guidance for schools and colleges

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Wales Centres

The roles and responsibilities of centres in Wales are defined in Keeping Learners Safe <https://gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe>

Northern Ireland

The roles and responsibilities of centres in Northern Ireland are defined in the Department of Education's Publications on General Child Protection Issues – <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/topics/support-and-development/child-protection-and-safeguarding>

What is Prevent?

Prevent is a Government initiative to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and should be seen as part of the wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

8. Acting on Safeguarding Concerns

If anyone is concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of being abused or neglected, they should not ignore their suspicions and should not assume that someone else will take action to protect that person.

Concerns about children should be referred to the children's social care department of the local authority where the child lives. Similarly, concerns about vulnerable adults should be referred to local authority adult services. Alternatively, concerns can be raised through the Whistleblowing Procedures which are available on our website which will be forwarded to the Safeguarding Officer.

9. BCS Events and Activities

This policy applies to all events and activities organised by BCS, its subsidiary organisations, and all BCS Member and Specialist groups and volunteers that allow children to attend.

All children under the age of 13 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian (which can be a professional eg a class teacher within a school setting) when on site at an event.

Children over 13 may attend unsupervised but with parental permission sought by the organisers of the event or by the school at which the event is taking place.

When children attend a BCS event, all our standard health and safety policies apply and must be adhered to.

For insurance purposes, please notify the Legal Team when organising any event with expected or encouraged attendance from children. For Member Groups, please liaise with Member Groups Services.

10. Data Protection

When inviting children under the age of 16 to attend, permission will be sought from their parents to use any of their personal data including, but not limited to, email addresses and contact information for invitation to future events and further BCS participation or to facilitate participation in activities requiring online registration. If the event is taking place in a school, the school will be asked to seek permission from parents or guardians. We expect children to only display their first name on any conference calls in accordance with the advice in our Zoom/Teams calls policy.

It is a requirements that parents or guardians must be informed of the exact intention of the use of the data at the time of request and this data cannot and must not be used for any direct or indirect marketing purposes.

All privacy policies and terms of use for our website also apply.

11. Nine Principles

Principle 1 A safeguarding policy

An awarding body will have a safeguarding policy in place.

Principle 2 Procedures and systems

An awarding body will have clearly defined reporting procedures and response mechanisms that ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met. This will include a designated Safeguarding Officer. At the same time, so far as this is possible given those safeguarding responsibilities, an awarding body will ensure that obligations of confidentiality (re-assuring all concerned that the matter will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately) are respected.

Principle 3 Prevention

An awarding body will adopt measures to minimise the risk of abuse by any person it retains to engage in any activity in relation to its qualifications.

Principle 4 Codes of behaviour

An awarding body will have in place Codes of behaviour that set out acceptable standards of behaviour and good practice for staff and representatives.

Principle 5 Implementation

An awarding body will give clear guidance to permanent staff and representatives on how the safeguarding policy will be adapted and applied.

Principle 6 Equality and inclusion

In accordance with equality legislation, in the exercise of its function of developing and awarding qualifications, an awarding body must have due regard to the need to combat discrimination and ensure procedures are equitably applied to all children and vulnerable adults.

Principle 7 Communication

An awarding body will make their safeguarding policy publicly available. The policy will be regularly reviewed, taking into account comments from appropriate stakeholders.

Principle 8 Education and training

An awarding body will provide appropriate initial and refresher training and development opportunities to staff and representatives.

Principle 9 Implementation and monitoring

An awarding body will monitor the implementation of their safeguarding policy.

In conclusion, these nine principles attempt to ensure that BCS, in its capacity as an Awarding Body, develop and promote practice which safeguards children and vulnerable adults from abuse and exploitation. They additionally seek to meet regulatory and legislative requirements.

12. Definitions

Child

A child means anyone under the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Vulnerable Adult

Although there is no legal definition of the term "vulnerable adult", BCS defines a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of eighteen who is or may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Abuse

The Government guidance document *Working Together to Safeguard Children* describes four categories of abuse:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, 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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's emotional state. This may involve telling the person they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. For a child, this may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of learning, or preventing the child's participation in normal social interaction. It may involve causing the person to often feel frightened or in danger.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution/. 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, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

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 because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

13. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of Legal & Compliance as a minimum, on an annual basis in line with legislative and regulatory standards and procedures.



For further information please contact:

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