

Document Details

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1.0	April 2020	New statement. John Dickinson, Senior Governance Officer

Referenced policies and documents

1. [Anti-bribery and Corruption](#)
2. [Bullying and harassment for staff](#)
3. [Code of conduct for members of the governing body](#)
4. [Code of Conduct on Protests](#)
5. [Data protection](#)
6. [Disciplinary Procedures \(staff\)](#)
7. [Employment of Children and Young People](#)
8. [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#)
9. Framework for Staff Working Overseas
10. [Fieldwork and Travel Guidance](#)
11. [Freedom of Speech](#)
12. [Grievance procedure \(staff\)](#)
13. [Health and Safety Arrangements](#)
14. [Information for Visitors](#)
15. [Information security](#)
16. [Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures](#)
17. [Raising Serious Concerns and Disclosing Public Interest](#)
18. [Staff recruitment guidelines](#)
19. [Reporting Accidents and Near Misses](#)
20. [Research Integrity, Ethics and Governance](#)
21. [Risk Assessment](#)
22. [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy](#)
23. [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Procedures and Guidance](#)

24. [Student Complaints Procedure](#)
25. [Dignity in Student Life Policy](#)
26. [Student Discipline Regulations](#)
27. [Student Placements](#)
28. [Workplace Welfare](#)

Commitment to Safeguarding Research

Lancaster University is seeking to transform lives, communities, practices and thinking. Through our teaching, research and engagement, we aim to take a leading role on social and economic improvement regionally, nationally and internationally.

Central to this mission is respect for the safety, wellbeing and human rights of those with whom we interact. Respect means that we will not tolerate actions or omissions that expose these people – especially children, young people and vulnerable adults – to abuse, harm or neglect.

Lancaster University has and continues to ensure that robust safeguarding measures are in place, understood and enacted. Following the lead set by Office for Students and UKRI, we also commit to:

- ensure we have agreed standards of practice met by both ourselves and our partners;
- provide support to survivors, victims and whistle-blowers and accountability for perpetrators;
- strengthen organisational capacity and capability.

We seek to create cultural change. With strong leadership, we aim to reduce tolerance of wrongdoing, tackle impunity and improve lives.

Stemming from this commitment Lancaster University operates from the following principles in relation to safeguarding.

1. Lancaster confirms both corporate and individual responsibility to act to prevent abuse, harm and neglect, including its specific legal requirements under UK safeguarding legislation.
2. Lancaster encourages the reporting of concerns and underpins this with enhanced institutional understanding of both actual and potential risks and responsive systems to address these.
3. Lancaster identifies barriers to reporting and proactively acts to remove them.
4. Lancaster prioritises prevention and removal of harm and is committed to hold those responsible to account, including using internal disciplinary action where it is justified and reporting suspected criminal activity/notifying relevant professional bodies where it is warranted.
5. Lancaster seeks constructive engagement with others in a spirit of openness and mutual learning.

In addition to ensuring that Lancaster University is compliant with relevant UK legislation and regulation, we also endorse and support the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (UN, 1948); the UN Convention on the Rights of The Child, (UNICEF, 1989); the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, (UN, 1993) and the UN Global Compact, (UN, 1997).

Lancaster University operates and regularly reviews specific policies and procedures to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults, as well as a suite of related regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines for safeguarding in its broader sense.

Statement agreed by Senate on 22 April 2020.

Prevention of Harm in Research and Innovation (Safeguarding): a Draft Framework for Lancaster University

(To be read in conjunction with the University's Commitment to Safeguarding Statement:
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/strategic-planning-and-governance/publication-scheme/policies-and-procedures/#policies-and-procedures-for-conducting-hei-business>)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Lancaster University promotes the safeguarding of all individuals, including those employed on, participating in or otherwise in contact with our research and innovation activities.
- 1.2 We will work with others across the research and innovation sector, including UKRI, to ensure Lancaster continues to develop and maintain the highest standards in organisational culture, systems and practice as required preventing and tackling incidents of exploitation, abuse and harm, while continually building on good practice.
- 1.3 This document sets out how Lancaster University will implement this through a framework of expectations, policies and procedures.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This framework covers understanding, preventing, reporting and responding to exploitation, abuse, harm or neglect to any individual directly involved in a research and innovation activity carried out by the University. This includes research and innovation participants, staff, associated personnel and students.
- 2.2 It also covers understanding, preventing, reporting and responding to exploitation, abuse or harm regarding any child, young person or adult, who is not directly involved in Lancaster University's research and innovation activity but who may be vulnerable to exploitation, abuse or harm by staff, associated personnel or students involved in Lancaster University research and innovation activity.
- 2.3 This applies to all research and innovation activity irrespective of whether it takes place in the UK or overseas, including activities carried out through international teaching partnerships, and to all individuals and organisations involved in these activities either directly or indirectly. Lancaster will enter into all international partnerships in a spirit of mutual respect and equality, respecting and complying with local law and regulation. However, where ambiguity arises in relation to safeguarding, Lancaster will follow its legal requirements under the law in England and Wales.
- 2.4 The following table sets out, in broad terms, those activities, individuals and organisations potentially affected by this framework.

Research and innovation activities include but are not limited to:	Individuals include but are not limited to:	Organisations include but are not limited to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funded research and innovation projects • Unfunded research and innovation projects • Seminars/workshops/conferences • Doctoral studies • Clinical trials • Fieldwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management • Grant-holders • Co-investigators • Supervisors • Research staff • Fellows • Students • Associated personnel • Professional Services staff • Technical specialists • Fieldworkers • Collaborators • Consultants • Monitoring Officers • Sub-contractors • Subject taking part in trials • Volunteers • Visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Higher Education Institutions • Collaborative Research Institutes • Companies • National laboratories • Non-governmental organisations

3. Expectations

3.1 Lancaster University expects all individuals and organisations involved in research and innovation activity, including staff, associated personnel and students, to:

- treat each other with dignity and respect, to act to the highest standards of integrity, honesty and professionalism and to embed good practice in every aspect of their work, including with regard to their own wellbeing;
- abide by all relevant legislation, statutory and regulatory requirements within the countries that they work;
- comply with and be aware of legal requirements under the law in England and Wales at all times;
- be aware of local safeguarding policies and procedures and know how to respond to and report concerns;
- raise concerns that they have, or those that are reported to them, through the appropriate channels in Lancaster University and/or the appropriate authorities.

3.2 Lancaster recognises that sufficient provision for preventing harm in research and innovation activities requires resources and time to build expertise, meet requirements and respond to the needs of those affected.

4. Developing a culture to prevent harm in research and innovation

- 4.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All individuals have a role to play in understanding, preventing, reporting and responding to exploitation, abuse, harm and neglect. Lancaster University will enable individuals through the following means.

Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, statutory and regulatory requirements

- 4.2 Lancaster will ensure that its documentation and process, as identified in the annex to the Commitment to Safeguarding statement, are fully compliant with relevant legislation, statutory and regulatory requirements. It will do this through the regular review and approval of all governance documents through its governance structures. Research Committee will take the leading role in the oversight of compliance in relation to the prevention of harm in research and innovation activities, ensuring other committees and officers with delegated authority demonstrate compliance in their areas of responsibility.
- 4.3 For individual research and innovation activities, assurance will be gained through the relevant procedures that the individuals, including collaborators, as well as the activities meet the principles and expectations as set out in this framework, as well as all legislative, statutory and regulatory requirements, particularly those relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- 4.4 Where the activities, or parts thereof, take place internationally, these same procedures will ensure compliance with legislative, statutory and regulatory requirements within the country (or countries) in which the activity operates. Where compliance issues arise, for example in relation to data protection or equality expectations, these will be considered with cultural sensitivity, but without compromising international safeguarding standards.

Communication

- 4.5 Lancaster will develop and maintain a website on safeguarding where information related to the prevention and reporting of harm will be located, as well as a mechanism and guidance for reporting allegations.
- 4.6 Lancaster will also provide regular communication on preventing harm in research and innovation activity through structures such as the University Leadership Group, internal communications and other communication fora.
- 4.7 Communications with partners, participants and others involved in Lancaster University research and innovation activities will meet a minimum threshold, in terms of providing appropriate information to allow individual or groups to report incidents, and more where it is appropriate.

Guidance and Training

- 4.8 Guidance will be developed by Research and Enterprise Services, in consultation with Human Resources and Wellbeing Services for staff, students, and others involved in research and innovation activity. This guidance will include advice on responsibilities, how to recognise potential harm, how to report and how to manage cultural sensitivities. This material will be available in translation as required for managing international research and innovation activities.
- 4.9 Through HR (organisational and educational development unit), training will be provided as part of the University's suite of training opportunities. The University will identify those areas where risk is highest and ensure appropriate training for those involved, prioritising those currently involved in this type of research and innovation.

Removing barriers

- 4.10 Lancaster University recognises the barriers and challenges inherent in many research and innovation activities including unequal power relations, experience of unsupportive reactions, fear of retribution, fears of impact on research outcomes, personal safety or negative consequence, lack of trust that an appropriate response will result, and inaccessible reporting mechanisms.
- 4.11 Lancaster also acknowledges that harm can be gendered, classed and racialised, and that sexuality, age, (dis)ability, faith and other characteristics are present, context specific and variable in the dynamics of vulnerability, risk and harm.
- 4.12 The University will take due attention to these and proactively act to lessen and remove barriers through a variety of mechanisms and arrangements, including enhanced communication, risk management and training. Where the outcome of a safeguarding procedure identifies a specific issue, this will be drawn to the attention of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) who will act upon it in line with monitoring and reporting mechanisms as set out below.

Risk assessment and management

- 4.13 Risks, both current and anticipated, will be assessed and managed as set out through the University's risk assessment protocols, including using an adapted hierarchy of controls and arrangement for mitigation where we attempt to exclude the risk, remove the risk or reduce the risk, as appropriate.
- 4.14 Included in the risk assessment and management process will be a requirement for individuals to self-declare exceptional circumstances, conflicts of interest and/or other factors that may constitute a specific risk within the activity, for example, a relevant unspent criminal conviction. Such declarations will be managed sensitively and, where appropriate, confidentially. Where a declaration requires further action to be taken by the University this will be managed through purpose-designed processes ensuring an effective and fair process for all involved. Any action taken will aim to minimise the impact on the research and innovation activity affected.

Recruitment

- 4.15 Lancaster University will ensure that its recruitment procedures in relation to research and innovation activity are fully cognisant of the requirement to prevent harm and that those recruited are aware of expectations, responsibilities and support. In particular, new staff will be trained as part of the induction arrangements. Arrangements will also be agreed to ensure that others involved in research and innovation activities, such as volunteers or research subjects, are aware of expectations, responsibilities and support.

5. Managing reports of potential harm

Routes for reporting and escalating allegations

- 5.1 When someone sees that something might be wrong, the University hopes that the individual will have the confidence to raise this with someone who is in a position to address the issue. This may be the grant holder, supervisor or manager or other such person. Working with that person, they may be able to resolve the issue quickly and informally. Alternately, they may be advised that they need take it to a higher level and should be supported to do so.
- 5.2 Where an individual feels uncomfortable or unable to speak to one of these people (including in order to protect anonymity), *or* has done so but is not satisfied with the outcome, *or* considers/has been told that the matter is more serious, a report should be completed using an incident disclosure form (hyper link). Guidance on completing the form is available on the safeguarding website.

How Individuals reporting concerns will be protected

- 5.3 The University will use the arrangements as set out in the Raising Serious Concerns and Disclosing Public Interest Matters policy (sections 6 and 7).

How Lancaster University will respond to and investigate reports, including managing risk

- 5.4 Depending on the nature of the report the University, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), in consultation as required with the University's Designated Safeguarding Lead (Director of HR and OD), will determine the most appropriate response including which University process should be used.
- 5.5 Where a report involves a credible, imminent threat of harm occurring, as determined through risk assessment, Lancaster University will take such immediate actions as it is able under its authority to mitigate and minimise risk, recognising that these actions may be limited where there is reasonable expectation, again determined through risk assessment, that actions would cause further harm.

- 5.6 Where matters involve or may involve criminal or similar proceedings the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) (or nominee), as the legal officer of the University, following relevant consultation, including with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) (or nominee) and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or nominee) can suspend internal proceedings, except those supporting wellbeing, until such time as the criminal proceedings are complete. The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) (or nominee) can also decide to take forward internal procedures where the University judges these would not impair criminal or similar investigations. Where an internal procedure is suspended, the University reserves the right to undertake a risk assessment and take any subsequent action it deems reasonable, necessary and proportionate.
- 5.7 Where criminal or similar proceedings are underway, staff, students and partners involved are obliged to keep the University informed of any progress and/or change of status regarding the case. The Deputy Chief Executive (or nominee) will review the status and determine if any actions are required.
- 5.8 Should a student, a member of staff or an individual/organisation with whom the University is in a formal partnership agreement be convicted of a relevant criminal offence, the University may choose to take action under the relevant policies or regulations where matters of concern to the University have not been addressed. In this case, the conviction in a criminal court can be taken as conclusive evidence that the alleged offence has occurred, and no further investigation will be required by the University.
- 5.9 A decision by authorities not to pursue a criminal conviction and/or an acquittal in court does not preclude the University from pursuing outstanding matters of concern to the University that have not been addressed.

Disciplinary procedures that will be followed if an allegation is upheld

- 5.10 Where required, Lancaster University has disciplinary processes and will use the one deemed most effective in the individual circumstance. Normally, these would be:
- for staff – staff disciplinary procedures
 - for students – Student Discipline Regulations
 - for contracted third parties – dispute mechanisms as set out in memoranda or other contracts
- 5.11 The University will ensure that these processes are impartial, fair and timely, protecting the rights of the individuals involved, take a survivor-centred approach and allow for appropriate action.
- 5.12 Where possible, Lancaster University will see a disciplinary procedure through to its conclusion even where the subject of the investigation resigns/withdraws during the process.

5.13 In addition to the normal sanctions available through discipline processes, for those cases involving harm within research and innovation activities the following additional sanctions are available:

- removing the individual from all or some aspects of research and innovation activity;
- restricting applications for specific grant types, for example, doctoral training programmes, overseas based research until a remedial action plan is agreed and implemented;
- suspending access to grant funding for a limited period until a remedial action plan is agreed and implemented.

6. Internal monitoring and reporting

6.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) working with the Faculties, Human Resources, Research and Enterprise Services, Strategic Planning and Governance and others, will monitor the University's progress towards and compliance with the expectations of this framework, as well as its practical implementation.

6.2 Lancaster University will hold a central record of all reports received under this framework and subsequent related documentation in RES, subject to the University's data holding and retention arrangements.

6.3 An annual report will be submitted to Research Committee, UMAG, Senate and Council identifying:

- number of reports received
- number investigated
- number upheld in whole or in part
- a brief factual statement on those upheld in whole or in part about the nature of the allegation
- the findings of the investigation
- what, if any remedies were imposed
- what, if any, recommendations were made to change policy and/or practice and what actions were subsequently taken

6.4 This report will be anonymised as much as possible, with any personal data subject to necessary protection compliance and legitimate interest tests.

7. External reporting

7.1 Lancaster University will comply with the reporting requirements of external bodies to the full extent it can under the law.

7.2 For UKRI, Lancaster University will contact UKRI when an investigation into an alleged breach of safeguarding by a member of staff, associated personnel or student, involved in a UKRI funded activity or UKRI application, has been completed and any final appeal heard, if the allegation is upheld. This will include:

- a brief factual statement on those upheld in whole or in part about the nature of the allegation
- the findings of the investigation
- what, if any remedies were imposed
- what, if any, recommendations were made to change policy and/or practice and what actions were subsequently taken

7.3 Lancaster University will work with UKRI to minimise the impact on any UKRI grant applications, or UKRI funded activities that are affected.