

Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 (including OfS Prevent monitoring return welfare reporting)

Prepared by Honor Rhodes Head of Student Support, (Lead Operational Safeguarding and Prevent Officer) Student Services

Introduction

The University must ensure it can demonstrate it is addressing the following duties:

- Statutory Safeguarding and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups
- its *“Duty to have due regard to preventing individuals from being drawn into terrorism”* – The Prevent Duty; and
- in relation to discharging its Duty of Care to students and staff who are vulnerable by way of their mental health, disability etc.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and is embedded and devolved. The University takes a risk-based approach to safeguarding including Prevent, which is embedded within safeguarding at the University.

The OfS indicated in their briefing document of May 2020 that whilst it recognised that as a result of the impact of Covid-19 on the way universities delivered their provision and the impact of this on their risk assessments, it still required universities to comply with the Prevent Duty. The reporting return requirements were subsequently clarified (although the monitoring return itself has not been received at the time of writing this report). The Safeguarding and Prevent annual report is intended to provide assurance to underpin the OfS monitoring requirements and for other external bodies (e.g. OFSTED) and to show the range of safeguarding activity during 2019-20 academic year.

Terrorism threat level 2019-20

The threat level for the UK in relation to international terrorism started 2019-20 academic year at ‘severe’ meaning that an attack was ‘highly likely’ but ended at “substantial”, meaning an attack is “likely.” The threat level in Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland related terrorism remained as ‘severe’ throughout.

In relation to our campuses, the Prevent Risk Assessment has been updated to include a more specific indication of threat. In terms of this, the threat from far right-wing extremism continued to see a focus away from Islamist related terrorism during 2019-20 except for in East Lancashire and London.

The University receives regular updates from the North West Regional Prevent Coordinator and the Cumbria Prevent Coordinator regarding activity in the local northern areas and information for London from the NW DfE Coordinator.

Leadership and Governance

“Effective leadership” is a key theme of OfS compliance in relation to the Prevent Duty. Specifically,

“People in leadership positions are expected to:

- *Establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of radicalisation*
- *Ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with it*
- *Communicate and promote the importance of the duty and*
- *Ensure staff implement the duty effectively”*

The University has a named Safeguarding/Prevent Lead on the Board of Directors.

In May 2020, the Executive Strategic Lead moved from the University Secretary to the PVC and now DVC (Health, Environment and Innovation). The OfS were informed of this change to leadership, as it is a reporting requirement. The strategic lead is supported by an operational lead (LOSO) – The Head of Student Support - the Director of Student Services and a small number of Safeguarding Officers.

The Safeguarding and Prevent Management Group, chaired by the Strategic Lead, provides advice on the University’s approach to Safeguarding, including Prevent. Due to the shift in priorities and work required to ensure we adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic, a more pragmatic approach has been taken involving close oversight of safeguarding and Prevent via the Strategic and Operational Leads and Director of Student Services working with group members as required and via an audit process to ensure compliance.

Internal reporting on Safeguarding and Prevent and monitoring of welfare provision

- VCE received the Safeguarding/Prevent Annual Report and OfS data and accountability statement in November 2019
- Audit and Risk Committee received the Prevent Annual Report and OfS data submission and draft accountability statement in November 2019 and an update on Safeguarding and Prevent in June 2020, along with the letter of confirmation from the OfS that, following scrutiny of the data and accountability statement for 2018-19, the University was compliant with the Prevent Duty and not a high risk of future no- compliance.
- Audit and Risk Committee received the Prevent and Safeguarding Risk Assessments and updates in October 2019 and June 2020.
- The University Board of Directors received the Prevent Annual Report 2018-19 along with an updated Prevent Risk Assessment & Action Plan, and the draft of the OfS submission and accountability statement in November 2019.
- It was agreed that the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy needed a full review and a new approach. Development took place during 2019 – 20 but final sign off has been deferred to December 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19 and staff leadership required for this. Reporting to OfS will be required under Prevent once approved due to the substantial change in approach. The 2018-19 policy was agreed as rolling forward for 2019-20 and until any changes have been made.
- Updates on student and staff welfare and wellbeing from Human Resources and Disability and Mental Health and Counselling provision were provided to the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing (EDIW) committee. The Chaplaincy Coordinator also provided updates to the EDIW committee in relation to, for example, multi-faith prayer spaces.
- In April 2020 the University Board of Directors received a full update “Student Support Arrangements during Covid 19” which covered how both academic and support staff were adapting their provision and new initiatives which were being introduced to address changed risks and needs. (See section on welfare and support below)

- To recognize the significant changes required to support all learners to move to online only provision, to prepare for, implement and monitor the move to lockdown and to prepare for a blended return to study in September 2020, a series of workstream groups at strategic and operational level were set up, chaired by senior management, with a focus on identification of barriers to success and vulnerabilities and support required. These included the Students' Union and Chaplaincy.

Key actions in relation to Safeguarding and Prevent during 2019-20

- The Safeguarding and Prevent Management group met initially, then moved to the approach outlined above. The Terms of Reference of the group were reviewed and updated, including changes to membership to ensure wider range of key stakeholders represented.
- Both the Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Action Plan, and the Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan were updated in April 2020 to reflect the risks of increased vulnerabilities in relation to, for example, mental health, loss of income for our students, isolation, increased online work and study etc due to the lockdown imposed due to Covid-19.
- A safeguarding audit was carried out prior to completion of this report by the Lead Operational Safeguarding Officer to ensure those responsible for elements of safeguarding and Prevent were maintaining compliance and good practice.
- Under 18 risk assessments for summer schools were not required during 2019-20 as no physical events were held due to Covid-19. However, moves to virtual and online outreach with under 18s were risk assessed and advice and support given by the Lead Operational Safeguarding Officer.
- Nine students under 18 were admitted to the University in academic year 2019-20 and risk assessments were conducted by Programme Leads and residence life as required, and copies lodged with the LOSO.

Welfare, pastoral and chaplaincy support and response to Covid-19

- As a multi campus university with a range of learners, staff have always been able to offer online support and refer students remotely for support.
- A range of welfare, pastoral and chaplaincy support services are available to students. These are part of a student support framework which includes: Chaplaincy (for those of faith and those of no identified faith), Counselling, Mental Health Case workers, Residence Life, Money Advisors, support for disabled students, international students, care leavers, L3, estranged students, adult carers and residence life support.
- The personal tutor and other academic staff also form a key part of this framework. Other frontline services such as the Library, Reception and Academic Skills provide useful referrals into more specialist services and are another set of eyes and ears for identifying vulnerable students. Regular events are held throughout the year to encourage students to access support and services are introduced at registration and induction events. Full details of support can be found at: <https://my.cumbria.ac.uk/Student-Life/Support/> Our services have continued to operate fully in an online mode.
- The Student Union and Chaplaincy provide vital impartial support and the Chaplaincy has held mindfulness sessions for students to access.

- Residence life has continued to provide more in person support (with risk assessment and Covid-secure practices in operation) initially to those not able to return home immediately during lockdown and in an ongoing way to those for whom our halls is their current home.
- The University recognised immediately that some students (and staff) are more vulnerable to isolation, domestic violence, lack of mental health support and other influences that might affect them and that the move to online coupled with that increases the risk of radicalisation. Students have had intensive and proactive support and have access to frequently updated FAQs and a Student Guide that covers wellbeing, studying remotely etc.
- Our mental health caseworkers have established a wellbeing blog and provided presentations and videos for virtual recruitment and induction events and for residential students for whom the option to return to a different base is not available. They are capturing covid-related impact on mental health <http://livewellatcumbria.com/>
- The careers team focused on support for final year students as they prepared to move into a challenging job market working on a coaching pilot with disabled students.
- The Money Advice Team saw an increase in demand for financial support due to many students losing their opportunity for part time work. The application route to hardship funding was simplified and a Covid-related grant of up to £500 introduced to meet immediate need due to, for example, loss of work.
- Around 16% of our students have a declared disability. The disability team has improved its processes including streamlining and re-focusing the disability questionnaire and disability action plans to capture information on Covid impact and safeguarding to assist with triage and identification of the most at risk and complex disabled students.
- All of the support teams work together in a multi-professional/agency model and when a vulnerable student is identified they are quickly supported by the right service or services.
- The University introduced “*Togetherall*” in January 2019 (previously Big White Wall) and are piloting this as it gives access to 24/7 peer support for mental health for staff and students. An evaluation of this is currently under way.
- Student Minds has also responded to the lockdown by setting up Student Space a resource providing access to dedicated support services for students, by phone or text · Information and tools to help you through the challenges of lockdown which we are promoting. Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Manager is on the Board of Student Space and has been involved in its development.
- Tutors were charged with actively monitoring student engagement through our VLEs and the Student Engagement Dashboard to implement early intervention and referral to specialist services where required. Service staff highlighted academic issues back to tutors.
- The Centre of Academic Practice Enhancement (CAPE) and Information Services supported academic and professional services colleagues to understand the impact of technology on learners including supporting accessibility for disabled learners

IT acceptable use and online activity

- IT have been running compulsory Cyber Security training sessions during 2019-20 for all staff across the University
- They have provided guidance on cybersecurity for our students which can be accessed on the student hub and in induction sessions (including for Higher Level Apprentices). In addition, our

Learning Advisers in the Library Services have provided input on digital skills and online behaviours.

- IT Leads receive information via Jisc and their networks on the risks and wider context of delivering education online and respond accordingly in relation to their policies and procedures.
- The Lead Operational Safeguarding Officer has work with the Head of Information Technology and existing resources will be updated as part of the action to form a new “Keeping yourself safe during Covid 19” tile on the Student Hub as reflected in the updated Safeguarding and Prevent action plans.
- The University has an incident management process in place to deal with the posting of harmful material on its network such as that related to extremism.
- The IT acceptable use policy is clear re its scope in relation to remote access to our networks from any device.

External compliance 2019-20

1) OfS Annual Prevent Data Return and Accountability Statement 2018-19 (submitted in 2019)

Following submission of a full Prevent Annual Report to VCE and the Board of Directors, the OfS Accountability Statement and Data Return for Prevent (2018-19) was submitted to the OfS by the deadline of 1 December 2019. The OfS sought further information from the Strategic Safeguarding and Prevent Lead following submission of the return. After a phone call, the OfS confirmed they were satisfied that the University of Cumbria had discharged its Prevent Duty appropriately during 2018 -19.

2) There have been no other external inspections or submissions required in relation to Safeguarding or Prevent during 2019-20.

Freedom of Speech, External Speakers and Events

The University’s approach to the management of events involving external speakers is outlined within the External Speakers Protocols and Procedures which are incorporated within the University’s Freedom of Speech Code of Practice, this underpins aspects of the Prevent Duty. A risk-based approach is applied to the process of considering events involving External speakers; normal timetabled teaching and academic delivery is not included in the scope of the policy. Similarly, a streamlined screening process is used with organisations who use University facilities on a regular basis.

The University has a team of trained delegated appointed officers who process the authorisation of each external speaker event for their respective departments.

Events and speakers	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Total number of event/speakers approved	14	15	64
Number of events/speakers approved with conditions/mitigations	0	0	0
Number of events/speakers referred to the highest decision maker in the provider’s process	0	1	1
Number of events/speaker requests rejected	0	0	0

The drop in numbers is due largely to the impact of Covid –19 and the move off campus. It has been recognised in the Prevent Risk Assessment that the protocols need to more explicitly

reference events where under 18s may be present and online events moving forward.

UCSU have their own protocols in place governing external speakers and events but have shared with the University that they had 20 events that they approved.

The Chaplaincy Coordinator has prepared a risk assessment of the multi-faith spaces and devised a protocol in preparation for the resumption of activities on campus as part of the blended approach to learning.

External partnership working

1) Prevent-Related

There have been regular meetings between the DfE Regional Prevent Coordinator and the Lead Operational Safeguarding and Prevent Officer and Director of Student Services.

The Lead Operational Safeguarding and Prevent Officer has attended the Cumbria and North West regional Prevent Group meetings quarterly. These meetings now include representatives from the Police Counter Terrorism units and Police Prevent Leads and information on the local terrorism risks are fed back into the Prevent risk assessment. Intelligence sharing is improving but some information cannot be shared for security reasons.

The Prevent Risk Assessment acknowledges the need for development of regular staff and student communications and a need for a central area to bring together Prevent related material.

No cases required liaison with or formal referral to Prevent mechanisms in 2019-20.

2) Safeguarding Related

The Lead Operational Safeguarding and Prevent Officer and the Mental Health team, work closely with a range of external agencies including the Police, Social Services, Local Domestic Violence Advisers and Local Authority Designated Officers (Childrens' and Adult Workforce), Crisis MH teams etc, making referrals to and receiving referrals from them as appropriate to each case.

Academic Partnerships

Academic Partnerships with external organisations are managed by the Academic Quality Development team through the Partnership Office who are aware of the need to ensure Prevent and Safeguarding are considered. Higher Level Apprentice subcontracted provision agreements reference compliance with Prevent and Safeguarding.

Safeguarding and Prevent -Related Training - Staff

It was agreed to revise the requirements for Safeguarding and Prevent Training from every three to every two years for all staff and for some roles e.g. the Lead Operational Safeguarding/Prevent Officer, for this to be annual.

OfS monitoring Data Prevent and wider welfare/safeguarding training 2019-20

The number of staff identified as key to the Prevent Duty	953
Number of new staff inducted to the University (induction includes intro to SG and Prevent)	60
Face to face new and refresher Prevent training by DFE Coordinators including at London	45
Number of staff who have undertaken Prevent online training	790
The number of staff receiving broader welfare or safeguarding awareness training	See below
Number of staff who have undertaken Safeguarding training online	664
Mental health awareness or wellbeing management or suicide awareness eg Effectively Managing Wellbeing, developing resilience etc	83
Cybersecurity	64

The Lead Operational Safeguarding Officer undertook updated WRAP training with Lancashire Prevent Leads in July 2020.

Safeguarding and Prevent Training - Students

Student training in Prevent and Safeguarding is included at programme level as appropriate and tailored to the setting and professional body requirements. All new students are introduced to the student support framework as part of University Essentials and the key role of personal tutors and professional support services in being points of contact for raising concerns, is made clear.

Higher Level Apprentices receive an introduction to the Student Support Framework and information on Safeguarding and Prevent as part of their induction. Safeguarding issues can also be captured via the Tri-Partite review forms which are completed every 10-12 weeks and which involve the University, the employer and the apprentice. Further work to highlight the risks of radicalisation has begun via revised induction information.

Student Engagement

The student voice is heard via the representation of the Students' Union (UCSU) on the Safeguarding and Prevent Management Group. UCSU works closely with the University to ensure any safeguarding or Prevent related concerns are escalated into the University's protocols as appropriate. Students on Higher Level Apprenticeship programmes have regular opportunities to discuss safeguarding and wellbeing issues via the tripartite review process.

Casework/Data Monitoring

Prevent for the OfS data monitoring return 2019-20

The number of Prevent related cases referred to the Prevent Lead	0
The number of cases where external advice is sought from Prevent partners	0

The number of referrals to Channel	0
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Safeguarding Statistics (See Appendix 1)

Trends:

Nationally and within the HE sector there is increasing awareness of mental health issues and this remains a key trend under lockdown and Covid-19. Referrals to the mental health and wellbeing service for students fell only slightly in 2019-20 to 614 referrals from 621 in 2018-19. Along with the sector, the service saw a steep drop off initially on the move to lockdown, but numbers have recovered due to the university wide collaborative efforts to ensure the wellbeing of students, as outlined above. In particular, the Mental Health team reached out to all those it had engaged with and proactively provided resources focused on recognising the issues students might face due to lockdown and how to manage their mental health and resilience. (A full annual Mental Health and Wellbeing team report will be submitted to EDIW committee).

The safeguarding data in Appendix 1 shows a small decrease in overall cases overseen by the LOSO. This could be attributed to a number of things, move away from some placements in programmes to alternative learning (placements can increase student anxiety) and the impact of the mental health team staffing increase, and the implementation of a new approach in the mental health team leading to reduced waiting times and more opportunities for earlier intervention.

Fewer cases have required Police input which may be explained in part by the lock down situation, however one feature that remains is the need to involve mental health external Crisis teams with some of our cases.

One significant increase in those who pose a risk to others has emerged this year. In most cases students have been in the throes of a mental health crisis and have required time out and a return which is subject to Occupational Health.

Risk Management:

The University's response to the pandemic, lockdown and the changes that were needed was a risk based one.

The self-referral mechanism for the Mental Health and Wellbeing Service contains inbuilt clinical scoring tools which ensure that those who are most at risk are prioritised for proactive intervention and follow up.

The team have added a new question into their assessment process to capture the extent to which the individual's mental health is associated with their situation in relation to the pandemic.

Disability Services have introduced a triage mechanism to identify the most complex and high-risk students to prioritise the distribution of disability action plans. The service has made process improvements during 2019-20 to improve efficiency in triage and in sending out action plans to tutors.

The protocol implemented in 2018-19 whereby a student who is a serious cause for concern is phoned, texted and given a deadline to respond to the Lead Operational Safeguarding Officer (or Director of

Student Services or Programme Lead) has proved effective in a small number of cases again in 2019-20. The texts have proved effective in 5 cases in 2019-20 leading to engagement by the student before the need to call external statutory agencies.

Appendix 1 Safeguarding and Prevent Casework

Safeguarding Casework 2018-19

These statistics are taken from the log of the most serious cases held by the Lead Operational Safeguarding and Prevent Officer. They include cases involving external agencies and those of most risk to self or others. Please note some cases are in more than one category.

	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Narrative
Total number of cases	116	138	100	This decrease was due to covid and changes to eg placements not being in school etc
Cases involving under 18s	0	3	2	
Cases involving former students or members of the public	2	5	2	Carried forward from the previous year pending external processes and closure by LADO
Cases requiring liaison with external agencies	19	33	18	Often multiple agencies involved – majority involved Police or Local Authority Designated Officers.
Cases involving MH Crisis Teams	20	20	15	Slight % increase as smaller overall numbers – but thresholds in external agencies mean others did not fit criteria for external agencies
Cases involving self-harm or risk to self, suicidal ideation	55	56	54	Slight % increase as overall cases lower. Level of risk higher than previous year. Increased anxiety due to covid-19 or pressures in home or historic abuse.
Cases where allegations of being victim of assault including sexual assault or domestic violence including bullying and harassment	7	22	15	A decrease in such cases this year but within this an increase in reports of coercive control components (no cyberbullying allegations recorded on this log).
Cases involving risk to others	22	8	16	A significant increase with actual threats or violence or potential if allowed to eg attend placement. Behaviours include distressing staff and other students.
Complex student cases carried into the following year	8	7	14	Some complex students remain on the log throughout their programme. Others remain intercalated pending eg Police outcomes which can be lengthy or OH prior to return.