Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation (PREVENT) Safeguarding Policy

Policy Title:	Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy
Approved created date (m/y):	September 2019
Author (s)	Director of Student Services, Safeguarding & Support
Approved by:	Safeguarding, Prevent & E-Safety Strategic Group
Last reviewed:	November 2024
Review date:	November 2025
Reviewed:	Annually
Related Policies & Procedures:	E-Safety Policy External Speakers Policy Learner Anti-Bullying / Harassment Policy Learner Disciplinary Policy Lockdown Policy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Equality Impact Assessment Tool

Name of Policy: Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation (PREVENT) Safeguarding Policy

		Yes/No	Comments
1	**Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:**	**No**	
	Race or ethnicity	-	
	Disability	-	
	Gender	-	
	Religion or belief	-	
	Sexual orientation	-	
	Age	-	
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	-	
	Maternity and Pregnancy	-	
	Gender Reassignment	-	
2	**Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?**	**No**	
3	**If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?**	**N/A**	
4	**Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?**	**No**	
5	**If so, can the impact be avoided?**	**N/A**	
6	**What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?**	**N/A**	
7	**Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?**	**N/A**	

1   Introduction

Suffolk New College is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing and welfare of all its learners. Every member of staff recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether they have direct contact with and / or responsibility for learners. Safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is an integral part of our overall safeguarding duties.

This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

Statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA, 2015) places a duty on colleges as well as other specified authorities to have due regard to the need to "*help **prevent** the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism*". This includes safeguarding learners from extremist ideologies and radicalisation.

There are 3 objectives of Prevent:
- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism by reducing the influence of radicalisers on susceptible audiences, as well as reducing the availability of, and access to, terrorist content
- Intervene early to identify people susceptible to radicalisation and providing support to those suitable for intervention
- Enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate - The Desistance and Disengagement Programme provides specialist Home Office-approved intervention providers to give support in the form of theological, ideological and practical mentoring to reduce the offending risk.

This policy document sets out how the College helps ensure that any learners who are susceptible to radicalisation are supported under safeguarding processes through identification and early intervention.

The following national guidance should also be read when working with this policy:

- Prevent Duty guidance: Guidance for England and Wales (HM Government 6th March 2024 updated)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE December 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2024).

This policy provides a framework for dealing with issues relating to vulnerability, radicalisation and exposure to extreme views and sets out our beliefs, strategies and procedures to protect susceptible learners from being radicalised or exposed to extremist views, by identifying who they are and promptly providing support through early intervention.

The main aims of this policy are to ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues will not happen at our college and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our learners are safeguarded from harm. Staff may recognise changes in a learner's behaviour and are a likely first point of contact for receiving a disclosure. It is important that all staff are aware of how to report concerns and whom they should speak to.

2   Understanding definitions

Threat and risk

In the UK, the primary domestic terrorist threat comes from <u>Islamist terrorism</u>. Islamist terrorism is the threat or use of violence as a means to establishing a strict interpretation of an Islamic society.

<u>Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism</u> describes those involved in Extreme Right-Wing activity who use terrorist violence to further their ideology. These ideologies can be broadly characterised as Cultural Nationalism, White Nationalism and White Supremacism.

Prevent also tackles other ideologies and concerns that may pose a terrorist threat. Established terrorist narratives exhibit common themes such as antisemitism, misogyny, anti-establishment, anti-LGBT grievances and religious or ethnic superiority. <u>Left-Wing</u>, <u>Anarchist</u> and <u>Single-Issue Terrorism</u> currently represent a significantly smaller terrorist threat to the UK than Islamist terrorism or Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism.

Conspiracy theories can act as gateways to radicalised thinking and sometimes violence. In some cases, a blurring of ideologies with personal narratives makes it harder to assess the risk that people may pose.

Encouraging susceptible people to commit acts of terrorism on their own initiative is a deliberate strategy of terrorist groups in their propaganda and is exacerbated by communities who glorify acts of violence against society or specific groups within it.

Terrorists can hold a range of personal grievances alongside the primary ideology for committing an attack. Individuals are increasingly adopting a mix of ideas from different ideologies into their grievance narratives.

The internet and social media make it simpler for individuals and groups to promote and to consume radicalising content with research demonstrating that the internet has become the 'preferred' avenue for those searching for terrorist propaganda or contacts.

Emerging radicalisation trends and ideologies remain under close monitoring by government agencies to establish whether they represent a terrorism risk or play a role in radicalising people.

The local context and risk are important factors for an institution or setting to consider when identifying and assessing potential threats. The College has a **Risk Assessment** which not only helps us in understanding risks pertinent to our learners in regards radicalisation but as importantly identifies our approaches towards managing any risks. The risk assessment is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current.

Susceptibility to radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. Most people who commit terrorism offences do so of their own agency and dedication to an ideological cause.

There is no single profile of a radicalised person, nor is there a single pathway or 'conveyor belt' to being radicalised. There are many factors which can, either alone or combined, lead someone to subscribe to terrorist or terrorism-supporting ideology. These factors often include exposure to radicalising influences, real and perceived grievances – often created or exacerbated through grievance narratives espoused by extremists – and a person's own susceptibility.

A person's susceptibility to radicalisation may be linked to their vulnerability, however not all people susceptible to radicalisation will be vulnerable. There is no single model of a person's radicalisation journey or single profile of a radicalised person.

What is Extremism?

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in 1 or 2 (above).

What are British Values?

British values are defined as "democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs"; institutions are expected to encourage students to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Indicators of potential radicalisation

There are a number of behaviours which may indicate someone is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extreme views.

These include;

- Isolating themselves from family and friends, including spending an increasing amount of time online
- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- Day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause
- Communications with others that suggests identification with a group, cause or ideology
- Using insulting to derogatory names for another group
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include;
  - physical or verbal assault
  - provocative behaviour
  - damage to property
  - derogatory name calling
  - possession of prejudice-related materials
  - prejudice related ridicule or name calling
  - inappropriate forms of address
  - refusal to co-operate
  - attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations
  - condoning or supporting violence towards others

We believe that it is possible to intervene to protect people who are vulnerable. Early intervention is vital. Staff must have the confidence to challenge, the confidence to intervene and ensure that we have strong safeguarding practices based on the most up-to-date guidance and best practise.

3   Ethos and approach

There is no place for the expression of extremist views of any kind in our college, whether from internal sources – learners, staff or governors, or external sources – the College community, external agencies or individuals. This aim of this policy is not about the restriction of freedom of speech, but allowing learners to shape how their individual views are expressed and in doing so, demonstrating an understanding of those who may have different views and beliefs.

As a college we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for learners and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge the promotion or expression of extremist views we are failing to protect our learners.

We will all strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead to some young people becoming alienated and disempowered, especially where the approaches learners may experience elsewhere may make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences, this guidance and support should be delivered in tutorials.

We will ensure that all of our support and approaches will help our learners build resilience to extremism and give them a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We will develop strategies and staff training to ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by learners or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Disciplinary Policies for learners and staff.

Our college will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and/or the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership's agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals considered vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

The College benefits from close partnership working with the regional FE / HE Prevent Co-ordinator, which sees the College's Head of Student PD attending regular forums. Additionally, the Director of Student Services is a standing member of Suffolk's Prevent Delivery Group (the PDG). Any learning or information shared is brought back in-house and incorporated into staff training and direct support to learners, such as through tutorial programmes.

The College has chaplaincy support, prayer and multi-faith facilities which are available for learners to use when they are on site. The College will advocate on behalf of apprentices who require these facilities in the workplace to ensure that appropriate spaces are made available for them to use.

4   Reducing Permissive Environments

Limiting the potential harm and influence of radicalisers, as well as extremist narratives and content "reasonably linked to terrorism" can help to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Prevent seeks to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism by reducing "permissive environments". Suffolk New College staff are committed to:

- Limiting exposure to radicalising narratives, both on and offline
- Creating an environment where radicalising ideologies are challenged and not permitted to flourish.

One of the ways that the College aims to do this is through our approach to the use of external visitors and guest speakers. We will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers with whom we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences for our learners. Staff will intervene in any presentation or discussion led by an external speaker where they judge the content is inappropriate and may lead to positive reinforcement of narratives and actions that may promote extremism.

External visitors and guest speakers must be supervised by a college member of staff at all times. The College recognises that there may be occasions where external visitors or guest speakers will use the College facilities and will not be supervised. (In these instances staff must follow the guidance outlined within the External Speakers Policy regarding vetting and risk assessments).

5   Reporting Procedure

The Director of Student Services, Safeguarding & Support, in their capacity as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the College's Prevent and Channel Panel lead and can be contacted via email greerhill@suffolk.ac.uk. In capacity as Prevent lead, the Director is responsible for ensuring that college staff have the capabilities for:

- Understanding risk
- Managing the risk
- Sharing information.

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation learners are encouraged to raise any issue in confidence with a member of staff as soon as possible. The College promotes http://www.actearly.uk/

"Actearly" is a Counter Terrorism website, launched to support an individual if they are worried about a friend or family member. This website highlights what signs to look for, but also emphasises how important it is to "act early".

Concerns must be reported by staff via MyConcern, the College's online safeguarding platform, as soon as possible, and in any event, within two hours.

If reporting via MyConcern is not possible within two hours, then a member of the Safeguarding Team must be informed verbally of the concern, so as not to delay any anticipated action(s) required to appropriately safeguard the learner.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities college staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by learners of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of college, such as in their homes or community groups, workplaces or placements, especially where learners have not actively sought these out
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Reports of learners accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Reports of learners isolating themselves from family and friends, spending an increasing amount of time online
- Parent / carer reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Employer reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Partner colleges, Local Authority services, and police reports of issues affecting learners in other colleges or education settings
- Learners voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives Use of extremist or "hate" terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views.

Our college will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and/or Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership's agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals considered susceptible to extremism and radicalisation.

Supporting Employers

The College ensures that any employer who is employing an apprentice or taking learners on placement is provided with information on the PREVENT duty and key information on identifying any concerns, and how and who to raise these concerns with staff at the College. They are also informed that learners are encouraged to raise with their tutors/assessors any concerns they notice in a workplace. The College provides support on both sides to ensure that PREVENT issues are effectively addressed and dealt with through the appropriate processes.

Channel Panel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential, early intervention programme that supports people who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Many types of support are available as part of Channel.

Where a referral is considered appropriate to "Channel", the College's Director of Student Services will attend any Channel Panel Meetings as the College's representative and in their capacity as Prevent lead.

Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for the full details on our Safeguarding duties.

6 Understanding the risk – Training

The Director of Student Services is responsible for ensuring introductory safeguarding training is accessed by all new staff, to familiarise them with safeguarding and child protection issues. Safeguarding and Prevent training for new staff is a mandatory component of their Induction, facilitated through the completion of TES training modules online. Completion of this training is monitored by the College's Safeguarding, Prevent & E-Safety Operational Group, through the submission and scrutiny of training summary reports.

The College's safeguarding policies, procedures and reporting mechanism (MyConcern) are included as part of on-boarding for new staff prior to and at Induction.

Alongside this, safeguarding briefings are delivered by the DSL to all staff with updates shared as appropriate throughout the year.

Information on PREVENT will also be shared with all learners, employers and parents / carers.

7 Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers (this also includes supply / agency staff), to our college will follow guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks.

We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general and in doing so will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement.

We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our college so as to unduly influence our college's character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our learners thereby rendering them susceptible to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence.

Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within our college and staff team we will minimise the opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

For further information, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead in their capacity as the College's Prevent lead or by visiting the safeguarding section of the College Intranet.

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Greer Hill, greerhill@suffolk.ac.uk