

## **Annex 5.**

### **Staff Guidance for working with Under 18s**

#### Guidance for staff: Maintaining appropriate boundaries with students U18.

At Keele, we have a small number of students who will turn 18 within their first year with us. This Guidance Note sets out important guidelines for University staff and all other individuals acting on behalf of the University (e.g. academic staff, volunteers, contractors, third party employees, temporary/interim staff members, consultants, etc.) to follow when working with anyone who is U18 or an Adults at Risk.

Adhering to these practical guidelines will help to maintain appropriate boundaries. This Guide should be read in accordance with the University's Safeguarding Policy.

When working with U18s and Adults at Risk, do:

- Always treat all students with respect and dignity.
- Seek support from Student Services, your line manager or Safeguarding Coordinator or Lead if you are unsure about how best to interact with U18s or Adults at Risk that you are dealing with.
- Familiarise yourself with the signs of abuse or neglect that could suggest a safeguarding concern is required.
- Ensure you have completed the University's mandatory Safeguarding training
- Ensure you have completed the University's Prevent training.
- Ensure you have read the University Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.
- Plan interactions, as far as your role allows, that take place in the company of others to ensure that an allegation of improper behaviour does not arise.
- Ensure that when conducting a meeting, you are either with another colleague, you meet in a room shared by other employees, or the room has a glass door where other employees can see you or (only where appropriate). If this isn't possible, rearrange the meeting for a more convenient time when others can be present.
- Be consistent in applying the boundaries of your role when supporting/advising students and explain these to students, where required.
- Be aware that others might misconstrue your speech and behaviour, however well-intended, and do your best to ensure that your intentions and boundaries are clear.
- Consider the balance needed between respecting people's right to privacy and taking any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously.
- If you have any concerns regarding the wellbeing or behaviour of any student, particularly an U18 or Adult at Risk, contact Student Services or [safeguarding.keele@keele.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding.keele@keele.ac.uk).

When working with U18s and Adults at Risk, do not:

- Delay when responding to any concerns or allegations made by a child or Adult at Risk or reporting these to a Safeguarding Coordinator or Lead.
- Share your personal details (personal mobile number, personal email address, home address) with any student or parent.
- Share overly personal information (e.g. about your background, your history, your mental health, your family) with students, as this can easily blur the boundaries of your role and send a message to the student that you are their friend rather than a member of staff.
- Communicate with students using any personal social media accounts, sites or apps.
- Use your car (or a University vehicle) to transport a lone student – except in rare emergency situations, where permission has been granted by a supervisor or line manager.
- Physically touch or comfort a student (and, if they initiate physical contact for whatever reason, break away from this as soon as you are able and make a file note).
- Be overly familiar or take part in inappropriate behaviour or contact
- Form a relationship (including a platonic relationship)
- Trivialise abuse or allow bullying or abusive activities (e.g., by downplaying an ‘initiation ceremony’).
- Take photographs or videos without appropriate consent.