




Learner Welfare & Safeguarding Policy

VERSION NO: 3.0	TITLE: Learner Welfare & Safeguarding Policy	ISSUE DATE: 01/04/2022
PLANNED REVIEW: Annual	PREPARED BY: David Johnson CEO 	PLANNED REVIEW DATE: 01/04/2023

Statement

PEAK believes that it is always unacceptable for anyone to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of all learners or associates, including our employees. This organisation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of individuals and groups and expects all employees, our representatives, learners and employer partners to share this commitment.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the learner is paramount.
- All learners, irrespective of, but not limited to; their age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with learners and with other agencies is essential in promoting a safe learning environment.
- We work in environments where children and adults at risk, especially in early years and health and social care sectors, are particularly vulnerable.

The purpose of the policy and its associated documents are to:

- Provide protection for learners.
- Provide employees, and those representing Peak, with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they have been informed or suspect a learner or associate may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

The policy applies to all employees, and anyone working on behalf of Peak, within our training capabilities.

We will seek to safeguard all learners by:

- Valuing them, listening to them, and respecting them.
- Adopting safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for employees and representatives.
- Recruiting employees safely.
- Ensuring learners are working and learning in a safe environment.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need it, and involving learners and their parents/carers appropriately.
- Ensuring data security is compliant with Peak policy and legislative regulations.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and practices at least annually.

Policy

Our provision complies with The Children Act 2004, and subsequent Amendments. The term 'child' means anyone under the age of 18 and the term 'adult at risk' (previously 'vulnerable adult') means a person who has been or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; or who is/may be unable to take care of themselves, unable to protect themselves against harm, exploitation, or may be deemed vulnerable to radicalisation. This may be a temporary or permanent state.

This policy also aligns our compliance to the UK Government's Prevent strategy). While the definitions of a child and adult at risk give the rationale for legislative intervention, it is important to note that a person may be deemed at higher risk of a safeguarding issue affecting them due to other factors. Peak understands that a number of situations may render a person 'at risk' such as:

- A victim of historical or current bullying, including cyber-bullying or harassment
- Being a victim of domestic violence and abuse, including relationship, family, parent and elder abuse

- Being stalked or a victim of revenge porn
- Experience of historical or current abuse or trauma
- A young adult living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- Having migrant or refugee status
- Living in an alcohol or drug-misusing environment
- Drug or alcohol misuse themselves
- Being homeless
- Coping with debt
- Living in an area of high crime
- Gang related coercion or gang crime
- Those likely to face hate crime
- Elderly or young people who themselves may have caring issues or have responsibilities for caring
- Being under a social services care order, past or present, including being fostered
- Being in receipt of any form of health care, welfare service in order to support their need to live independently or receiving a service due to their age or disability
- Living in residential accommodation such as a care home or sheltered housing
- Someone receiving domiciliary care in their own home
- An expectant or nursing mother living in residential care
- Children in nursery/early years care
- Those with a background in offending / person under supervision of probation service
- Those with learning difficulties, including poor numeracy and literacy skill, or those with specific learning needs such as for Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia & Dysgraphia
- People with a diagnosed autistic spectrum disorder, including Asperger syndrome or ADHD
- Those with physical disabilities (seen or unseen) including impairments or critical/severe illness
- People with mental health illness, condition or support needs
- People with age related frailty
- Those with dementia or early onset Alzheimer's
- Unsupportive home or work environment
- People with English as their second language
- Social issues, such as poverty, deprived environment, poor diet, disillusionment or long term unemployment
- Someone who's experienced a lack of schooling, nurturing, mentoring or support
- Being part of an under-represented group, discriminated or suffering abuse or hate

We recognise and embrace our duty of care, applying a personalised approach to reflect the specific situations of individuals and ensuring approach to identifying and reducing risk. We recognise that we are not experts in the range of potential scenarios that safeguarding issues can present nor in the personal circumstances that may make individuals vulnerable/at risk. In response, our policy focusses on identification of risk and appropriate referral to support agencies and organisations, in line with detailed procedures.

Peak believes that our workplace and our learners' workplaces should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual.

It is important that people are protected from all forms of abuse or potential harm. Abuse can take many forms and may include, but not limited to:

- Sexual - inappropriate behaviour, abusive relationship or unwanted sexual harassment.
- Physical, financial or emotional abuse or neglect.
- Female genital mutilation - full or partial.
- Exploitation - financial, sexual, forced marriage, forced labour through modern slavery and/or human trafficking and domestic servitude.
- Grooming - for a sexual, criminal or radicalisation intent.

- Domestic violence.
- Bullying - including cyber bullying and harassment.
- Internet/cyber-crime - financial extortion, data theft, hacking, online child pornography.
- Victimisation.
- Self-harm or harming of others.
- Criminalisation.
- Unsafe or potentially unsafe environment or activities.
- Unsuitable housing/homelessness/immigration issues.

All complaints, allegations or suspicions will be taken seriously, will be recorded and will lead to appropriate action, and, where appropriate, signposting to specialist external organisations.

With the increasing threats to individuals, the UK and other countries through radicalisation, hate crime and or extremist activities, safeguarding now extends itself to include awareness that children, young people and adults are at risk of being coerced into committing criminal activities, including extremism or terrorism.

At Peak, we want to promote and continue to facilitate the exchange of opinion and ideas and enable debate as well as learning. We have no wish to limit or otherwise interfere with the free flow of ideas, but recognise the importance of balancing the need to preserve national security whilst protecting civil liberties and rights. Although it is vital that we must protect academic freedom, it is a long-established principle that Peak also has a duty of care to their learners.

Policy aims

The aims of this Learner Welfare & Safeguarding Policy are to:

- Support the individual's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- Raise the awareness of employees, representatives, learners and our employer partners of the need to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, bullying or harassment, of any nature, and in identifying those that may be in need.
- Source and provide the most appropriate information, advice and guidance on a wide range of welfare topics or issues to help employees, learners and employers remove barriers to learning.
- Provide a systematic means of monitoring those known or thought to be at risk of harm or vulnerable to grooming including extremist radicalisation.
- Emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all employees, our representatives, our learners and their employers.
- Support the structured procedure that must be followed by all employees and our representatives in cases of suspected or known abuse, neglect, bullying or harassment to any child or adult at risk.
- Develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, particularly Local Child or Adult Services and Safeguarding Boards, CQC, Ofsted, the Police, and, where applicable, consultation with external Channel Coordinators for Prevent concerns.
- Ensure that all adults in our employment who have access to children and adults at risk have been checked, trained and continually monitored to meet current safeguarding legislation with regard to their suitability.
- Continually observe the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Additionally, through our learner recruitment and employer apprenticeship agreement processes, we can assure learners are not subject to or at risk of modern slavery or human trafficking issues.

Safe recruitment and selection of employees

- Peak will ensure safeguarding considerations are incorporated into every stage of the recruitment process.
- Individual's criminal convictions are checked on appointment, as appropriate to the job role, via

Enhanced DBS Disclosure, with additional supervision and monitoring in place until confirmation of DBS check is confirmed soon after appointment.

Induction and training

Peak will ensure that:

- Mandatory training is undertaken by all employees on Security, Health & Safety, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Welfare & Safeguarding, including for Prevent Duty and Promotion of British Values policies, at employee induction and subsequently supported by ongoing training and awareness activities.
- Operational delivery teams are given the confidence to support learners and employers, building an understanding of welfare and safeguarding issues and how to deal with them, developing their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, bullying and/or harassment, or radicalisation, and have the competence and confidence to have meaningful conversations and educate learners and their employers appropriately during enrolment and induction period and by the provision of ongoing subject awareness and discussion throughout their programme.
- Employees will receive refresher training at least every three years and/or following the introduction of new procedures and or legislation.