

## CODE OF PRACTICE - CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

### SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL CHANGES

#### General changes

This document has been re-issued without amendment.

The following Code of Practice applies to all University staff and students and to individuals external to the University working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, whether acting in a paid or unpaid capacity.

- 1 Avoid unnecessary physical contact. Where this is not possible, ensure that there is another adult nearby.
- 2 Always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations. If a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary it should be conducted in a room with an open door or visual access.
- 3 If you find you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult, wherever practicable make sure that others can clearly observe you.
- 4 Avoid taking a child, young person or vulnerable adult alone in a vehicle on journeys, however short.
- 5 Avoid taking a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet unless another adult is present or another adult is aware.
- 6 Avoid close personal relationships with a child, young person or vulnerable adult in relation to whom you are in a position of trust.
- 7 Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, young person or vulnerable adult, even in fun, as these could be misinterpreted.
- 8 If a child, young person or vulnerable adult accuses a student or member of staff of abuse or inappropriate behaviour you should report this immediately to the Head of your Strategic Business Unit who may seek advice from the Safeguarding Officer.
- 9 If you are the recipient of any complaint or allegation from a child, young person or vulnerable adult, it is important to listen without making or implying any judgement as to the truth of that complaint or allegation.
- 10 Although allegations should be reported only on a 'need to know' basis, staff and students making allegations need not be concerned that they will be breaching confidentiality or the Data Protection Act (1998), as complying with the University policy relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults (UPR HS07) overrides such obligations. If the person making the allegation feels they need counselling or other appropriate support from the University, they are encouraged to seek it.
- 11 Do not interact with any student (or past student) who is under the age of **18** on a social media or networking site.
- 12 Do not 'befriend' children, young people or vulnerable adults via Facebook.
- 13 Should any staff member, volunteer, student ambassador, mentor or external adult receive an invitation for a 'friend request' from a child, young person or vulnerable adult, they are to delete the request immediately.

- 14 Do not establish or seek to establish social contact via social media/other communication technologies with children, young people or vulnerable adults for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- 15 Create a separate, designated Facebook account for the purposes of the event/activity taking place.
- 16 No member of staff/ambassador/volunteer/mentor is to use their own private Facebook page for communicating with a child, young person or vulnerable adult,
- 17 When using Facebook, communicate using the public wall function which is the recommended method for communicating individually with children, young people and vulnerable adults on Facebook and for replying to private messages which they may have sent to the staff member/employee.
- 18 When sending group messages (messages to multiple young people perhaps for an event) copy another adult into this message or where this is not possible, log the message and do not remove it.
- 19 Do not use a designated Facebook account that you have created after **22.00** hours in order to preserve an appropriate degree of separation between their professional and personal lives.
- 20 In all communication with young people using social networking sites, do not use abbreviations, such as 'LOL' in your communications.
- 21 Do not use instant chat facilities on social networking sites.
- 22 Where a public wall post is not appropriate for responding to a child, young people or vulnerable adults then arrange a public one-to-one meeting with him or her or telephone the young person and/or seek further advice from the designated Child Protection Officer.

Mrs S C Grant  
Secretary and Registrar  
Signed: **31 October 2014**