

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: ADULT (OVER 18) SAFEGUARDING JUNE 2022

Elizabeth Kenny, Dean of Students
Version Number 1.2

The Royal Academy of Music moves music forward by inspiring successive generations of musicians to connect, collaborate and create.
Charity number 310007
Company registration number RC000438

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**UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON**

APPROVAL AND REVISION HISTORY

Author	Elizabeth Kenny
SMT Owner	Elizabeth Kenny, Dean of Students and Designated Safeguarding Lead
Reviewed by	Senior Management Team, Policy Review Group
Date of creation	APRIL 2022
Date of approval	18 MAY 2022
Version	1.2.1 (see version history for details)
Last edited	24 October 2025
Review date	July 2028

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ADULT (OVER 18) SAFEGUARDING

1. CONTEXT

The Royal Academy of Music's mission is to provide pre-professional undergraduate and postgraduate musical training of the highest national and international standards, and to ensure that members of its community are able to learn and flourish in a safe and supportive environment.

The Academy commissioned an Independent Review of Safeguarding in 2019. This Review, along with recent refinements to the definition of vulnerable adults in the context of higher education, has shaped this policy. In the context of the [Office for Students updates in Higher Education](#), this policy must also be read in conjunction with the Academy's Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy and Intimate Personal Relationships Policy (see [Related Policies](#)).

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We recognise that some students and staff members who raise safeguarding concerns perceive – and may experience – career risk in doing so. We aim to create an environment where this perception is corrected and mitigated by supportive listening and action, as well as high standards and clear expectations of staff and student conduct. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility within the Academy.

Governing Body

The Governors are responsible for making overall strategic decisions about risk management and the organisation's activities, and to have oversight of outcomes and concerns as reported to them by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). A member of the Governing Body is the designated safeguarding contact and sits on the Safeguarding & Support Committee. This Committee, which meets termly, assesses and discusses the DSL's Safeguarding Report and analytics from the [Report + Support](#) portal. The regular Safeguarding Report is reviewed by Audit Committee and by the whole of the Governing Body in its regular meetings.

It is the role of the Principal to:

- Communicate to staff any changes in policy and procedures.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding within the organisation.
- Review, update and develop the Academy's policy and procedures on safeguarding in consultation with specialist sector advisors.
- Promote the importance of safeguarding across the organisation.
- Manage complaints about poor practice of staff in any capacity.
- Make decisions about appointing someone who has a criminal record.
- Ensure that the organisation meets the requirements of its insurers regarding its safeguarding responsibilities.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Dean of Students

Elizabeth Kenny

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The DSL for the Academy is the Dean of Students, who is responsible for:

- Being the point of contact for the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) about the safety and welfare of an adult.
- Keeping relevant senior staff within the Academy informed about any incidents, action taken and further action required.
- Ensuring that an individual case record is maintained of the concern, action taken, liaison with other agencies and the outcome.
- Advising the organisation of pedagogical training needs.
- Dealing with the aftermath of an incident in the organisation.
- Collating monitoring data on safeguarding activities.
- Updating the organisation's policy and procedures on safeguarding.
- Ensuring visiting staff comply with safeguarding best practice in undertaking their duties.

Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)

Senior Case Manager	Fran Latham	flatham@ram.ac.uk
Senior Tutor in Undergraduate Pastoral Support	Ruth Byrchmore	r.byrchmore@ram.ac.uk
Head of Open Academy	Julian West	julian.west@ram.ac.uk
Junior Academy Teacher	Helen Kuby	helen.kuby18@ram.ac.uk
Director of Junior Academy	John Hutchins	j.hutchins@ram.ac.uk
Director of First Strings Experience	Paola Delucchi	pdelucchi@ram.ac.uk

The DSOs receive regular safeguarding training through the NSPCC. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring students, visitors, teachers, and staff are aware of the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Liaising with the pastoral and mental health support teams, and accurately documenting concerns with the DSL.

All staff are required to complete basic level safeguarding awareness training via LearnUpon.

Staff are responsible for identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns, and agree:

- To be familiar with the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedures and to undertake regular training to ensure their knowledge remains current.
- To take action when a concern arises.
- To report the concern immediately to a DSO/DSL named in this policy, who will determine the next steps to take.
- To record concerns and actions taken (or to pass to DSO to record). Helpful information to record and report includes:
 - The nature of the allegation or concern.
 - The adult's account, if he or she can give them, of what happened.
 - Any times, dates, or other relevant information.
 - Whether anyone else, peers or staff, are aware of the concern.
 - A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, and hearsay.

It is not the responsibility of Academy staff to determine if abuse has taken place or if a student is at immediate risk, with the exception of a medical emergency; rather, they are responsible for reporting their concerns to the appropriate individuals within the Academy.

3. DEFINITIONS OF VULNERABILITY IN OVER 18S IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Under the Care Act 2014, an adult at risk is a person aged 18 years or over who may be in need of community care services by reason of physical or mental disability, age, or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Adults in Higher Education may not consider themselves vulnerable by this statutory definition but may be considered as such due to exploitation or an abuse of power by people in positions of leadership or responsibility over them.

The Academy adopts this broader definition of vulnerability with regards to adult safeguarding in higher education.

Factors which increase vulnerability may include:

- A learning difference or disability.
- Chronic as well as acute mental illness.
- Addiction to substances such as alcohol or drugs.
- A permanent or temporary reduction in capacity brought on by life events such as bereavement or trauma.
- Domestic or relationship abuse involving direct violence and/or coercive behaviour, stalking or harassment.
- Experiencing harassment and/or sexual misconduct.
- Abuse of power or conflicts of interest particularly where this relates to an intimate personal relationship (whether disclosed or not).
- Those who have lived experience of abuse, including in childhood.

The Academy takes reports of harassment and/or sexual misconduct seriously and allegations of misconduct will be investigated in line with our [Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

The Academy's [Intimate Personal Relationships Policy](#) outlines the expectations and procedures in order to underpin our commitment to collaborative and positive professional relationships between staff and students.

4. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of the Policy is:

- To ensure all staff understand the importance of prevention in responding proactively and efficiently to all concerns. This applies to all staff in any capacity: teaching, academic, professional services, mentors, volunteers, and other roles such as external freelance workers, contractors, visiting artists, students, visitors, and anyone working on behalf of the Academy.
- To provide information for students attending the Academy or participating in Academy events, on the responsibilities of, and approach taken by the Academy in the protection of adults. A separate but complementary policy exists with regard to children and young people (i.e. those under 18 years).

Students are made aware of this policy and these procedures during their induction or through information widely distributed and provided at the Academy.

5. DISCLOSURES

A student or staff member can disclose safeguarding issues or a wellbeing concern to their Principal Study teacher or Head of Department, their tutor or Head of Year, a member of Student Support Services, another trusted staff member or a friend or peer. This policy outlines best practice for managing disclosures in a sensitive and compassionate way, which focusses on empowering student choice as well as acting in their best interests when necessary.

Confidentiality is important but should not be guaranteed if there is a risk of serious and/or life-threatening harm to the person making the disclosure, or to another member of the community, in the case of an anonymous concern. In the case of a mental health crisis or suicidal episode, a qualified mental health practitioner is the right person to make this assessment; any student or member of staff who thinks this may be the case should seek their help as soon as possible, enlisting the help of the DSL to do so. The DSL must be informed of the risk assessment and any further support which is put in place.

More information about counselling and psychological support at the Academy can be accessed [here](#).

Any disclosures of potential misconduct including harassment and/or sexual misconduct by a staff member or student can be brought to the attention of the Senior Case Manager or Dean of Students for advice and review. All allegations will be managed sensitively in line with the Academy's published policies and procedures.

Good practice when responding to a person making a disclosure:

Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions. (Open questions begin with words like who, what, when, where, and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'.)
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your DSL or the statutory agencies what has occurred.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell them what you are going to do next.

Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (eg that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.

- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Conduct a physical or medical examination.

Record:

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the DSL or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place and actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Do not speculate or jump to conclusions.

Report:

- If you think there may be immediate danger to the adult, contact the Police or member of the Student Support Services to make a risk assessment and, where necessary, refer to Accident and Emergency Services.
- If an emergency is confirmed, report to the Academy DSL immediately.

The Academy's Report + Support portal enables reports of incidents or concerns to be made at any time and can be accessed [here](#).

If the identity of the reporter is known, they will be contacted within three working days with an offer of support and an outline of actions or steps to be taken.

If the reporter is anonymous, incidents are logged as part of the overall safeguarding picture and to identify patterns of behaviour that may be of concern.

If a student or staff member is named as the subject of a report, they will normally be informed without delay that a review and assessment will take place in line with published staff and student processes before further action is taken. The Dean will triangulate the reports with Student Support Services and/or teaching and pastoral staff, or other named students, in order to determine next steps.

If the Dean of Students or Senior Case Manager are the subject/s of a report, this will be handled by the Director of Human Resources and the Principal.

If a major breach of conduct is alleged, this is followed up according to the staff or student disciplinary codes, and an investigation will take place involving several stages and independent panel members at each stage. For matters of a criminal nature there may be a need to contact the statutory agencies – Police or social services. The reporting student or staff member who experienced it will be asked if they wish to make a Police report, and given the opportunity to change their mind at any time thereafter. If a Police report is made, this takes precedence over any internal investigation, which should not then be carried out.

Safeguarding concerns are taken seriously whether or not they result in a formal complaint. The Academy is committed to the care, respect and dignity of all staff and students regardless of age, disability, sex, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, believing each individual has the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

6. WHAT TO DO IF THERE ARE CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS ABOUT ANY MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER

All allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken. Reports of historical breaches of safeguarding are dealt with as swiftly as current ones. When dealing with any allegation against staff it is vital to keep the welfare of the vulnerable adult¹ as the central concern.

Procedures for managing allegations or concerns about a member of staff or volunteer in the Academy, as outlined in this policy and other related Academy policies, should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a staff member has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a vulnerable adult.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a vulnerable adult.
- Behaved towards an adult in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults.
- Abused their position of trust with a member of the student community.

If any of these circumstances arise, the following procedure should be followed:

First, establish the safety of the subject of concern and whether any immediate action needs to be taken to safeguard them. In an emergency, contact emergency services via 999 to reach the Police, NHS or Fire Brigade and notify a DSO/DSL. In the event of a mental health crisis, the Psychological Support Team are available Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm to conduct a risk assessment.

In the event of a non-emergency situation, staff are responsible for sharing their concern with a DSO. Advice can also be sought from the Psychological Support Team.

If a member of staff does not feel able to share their concern with the DSO, they should speak directly to the DSL or a member of the Senior Management Team.

The DSO will then inform the DSL and explore the seriousness of the allegation/concern, and together they will be responsible for co-ordinating the management of the concern, including the decision-making about any immediate protective actions that are warranted: for example, referral to statutory services or Psychological Support Services; suspension from role; confinement; change of duties etc.

In dealing with any allegation the DSO needs to balance: the seriousness of the allegation, the risk of harm to the adult, possible contamination of the evidence, and the welfare of the person concerned.

There may need to be one or more type of inquiry depending on the nature of the concern: a mental health or support issue, Police investigation and/or disciplinary process. The perspective and decision of the reporting student and staff member will be the determining factor in this.

¹ With reference to the broader definition of vulnerable adult in higher education as outlined on page 6

Poor practice

There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice rather than adult safeguarding, but where there is any doubt, the supervisor/manager should consult with a DSO/DSL. If the investigation shows that the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Academy will determine how best to remedy this, for example as part of the performance management or disciplinary procedure, dependent on the nature and seriousness of the practice.

Best practice

All staff are expected to engage in sector best practice, which includes the Conservatoires UK guidance '[Commitment to Safeguarding within the Conservatoires Sector](#)' and '[Principles of Best Practice in Conservatoire Teaching](#)'.

Physical contact

- All staff must abide by industry [best practice](#) and remain within the law in relation to physical contact. The Academy advises that music technique should be taught through demonstration, instruction and explanation first before the use of physical contact.
- Physical contact within the lesson must only be carried out with explicit consent before the contact takes place. This means that the exact contact and reason for it should be explained before and the student given the opportunity to express their opinion, including to decline.
- Staff should be alert to feedback including any non-verbal communication that may indicate discomfort or distress.
- It is recognised by the Academy that there are circumstances when it may be appropriate to use physical contact and/or 'reasonable force' to safeguard another person. 'Reasonable' means 'using no more force than is needed' and is down to professional judgement within the context of the law and circumstances. For example, it may involve passively blocking the path of a student or breaking up a fight. It is recognised that the adoption of a 'no contact' policy may leave staff unable to fully support, safeguard and protect students.
- Other scenarios may include assisting a student who requires reasonable adjustments or support, administering first aid, or preventing a health and safety risk or incident.

Position of trust

It is a criminal offence for any person aged 18 or over, who is in a 'position of trust', to have a sexual relationship with a young person under 18 if their role is one identified within the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The Academy's [Safeguarding Policy \(under-18s\)](#) outlines the expectations for all staff in relation to safeguarding children in connection with the Academy.

The Academy's [Intimate Personal Relationships Policy](#) gives clear guidelines to staff about the expectations and disclosure procedure of intimate personal relationships with a student over 18 connected to the Academy. This involves reporting the relationship and removing themselves from a position of authority, assessment or future career influence in relation to a younger member of staff or student.

Safeguarding concerns outside the Academy/offsite

If you are concerned about an incident which has occurred outside the Academy, or at a different site, this should be raised with a DSO or the DSL, who will ensure appropriate procedures are followed.

Safeguarding concerns about an external organisation (on Academy premises)

If there is a concern about an employee from an external organisation, this should be referred to the DSL, who will follow procedures as above in determining the risk involved.

External hirers

It is important that organisations/individuals who hire the Academy premises comply with the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedures. Concerns regarding these individuals will be referred to the DSO/DSL, who will follow procedures. In order to reinforce the importance of safeguarding, the Academy has identified minimum requirements that must be met by any hirer prior to a booking being accepted from them. These are included in the terms and conditions of the booking form.

Support for staff raising concerns

The Academy will fully support and protect any member of staff who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing an adult. If an allegation is made that is found to be malicious or fraudulent, the Academy retains the right to take appropriate action against the individual responsible for making the claim.

Referral for consideration of barring

If an allegation/concern is substantiated and the person is dismissed, resigns, or the Academy decides to cease to use their services, the DSL, in conjunction with the Principal, will decide whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). If a referral is appropriate, the referral should be made as soon as possible. A referral must always be made if the Academy thinks that the individual has harmed or poses a risk of harm to adults or children.

For general safeguarding matters please contact safeguarding@ram.ac.uk

7. RELATED POLICIES

Staff must review and comply with this policy in conjunction with the following:

1. [Safeguarding Policy \(Under-18s\)](#)
2. [Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
3. [Intimate Personal Relationships Policy](#)
4. Dignity at Work Policy (via HR)
5. [Social Media Policy](#)
6. [Freedom of Speech Policy](#)

Alternative format

If you need help accessing this information or need it in an alternative format, please contact the general office on go@ram.ac.uk or call us on +44 (0)20 7873 7373.

Version history

Version number	Date effective from	Amendments made (summary)	Previous version location
v1.2	28 July 2025	Policy updates by SCM • Part 1 Context updated to include reference to the Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy and Intimate Personal Relationship Policy. • Part 3 Definitions updated in the context of updated policies. • Updates with links and information throughout. • Update to Best Practice to include Conservatoire UK's links and Principles of Best Practice in Conservatoire Teaching.	Safeguarding Team safeguarding@ram.ac.uk
V1.2.1	24 October 2025		