

Online Engagement Safety Procedures and Guidance



April 2021

The University of Northampton (UON) works with primary and secondary age students and their families as part of its activities to support young people in their educational journey.

Our programme of online engagement includes:

- Virtual events: live-stream and pre-recorded footage with monitored live chat / Q&A.
- Remote delivery of workshops to our schools.
- Individual support and guidance including online tutoring provision.

The following document outlines the processes and procedures in place to address the safeguarding of the children and young people engaged in online through the work of the UON Schools Engagement team and its delivery partners.

The purpose of these procedures and guidance is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults, when engaging in UON activities online.
- Provide staff and delivery partners with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety.
- Outline, how we operate within the guidance for good online practice provided by the Department for Education and the NSPCC.

Further details can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/schools/e-safety-for-schools#heading-top>

We recognise that:

- Children and young people should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are always kept safe.
- We have a duty of care that all children, young people and vulnerable adults involved with our organisation are protected from potential harm whilst participating in UON activities online.
- All children regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing clear and specific directions to UON staff and Ambassadors on how to work online with young people.
- Supporting and encouraging the young people we work with to participate in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
- Developing an online safety guideline for use during project work with young people and their parents/carers.
- Developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult, child or young person.

Who to report safeguarding concerns to:

Any safeguarding concerns should be reported to the UON Schools Engagement Team Designated Safeguarding Lead who will decide if the issue needs reporting to the UON Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Contact details:

UON Schools Engagement Team Designated Safeguarding Lead is Tim Dobson
Tim.Dobson@northampton.ac.uk; 07889 936055

The UON Lead Safeguarding Officer/Designated PREVENT Duty Officer is the Academic Registrar.

In our online engagement, we are committed to:

- having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place to respond to concerns.
- reviewing the plan developed for online engagement at regular intervals, to ensure that any problems are addressed and resolved in the long term.

Livestream, Live Calls and Chat

To create a safe environment for children and young people when watching or engaging in a live activity staff will mitigate the risk of inappropriate or harmful material being shared online by:

- using platforms that allow host staff to manage chat comments and remove participants in breach of conduct guidelines.
- using a registering system for participants to participate in livestreams.
- using a lobby system in live calls to approve participants prior to their joining.
- using a conferencing service that can disable users' microphone and video cameras.
- students are advised not to use full names when logging onto a live chat or online opportunity.
- ensuring that participants are provided with and adhere to our Schools Engagement online code of conduct for the workshop, an example of which is provided on page 5.

Consent for the use of images will be collected prior to the opportunity through the UON ISA or paper/Online consent form and complies with the UON GDPR statement.

Staff, Ambassadors and external delivery partners will ensure there is no personal or sensitive (or special category) data visible during their streaming. They will ensure that cameras and audio are disabled when the activity has finished.

External delivery partners will have extensive discussion with UON staff surrounding expected conduct and safeguarding. Partners will not share any personal contact details during their delivery or use the live chat during Q&A sessions to post this information. Strict safeguarding procedures must be adhered to.

Pre-recorded footage may be used in place of live delivery wherever possible and discussions with external partners will take place prior to booking so partners are aware of the intended use of the recorded footage.

Staff will provide ground rules to attendees including:

- To behave in a considerate and responsible manner to staff, Ambassadors and other students.
- To refrain from the use of explicit, aggressive or intimidating language.
- Not to share private information.
- Not to respond to contact requests from people they don't know.
- Who they should tell if they see or hear anything upsetting or inappropriate?
- How any comments / views shared by participants will be used (if this information is being gathered. i.e. feedback purposes).

Online Projects

Project staff will have the UON Schools Engagement code of conduct that the young people and their school key contact will be provided with, and agree to, prior to the UON opportunity. This may include the guidance given below and will also outline how to report concerns
The UON Schools Engagement online code of conduct for participants can be found on page 5.

Ambassadors

All our Student Ambassadors working with young people online will have received additional guidance relating to safe online practices.

All Ambassadors will follow a code of conduct which includes;

- not engaging with children on social networking sites or through mobile devices.
- keeping personal information private online.
- considering the long-term implications of any comments or content posted online.
- not uploading or posting inappropriate, offensive or illegal content.

If Ambassadors are running sessions in which UON staff are not be present, school staff must always be present. Ambassadors will run these sessions as a minimum in pairs.

If recording or live streaming lessons, Ambassadors will ensure they are in a neutral area where nothing personal or inappropriate can be seen or heard in the background.

GDPR

UON works with schools and colleges to support young people to make informed choices about their future, including progression to further and higher education. To fulfil funding, monitoring and regulatory commitments, we need to collect data from the young people we work with online.

By collecting this information and storing it in our database, we can monitor the effectiveness of our activity, which helps participants receive meaningful support. For research purposes only, this data is stored on the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT).

Anonymised data may also be shared with the Office for Students (OFS), Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) as part of government policy to increase university attendance from underrepresented groups.

We keep students details safe and secure and will ensure that the information we provide is completely anonymous. The organisations detailed above are all GDPR compliant.

What data we collect

We will collect the following personal data: name, date of birth, school / college attended, postcode.

In some instances, we may also collect the following special category personal data: gender, ethnicity, free school meal status, looked after child status, children from military families, 1st generation to Higher Education (HE) and disability.

Our basis for collecting the data

We will use your information to evaluate the impact of the University's widening participation funding. We have a legitimate interest to do this, and we will only use the data for the said research.

If you have any queries or concerns about this process, please get in touch with the Schools Engagement team on schoolsengagement@northampton.ac.uk

UON Schools Engagement Online Code of Conduct:

For children and young people

By engaging in a UON opportunity, children and young people agree to:

- Help to establish and maintain a positive and supportive online learning environment.
- Be present – you do not need to have your camera on if you are uncomfortable but engagement in the workshops is important, if not by camera, by speaking when appropriate, “raising your hand” and using the typing chat function.
- Treat others and their opinions with respect, cultural sensitivity and politeness. You can discuss but not criticise.
- Turn off or keep your mobile phone on silent during a virtual event so not to distract the rest of the group.
- Behave in a considerate and responsible manner to UON staff, partner staff, Ambassadors and other students, including being sensitive to other attendees’ feelings.
- Refrain from the use of explicit, aggressive or intimidating language both verbally or via the chat.
- Be in an appropriate venue / space (e.g. public room – living room, dining room, kitchen). You can use headphones to manage background noise.
- Ensure you and all others in view of the camera must be appropriately dressed (e.g. school uniform, day wear). Remember that you, anyone or anything in range of the camera can always be seen.
- Have carers/parents/teachers in the same vicinity, to monitor and be available if needed.
- Not let anyone else join the calls.
- Not record the calls or capture images or footage from the screen with any personal devices unless explicit consent is given.
- Not smoke, vape, consume alcohol or use of any other illegal substances. This includes the display of any inappropriate paraphernalia in view.
- Stick to topics related to the online event.
- Share any concerns you have or if you feel unsafe in a virtual event or breakout room with UON staff immediately.

By signing up to and registering to an opportunity or workshop, students agree not to:

- Share sensitive personal information including any form of contact details with other course members and their tutor;
- Write, use, send, download or display any racist, sexist, homophobic, abusive terms, swear words or language that may cause offence in the virtual event or online chat;
- Attempt to contact staff members or student ambassadors outside of the event except through the UON website;
- Attempt to contact other participating members except through the virtual event or the online site;
- Post or upload anything off-topic, offensive, abusive or illegal to the online site or the virtual event;
- Post or upload inappropriate messages, content, unauthorised advertising, promotional material or spam to the event chat, online site or the virtual event.

Failure to follow any of the above may result in a student being removed from participating in an online event.

Dealing with inappropriate content within the event chat option

Our content standards are explained in our online code of conduct above. These cover in broad terms, the types of behaviour that would be deemed inappropriate. Below are the steps that ambassadors and members of the UON team can take in the case of a breach of content standards.

What UON employees will do in the event of breaching the code of conduct

If a student breaches the code of conduct in their conversations with an UON employee, UON workshop lead, Ambassador or delivery partner the following steps will be taken:

Warn

A verbal warning may be appropriate in the first instance or where a comment in a conversation is clearly not malicious.

Remove comments

If the platform allows for the deletion of comments, remove content that is offensive or breaches the UON Online Code of Conduct

Block

If deemed appropriate a member of the UON team will remove or block the user from the conversation and, where necessary, inform the school/college member of staff.

Please contact schoolsengagement@northampton.ac.uk if you have any queries or questions about this document.