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## Background

ASDAN believes that every young person should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. All members of ASDAN staff and those undertaking work on behalf of ASDAN (including consultants, consultancies, auditors and external moderators, referred to as Contractors) have a responsibility to support the care and protection of young people and vulnerable adults from abuse or exploitation.

This includes raising any possible instances of abuse (either directly obtained or implied through conversations or materials seen) for further investigation, and not putting oneself into a position where any behaviour could be misinterpreted.

Every allegation or suspicion of abuse will be taken seriously and addressed as a priority and in accordance with the processes set out in this policy.

This policy has been created using the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ)’s Principles for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults framework as guidance. This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if deemed necessary.

## Definitions

'Safeguarding' is how we aim to ensure that children and vulnerable adults who engage with ASDAN including through undertaking programmes or qualifications or face to face contact feel safe, and to try to prevent abuse from happening.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)

Abuse and maltreatment can take many forms and there is no strict limit on the definitions for the purposes of this policy, the following definitions are as stated in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education__3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf) (Department for Education, September 2018)

Vulnerable adults are people 'aged 18 years or over who are, or may be, in need of community care services by reasons of mental or other disability, age or illness or who are unable to care for themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation' (No Secrets DH 2000). This may include adults with learning difficulties, mental health issues, physical impairments or drug and alcohol misuse.

The following definitions

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Other forms of abuse which need to be reported, and may particularly relate to Vulnerable Adults, are:

Financial or material abuse: this involves the theft or misuse of a child or vulnerable adult’s money (e.g. child or disability benefits), fraud or extortion;

Discrimination or harassment: if based on someone’s characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act (e.g. gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief) this can, in some situations, be considered to be abuse or hate crime;

Institutional abuse: where an institution (such as an Academy) has policies or practices that deny children or vulnerable adults their dignity, or assert power and create a climate where the forms of abuse listed above are allowed to continue without challenge.

## Roles and Responsibilities

All ASDAN staff and Contractors have a responsibility to understand and follow the guidance set out in this policy.

ASDAN

ASDAN staff and Contractors are likely to come into contact with students’ work primarily through the course of moderating or certificating ASDAN programmes or qualifications, but also as part of related work including filing sample portfolios, and preparing training materials. ASDAN has an obligation to take appropriate action if there is cause for concern of abuse in any materials seen by a member of staff or Contractor.

ASDAN staff and Contractors may also come into contact with those who may be deemed a child or vulnerable adult through the course of visits to Centres or through ASDAN’s work experience programme, including those engaged on apprenticeships.

ASDAN will ensure that all staff and Contractors are aware of and understand this safeguarding policy, and the procedures that should be followed in the case of any cause for concern. Staff and Contractors will also be asked to read and acknowledge their understanding of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741315/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2018__Part_One__14.09.18.pdf) Part 1 (Department for Education, September 2018).

In relation to staffing and HR, ASDAN will:

* identify a Safeguarding working group that will always include a Director and a Board member, to ensure that this policy remains current and effective, and to remain informed of any changes to legislation or regulation that may affect ASDAN.
* take all reasonable measures to check the suitability of staff and Contractors to work with children and young people
* ensure that where ASDAN ceases to use the services of any person because that person was considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, a referral is made to the Disclosure and Barring Service as soon as possible if the criteria is met

Centres

As Centres have primary contact with learners, they are expected to have primary responsibility for the welfare of their learners, including progressing and resolving issues.

It is ASDAN’s expectation that any centre undertaking an ASDAN course will have a robust safeguarding policy and associated procedures in place. This is made explicit in the Terms and Conditions, which also requires centres to agree that their policy will be made available to ASDAN on request.

ASDAN Centres are required to nominate a Designated Safeguarding Officer. Any allegations or concerns will be referred to this person in the first instance. In the case that this person may be personally involved in the allegation, or that this information has not been provided or is out of date, the Head of the Centre will be contacted.

All centres can see a copy of this policy on [www.asdan.org.uk](http://www.asdan.org.uk)

## Processes

* 1. **Centre visits**

All staff and Contractors must hold a valid DBS certificate where their role involves visiting an existing or potential ASDAN Centre, whether a one-off, outside core hours or not specifically intended to involve contact with children or vulnerable adults. A DBS check will be arranged by the HR Advisor and Administrator for all new members of staff and renewed on expiration. If any circumstances declared on the certificate change it is the responsibility of the member of staff or Contractor to submit a new application form.

If a member of staff or Contractor visits a Centre but does not hold a valid DBS certificate, they must be accompanied at all times by a member of Centre staff.

* 1. **Witness or reason to believe abuse**

If a member of staff or Contractor is concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is suffering from abuse, they should contact the centre’s Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. The centre’s safeguarding procedures will then be followed. An ASDAN Safeguarding Incident Form should then be completed and shared with the Safeguarding group who will log the incident.

* 1. **Raising an allegation**

If an allegation is raised involving an ASDAN member of staff, the allegation should be logged using a Safeguarding Incident Form, and referred to a member of the Safeguarding group. The allegation will be formally investigated in line with this policy and ASDAN’s disciplinary procedures, following discussion with the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer.

If an allegation is raised involving an ASDAN Contractor, the allegation should be logged using a Safeguarding Incident Form, and referred to a member of the Safeguarding group. The allegation will be formally investigated following discussion with the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer and dealt with in line with the terms and conditions of their contract.

The Chair of Trustees will be made aware of any allegations against a member of staff or Contractor, and kept informed of the progress of any subsequent enquiry. The Board may choose to elect a Board member to represent Trustees on an investigatory or disciplinary panel.

* 1. **Disclosure**

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses information to a member of staff or Contractor they will:

* Explain that they are unable to keep secrets and that dependent on what they are told, they may have to tell someone else in order to keep them safe
* Remain calm and not show shock or disbelief
* Listen carefully without interrupting
* Acknowledge their courage and reassure them they have done the right thing
* Not ask detailed, probing or leading questions, or any questions that start with the words how, what, when, where or why
* Not criticise any perpetrator
* Explain what they are going to do next, and reassure that they will only tell people on a ‘need to know’ basis

The member of staff or Contractor should contact the centre’s Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. The centre’s safeguarding procedures will then be followed. An ASDAN Safeguarding Incident Form should then be completed and shared with the Safeguarding group who will log the incident.

In all instances, all matters will be treated strictly confidentially and information shared only where necessary to properly ensure processes are followed as outlined in this policy, and, most importantly, to ensure the safety of all children and vulnerable adults. Records of all incidents and referrals will be kept and all relevant data stored securely.

The witness will be informed the issue has been passed to the Centre but not of any outcomes.

## Code of Behaviour

The interests of every child or vulnerable adult must be put first; all will be treated equally and with dignity and respect

Staff and Contractors must be aware at all times of the effects and consequences that words and actions might have or meanings that could be construed from them.

ASDAN staff and Contractors will avoid:

* Situations in which they are left alone with a child or vulnerable adult
* Acting in any way that might make a vulnerable person uncomfortable
* Meeting or engaging in any form of contact that is not on official premises or outside of business hours
* Use of inappropriate language, any toleration of inappropriate language uttered by any party in the presence of or by vulnerable people
* Allowing any allegation concerning a child or vulnerable adult welfare to go unreported
* Ever promising that information shared by a child or vulnerable adult will be kept confidential

Centre Visits

Contact with young people or vulnerable adults at a Centre must be supervised by a member of Centre staff. There should not be a reason for ASDAN staff or Contractors to find themselves alone with a learner. Should this happen, the colleague should remove themselves from the situation.

If a staff member or Contractor is left working alone where there is potential for a child or vulnerable adult to enter the room, they must take appropriate action to prevent this e.g. by placing or requesting the placement of a ‘do not enter’ sign on the door, or by locking the room.

## Work experience

ASDAN hosts work experience students at its head office and across all central departments. It is recognised that although desirable, it is not always possible for work experience students to be supervised or accompanied by two members of staff. In the case that a member of staff is working alone with a placement they should:

* Avoid enclosed spaces and ensure doors are left ajar
* Inform another member of staff of their location and the activity they will be working on with the student

Physical contact

* It may be necessary to touch a work experience placement e.g. on the arm to guide them, but this should be kept to a minimum and only when another adult is present. Staff should not engage in non-professional contact with a young person (e.g. hugging, horseplay).

Contact outside of work

ASDAN staff and Contractors will not share personal contact details with any young people or vulnerable adults, including through social media. Any necessary follow up contact e.g. for work experience students, should be made through the learner’s Centre or school.

If a student attempts to connect with a member of staff through social media, they must decline the invitation and explain in person that they cannot accept their request. Any unsolicited contact should be reported to and logged by the Safeguarding group.

## Training and Dissemination

This policy will be shared with all members of staff. It will be issued with all new contracts for external work where the nature of the contract may involve the Contractor coming into contact with a child or vulnerable adult.

All new members of staff will be issued with a copy of this policy as part of the induction process.

Training on ASDAN’s safeguarding policy and procedures will be delivered to all members of staff that may come into contact with children, vulnerable adults, learner materials or young people engaged in work experience.

Training will be made available to the Safeguarding group as required and appropriate.

## Other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

* Employee code of conduct
* Work Experience policy
* Data Protection policy
* Risk Registers
* IT policy
* Email policy
* Whistleblowing policy
* Disciplinary policy

## Further information:

* Childline 0800 096 7719 [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk/)
* NSPCC 0808 800 5000 [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)
* Disclosure and Barring Service 0870 909 0811 [www.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.gov.uk/dbs)