



ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS IN OPHTHALMOLOGY

Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

Aim and scope

The aim of the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy is to create and maintain a safe, healthy and supportive learning and working environment for our students, staff, contractors and volunteers. The Safeguarding and Prevent Policy applies to everyone working for AHPO and students and apprentices undertaking AHPO courses. It confers responsibilities on all AHPO trustees and committee members, employees and those working under self-employed arrangements, students, apprentices and volunteers.

Definitions

Safeguarding: Safeguarding is the protection of children and adults at risk from abuse and neglect. A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18. An adult at risk (previously vulnerable adult) is defined as any person over the age of 18 and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their need for support or personal circumstance. Abuse may be physical, emotional, financial, sexual, and institutional and can take many forms including bullying and cyber bullying, internet grooming, domestic abuse, people trafficking and forced marriage.

Prevent: Prevent is one of 4 strands of the Government's counter terrorism strategy, and the responsibilities of training providers is set out in Section 26 (1) of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("The Act"). This imposes a duty on "specified authorities", when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for learners and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this policy. Examples of possible extremism may include race and religious hatred, religious and nationalist extremism and homophobia.

Our Responsibilities

As a training provider AHPO has a legal responsibility to safeguard learners under the age of 18 and adults at risk. AHPO also has a moral responsibility to safeguard all learners, and a responsibility to reduce the risk of staff being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct. AHPO has a responsibility to promote British values and challenge extremist views, and take steps where appropriate to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism and violent extremism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.

To meet our responsibilities we will

- Ensure that all staff are aware of our policies, procedures and systems regarding safeguarding and prevent.
- Ensure all employees and those working under self-employed contracts will have Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks appropriate to their role.
- Embed British Values, equality, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing and community cohesion within the curriculum.
- Ensure that every safeguarding issue that is raised will be taken seriously and the correct action and steps are taken.

AHPO will appoint a Safeguarding Officer whose duties will include:

- Promotion of safeguarding and prevent procedures and practices within the

organisation.

- Dealing with employee concerns over learner's welfare, and signposting and offering guidance.
- Carrying out investigations into reported concerns and liaising with external bodies where appropriate.
- Maintaining secure records in relation to safeguarding issues and allegations.
- Maintaining own CPD to ensure their role can be fulfilled competently.

Duties of AHPO staff

- Employees and those working under self-employed contracts must read and understand AHPO's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy and report any issues or concerns to the Safeguarding Officer.
- Employees and those working under self-employed contracts will only contact students and apprentices regarding matters relating to their studies and training. Forms of communication include email, messaging through the electronic portfolio, phone calls, text messaging, and other forms of electronic communication such as FaceTime, WhatsApp and Skype. All employees and self-employed contractors are given an AHPO email address and should use this for all email communications. Discussions (excluding brief communications) with learners about course work and related matters using telephone or electronic media should be recorded and uploaded into the Ecordia portfolio. AHPO employees and self-employed contractors will not communicate with students and apprentices through personal social networking platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Personal relationships between AHPO assessors and tutors, and students and apprentices, are strictly prohibited. Any existing personal relationships, e.g. a family member or friend must be declared to an AHPO administrator prior to the learner joining the programme.

Obligations of employers who have contracts with AHPO

Employers who contract with AHPO to provide training have a responsibility to ensure the safeguarding of learners in their employment. AHPO will seek assurance that the employer implements safeguarding and prevent policies and strategies. If an AHPO staff member has a concern regarding safeguarding that falls within the remit of the employer, AHPO will raise the issue with the relevant employer representative and agree a course of action. AHPO can refuse to work with and withdraw the services provided to any employer who breaches their commitment to safeguarding.

If an employer has any concerns that an AHPO employee or individual with a contract with AHPO is not complying with safeguarding policies and practices, this should be raised with the AHPO Safeguarding Officer or an AHPO administrator or trustee and a course of action should be agreed.

Obligations of AHPO students and apprentices

Whilst there are no obligations by law, AHPO will expect all students and apprentices to be vigilant and aware of the signs of possible abuse or extremism and report anything they feel is suspicious. They should report issues related to themselves and also related to their fellow learners.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed three yearly or as necessary.