



Safeguarding and Student Protection Policy

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UWC Mostar Safeguarding and Student Protection Policy

The underpinning policy principles within this document ensure that the health, safety, and welfare of all our students are of paramount importance to all the adults who work at UWC Mostar. Students here have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, sexual preference, religion, or disability. They have a right to be safe throughout their time at the College. All members of staff have an equal responsibility to act upon any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a student is at risk of harm.

Our aims are:

- to provide a safe environment for young people in which to learn, live and develop;
- to establish what actions the College can take to ensure that young people remain safe during their time here;
- to raise the awareness of all staff to these issues and to define their roles and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- to identify young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm;
- to set down relevant and effective procedures for those who encounter any issue of child protection.

In addition to protecting students from deliberate harm, safeguarding encompasses many other areas for the College including:

- student health and safety
- bullying
- racist abuse
- harassment and discrimination, including but not limited to verbal harassment
- drug and substance misuse
- educational visits
- sex and relationship education
- internet safety

As such this Safeguarding and Student Protection Policy should be read in conjunction with our Health and Safety Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, Student Behavior Policy, Safe Haven Policy, and Code of Conduct.

UWC Mostar fully recognizes its responsibility to safeguard young people. In doing so, we include the following three main elements in our policy:

Prevention through teaching and pastoral support.

Procedures that clearly outline the expectations of all parties within a safeguarding agenda for preventing, identifying, and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse, concern, and/ or vulnerability. Because of our day-to-day contact with young people, College staff are well-placed

to observe the outward signs of abuse.

Support given to young people who may have been abused, give a cause for concern, or who are vulnerable.

At UWC Mostar, the Head of the College retains overall responsibility for addressing issues of sexual harassment and appoints the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Issues will be referred to and discussed by the Safeguarding Team. For purposes of investigation, the DSL may request the services of other staff members outside the Safeguarding Team.

The Safeguarding Team in the College is:

- Head Of College
- Member of the Leadership Team 1 (DSL - Ljubica Bajo Behmen)
- Member of the Leadership Team 2
- Member of staff 1 (Deputy DSL Sanja Pandža)
- Member of staff 2 (Senior Tutor Year 1)
- Member of staff 3 (Senior Tutor Year 2)

The Safeguarding Team can appoint an additional Deputy Designated Lead.

Scope Of Oversight

This policy applies to all students of United World College in Mostar irrespective of their age, location, and whether the academics are in session or not.

This policy applies to all members of staff and volunteers working within the College. Additionally, this policy applies to all occasional workers, contractors, residents, visitors, and College Board members.

All the staff members, volunteers, and College Board members must be aware of the College's Safeguarding Policy as an adult, as well as teachers, can be the first point of disclosure for a young person.

Prevention

We recognize that high self-esteem, confidence, a supportive environment, and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to safeguard young people.

The College will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where young people feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- ensure young people know that there are adults within the College whom they can

approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

- include activities and opportunities for personal, social, and health education which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse or exploitation, both in their communities and the cyber community, and to know to whom to turn for help;

All members of staff must demonstrate a total commitment to safeguarding and child protection. We raise young people's awareness of themselves through our curriculum and develop a trusting climate so that they feel able to talk and share their thoughts and feelings. We help to develop appropriate attitudes in our young people and make them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognize different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.

Procedures

UWC Mostar procedures are in accordance with The Protocol On The Procedure In Case Of School Violence of the Hercegovina-Neretva Canton of the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina.

Safeguarding and child protection training is provided for all staff regarding:

- their personal, statutory responsibility;
- the agreed local procedures;
- the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse;
- how to support a child /young person who discloses abuse;
- record keeping.

Training will take place once every two years for existing staff and in the first year at the college for new staff.

It is ensured that every member of staff, volunteer, and College Board member knows:

- that they have individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the appropriate channels and with all practical immediacy;
- the procedures of the College regarding the recording and reporting of child protection concerns;
- how to take forward those concerns with one of the Safeguarding Team;
- the definition of abuse and neglect (Appendix A), and the need to be alert to signs of abuse and knowing how to respond to a young person who may disclose abuse;

It is ensured that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the College and staff for child protection.

In order to ensure the health and safety of students and encourage students to approach adults in the community to seek help without fear of disciplinary repercussion, a 'safe-haven' will be automatically considered in cases like sexual harassment. This will be as per the Safe Haven

policy of the college.

Reporting

Students may report allegations of abuse, bullying, discrimination, and harassment communicating to any staff member, verbally or in writing, including email.

If a student tells a member of staff that they or another student has suffered abuse, bullying, discrimination, or harassment, the member of staff is asked to act as per Appendix B. If a student reports to any staff member, the staff member should send a report to the DSL -safeguarding@uwcmostar.ba

Students may use the reporting form (Appendix C), which allows for anonymous reporting. There is no time limit on the reporting of sexual harassment incidents.

Investigation

Upon receipt of the report, the DSL or the DDSL will initiate the investigation and formal inquiries.

An official case will be filed, and all information documented completely and safely.

The Safeguarding Team will consider the report together with interviews and written statements or reports from all sides as deemed necessary.

The Safeguarding Team will then propose the decision to the Leadership Team, which will issue the decision. For decisions involving suspension or expulsion of a student, the Leadership Team will refer their decision to the Head of College for review.

In the case of complaints against staff, the investigating team will refer their findings to the Head of College who will take the final decision in consultation with the Chair of the College Board for a decision.

In the case of complaints against the Head of the College, the Pastoral Committee of the College Board will investigate and propose the decision to the Chair of the College Board.

Avoiding conflict of interest: if a member of the safeguarding team handling the report is closely related to the survivor or the alleged perpetrator or the alleged perpetrator is the person in charge, the DSL or Head of College will ask the member to leave the investigation.

Records of Concern / Significant Event / Disclosure

All student records of a safeguarding nature are kept secure and in a secure location, whether

physical or on a protected drive. Safeguarding records will be accessible only to the DSL or the DDSL. Students' files are kept individually and separately. Concerns will be shared with relevant professionals involved with the student, but records will not be available without the authority of one of the Safeguarding Team.

Transfer of Information

All relevant Safeguarding information must be transferred to the new school on request when a student leaves the College. Relevant child and youth protection agencies, or similar if they exist, must be informed of the student's transfer. The Head of the College will ensure that the receiving school or college is fully aware of any safeguarding concerns and that the information is transferred securely. Key documents in the file must be copied and kept at the College.

Contact with Parents and Guardians

The Head of the College or one of the Safeguarding Team should ensure that parents/guardians and/or respective National Committee are informed and made aware of a referral, other than in circumstances when doing so would put the student at risk of further harm, or where a student over 18 years in age has other significant reasons why they would not wish their parents to be informed.

Supporting vulnerable students and those who are at risk

The College endeavors to support all students in their academic and co-curricular work to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation. We will also promote a positive, supportive, and secure environment and make sure we give students a sense of being valued.

UWC Mostar recognizes that students who have suffered abuse, neglect, or have witnessed violence are likely to be deeply affected by their experiences. They may present behavior that is challenging, defiant, or withdrawn. Consequently, we look to understand the roots of such behaviors in order best to support the student concerned.

We have a Code of Conduct and Members of Staff have agreed on a consistent approach to behavior which focuses on any misdemeanor committed by a student but does not damage their sense of self-worth. We endeavor to ensure that students know that some behavior is unacceptable yet they are still valued as individuals within our community.

Safe Recruitment

All recruitment at UWC Mostar will be as per the Safe Recruitment policy.

Allegations against staff

When a member of staff witnesses or receives an allegation of professional abuse against another adult who is working with students (including other staff, volunteers, College Board

members, occasional workers, contractors or residents) they should report the matter immediately to the Head of College or DSL. If an allegation is made against the Head of College, a referral should be made to the Chair of the College Board. The reporting member of staff should:

- Submit details of the allegation in writing, signed and dated or via email.
- Keep a record of dates, times, locations and names of potential witnesses.
- Not investigate the allegation, or interview students.
- Not discuss the allegation with the member of staff.

Allegations against a member of staff no longer working at the College are referred to the Police.

Abuse and students over the age of consent

Actions by staff members or other UWC Movement adult non-students, that would be considered abusive to a student under the age of consent (within any jurisdiction) are, for UWC, to be considered abusive even if the student is over the age of consent and maintains that consent was freely given. The reason for this is the position of trust and the unequal balance of power between staff members or others within the UWC Movement and students.

Monitoring and reviewing

The Pastoral Committee of the College Board is designated to receive, monitor, and review the actions of the College Head and Leadership Team concerning any safeguarding and student protection issues. Any safeguarding complaint against the Head of College or a College Board member will also be received and responded to by this Committee. If a staff member is part of the Pastoral Committee, they will be excluded in case of a report against the Head of the College or one of the College Board members. The College Board recognizes its responsibility concerning safeguarding and child protection and will ensure that it is always an annual agenda item for their meetings. This policy will be reviewed annually. The coordinator of the subcommittee can be contacted via email cbsafeguarding@uwcmstar.ba.

Appendix A

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

A young person is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm or fails to act to prevent harm. Young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a young person.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the young person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a young person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material watching sexual activities, or encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. It may involve failing to protect a young person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a young person's basic emotional needs.

Appendix B

What to do if a student tells you that they or another student is being abused

- Show the student that you have heard what they are saying, and that you take their allegations seriously;
- Encourage the student to talk, but do not prompt or ask leading questions;
- Do not interrupt when the student is recalling significant events. Do not make the student repeat their account;
- Explain what actions you must take;
- Do not promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential, as you have a responsibility to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust;
- Write down as soon as you can and no later than 24 hours what you have been told, using the exact words if possible. Keep any rough notes you make;
- Report your concerns to one of the Safeguarding Team for discussion;
- Do not confront the alleged abuser;
- Do not worry that you may be mistaken. You will always be taken seriously. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment;
- Make a note of the date, time, place, and people who were present at the discussion.

Appendix C - Standard Reporting Form – see next pages

INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

CONFIDENTIAL

Anonymous reporting by a **survivor** implies the possibility for the **survivor** to remain anonymous, but provide details on the **alleged perpetrator**.

Anonymous reporting by a **witness** implies the possibility for the witness to remain anonymous, but provide details on both **survivor** and the **alleged perpetrator**.

Complainant Information (the complainant and **survivor** can be different people)

Today's date: _____

Reporter's name (optional): _____

Check here if you are reporting an incident, but you are **not** the **survivor**.

Survivor's Information

Survivor's name (optional): _____

Contact - if reporting against a student or an external individual:

I (the person making this report) would like to be contacted by (please check as many as apply):

- Head of College
- Director of Student Wellbeing
- Senior Tutor Year 1
- Senior Tutor Year 2
- Psychological Counselor
- Other staff member: _____

NOTE:

If reporting against a staff member, you will be contacted by:

- Head of College (if reporting against any staff member)
- The College Board (if reporting against the Head of College)

Alleged Perpetrator(s)' information

Note: If an [alleged perpetrator\(s\)](#)' name or group affiliation is listed, the institution will take action with the accused(s) or group. That action will include an immediate meeting with the Head of College/ DSL. The meeting is used as an opportunity to collect information from both parties. Further action will follow depending on the severity of the case and all the information collected.

Name(s) of [Alleged Perpetrator\(s\)](#) (optional):

Incident Information

Date of incident: _____

Time of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

Description of the Incident

Provide as many details as possible about the incident. (*Who? When? Where? How?*)

Submitting this Form

The report can be submitted by:

- Personal e-mail sent to any staff members.
- Personally approaching any staff members.

If in doubt, please do contact the DSL, DDSL or Head of College.

CAUTION

By submitting this form you have hereby guaranteed that, to the best of your knowledge, all the information provided above is truthful. False accusations may result in serious repercussions against the [reporter](#).