



## **Prevent Policy & Procedures**

Matrix College of Counselling and Psychotherapy has a responsibility under the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 to prevent people of all ages being radicalised or drawn into terrorism. Prevent concerns safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism. Prevent is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the Government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The college promotes a multicultural environment where respect for, and tolerance of, other people's beliefs is required at all times.

### **Aims**

This policy has the following aims:

- to explain our commitment to Prevent;
- to detail our Prevent policies and procedures;
- to provide a clear procedure to be implemented in the event of concerns;
- to ensure that everyone is protected from potential radicalisation.

### **Extremism**

Extremism is the holding of extreme political or religious views which may deny right to any group or individual. Extremism can refer to a range of views, e.g. racism, homophobia, right-wing ideology, as well as any religious extremism. Extremism can be expressed in vocal or actively.

### **Prevention**

In the context of this policy, prevention means reducing or eliminating the risk of individuals becoming involved in terrorism. Prevent involves the identification and referral of those susceptible to violent extremism into appropriate interventions. These interventions aim to divert the susceptible from embarking down the path to radicalisation.

### **Radicalisation**

Radicalisation is the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

### **Vulnerability**

Vulnerability describes the condition of being capable of being injured, difficult to defend, open to moral or ideological attack. Within Prevent, the word describes factors and characteristics associated with being susceptible to radicalisation.

## **Our Commitment to Prevent**

Our commitment to Prevent begins with our Prevent Lead, who is responsible for creating a risk assessment and action plan, which is reviewed and updated annually or following an incident or concern.

It is recognised that all members of staff, and students have a responsibility to uphold the principles and aims of this policy.

## **Training**

The college provides training and guidance to all members of staff and students; the aim of our training and guidance is to provide knowledge and confidence to all.

### **Staff are given:**

- Codes and Procedures that references Prevent duties.
- Training provided to raise awareness of prevent duties this may include:
- Online training provided by the Education and Training Foundation.
- Face-to-face training by the Prevent Lead.

### **Students are given:**

- Codes and Procedures that references Prevent duties.
- Personal tutorials three times a year or more often if needed.

## **Recognising Risk**

It is important to understand that extremism is not isolated to any particular type of person. Equally, extremist views may be held by either students or members of staff.

A person may come into contact with Matrix already holding extremist views, or they may be influenced by a range of factors. Those influences include, but are not limited to:

- global events;
- peer pressure;
- the media;
- views expressed by family or friends;
- extremist materials, accessed either online or in hardcopy;
- inspirational speakers;
- friends or relatives being harmed;
- social networks.

People who are vulnerable are more likely to be influenced.

Vulnerability could also stem from a range of causes:

- loss of identity or sense of belonging;
- isolation;

- exclusion;
- mental health problems;
- sense of injustice;
- personal crisis;
- victim of hate crime or discrimination;
- bereavement.

### **Counteracting Risk**

Although risk can never be completely eliminated, there are many ways in which we can reduce the risk of people being radicalised and help to protect and prevent people from extremism.

### **Matrix College believe it is our duty to:**

- Promote a safe and supportive environment via clear expectations of accepted behaviours and those, including radicalisation and extremism, that will not be tolerated.
- Where possible, develop critical awareness and thought to counter accepting extremism without question.
- Challenge radical or extremist views in any context, formal or informal, following stated procedures and reporting duties.
- Be ready to react when local, national, or international events cause upset.
- Offer clear rules on the use of social networks to exchange extremist views.
- Continue to know our students well, including details about their home circumstances. Through knowing students well, we believe it is easier to spot changes in behaviour.
- Be observant and vigilant in noticing any signs of radical or extremist behaviour.
- Work hard to support any students identified as vulnerable and at risk

### **Signs that may cause concern**

The following signs may suggest concerns and should be raised with the Prevent Lead immediately:

- Talking about exposure to extremist materials or views.
- Changing attitude, e.g. intolerant of differences / having a closed mind.
- Changing behaviour, e.g. becoming isolated.
- Falling standard of work, poor attendance, disengagement.
- Asking questions about topics connected to extremism.
- Offering opinions that appear to have come from extremist ideologies.
- Attempting to impose one's own views / beliefs on others.
- Using extremist vocabulary to exclude others or incite violence.
- Voicing concerns about anyone.

## **How and when to react to concerns**

It is of paramount importance that any concern or incident, however small, be reported immediately. Any report will be dealt with sensitively and carefully, with confidentiality assured for the person reporting a concern. If you have a concern, please contact the Prevent Lead: Fiona Paul

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