



## Safeguarding Adult Learners

### Policy Statement

Matrix College fully recognises its duty of care to students whilst they are in attendance and its responsibilities for the safeguarding of adult learners.

This policy applies to all staff working at Matrix College.

The purpose of this policy is to describe how Matrix aims to protect students from abuse and to outline the procedures to be followed in cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

The relevant legislation and guidance provide a number of definitions including, the categories of abuse or harm (this list is not exhaustive): physical abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational abuse, neglect and acts of omission, self-neglect. A list of these definitions is given in Appendix A.

The three main elements to this policy are prevention, protection and support.

### Prevention

Matrix will aim to promote a positive, supportive and secure environment in which students feel respected and valued. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with trusted adults are important elements in prevention. We will aim to promote an ethos in which students feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

Matrix students:

- Are aware the designated person that they approach if they are worried or in difficulty is their Programme Lead or one of the Operational Team if they prefer.
- Have an understanding of the responsibility of Matrix and its staff for safeguarding.

Matrix will ensure all teaching staff are registered and practicing counsellors and psychotherapists and have an understanding that there will be an expectation that all staff will work with students under the ethical framework of their professional body, such as UKCP, BACP, or NCPS and will work within the Matrix Codes and Procedures.

### Protection

Matrix will take account of legislation and guidance issued by the Government. The College will:

- Have a designated senior member of staff who is responsible for Adult Safeguarding (the

Principal).

- Aim to ensure that every member of staff knows the name of the designated person and her role.
- Aim to ensure that every member of staff knows that s/he has an individual responsibility for referring concerns about the safeguarding of students.
- Have in place procedures for reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- The Principal will report annually, in November, to the Matrix Operational Team who will oversee the College's safeguarding adult learners' policy and procedures.

## **Support**

Matrix will provide appropriate support for any students who may have been abused, for staff to whom a disclosure has been made, and to staff against whom an allegation may have been made.

We will:

- Endeavour to support students through the development of a responsive and knowledgeable process by senior staff.
- Ensure that every member of staff is aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse, and know how to respond to a student who may tell of abuse.
- Offer further support to students through liaison with support agencies as appropriate.
- Endeavour to support students through a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with them.
- Provide appropriate support for staff to whom a disclosure has been made.

## **Confidentiality**

While acknowledging the need to create an environment conducive to speaking freely, staff should make it clear to students, who approach them asking for complete confidentiality that, in some circumstances, staff are bound to pass on what they are told. Staff will never give undertakings of absolute confidentiality. The student should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it and that this in the first instance will be the designated person.

## **Procedure for Reporting**

In the event of a student or member of staff becoming aware or experiencing a safeguarding issue these steps should be followed:

- Report the nature of the incident to the Principal.
- In discussion with other professionals the event will be reviewed for degree of seriousness and whether or not a criminal activity has occurred.
- A further dialogue between Principal and the informant will take place in order to establish a course of action.
- Recommendations will be given to the informant about where support can be found for the victim.

## Appendix A

### Definitions of Categories of Abuse or Harm

There are many forms of abuse and neglect, and instances can be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. The list below is not exhaustive, but seeks to illustrate the sort of behaviour that could give rise to a safeguarding concern:

**Physical Abuse:** including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

**Domestic Violence:** including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.

**Sexual Abuse:** including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

**Psychological Abuse:** including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

**Financial or Material Abuse:** including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Modern Slavery:** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Discriminatory Abuse:** including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

**Organisational Abuse:** including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Neglect and Acts of Omission:** including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

**Self-neglect:** this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Document name	Safeguarding Policy		
Owner	Principal	Review Lead	Quality Manager
Approving Committee	Ops Team		
Last review	December 2025	Next review	April 2026
Amendments since last review	Detail of Revision	Date of Revision	Revision approved by
	Version control added Further in-depth review in 2026	December 2025	Ops Team