

Safeguarding Learners Policy

Version 1.0 · Effective September 2026 · Next review September 2027

Introduction

Everyone working with learners at Masar University has a duty to work together to protect them from harm or abuse. The University's Safeguarding Lead (Head of Student Affairs) has overall responsibility for safeguarding learners and for ensuring the effectiveness of all work done to safeguard and promote their welfare.

This policy covers:

- the recruitment of staff who work with learners, including vulnerable adults;
- the provision of a safe online learning environment;
- how safeguarding concerns are reported and handled.

Statement of intent

Masar University's first priority is to ensure the safety and protection of all learners taking part in its courses. To protect learners from harm, the University will act in accordance with applicable laws and recognised good practice in safeguarding.

Scope

This policy applies to learners enrolled on CPD courses and professional training delivered by Masar University. Degree programmes are governed by the University's academic regulations.

It includes all learning provision delivered directly by University staff and any provision delivered through partnership arrangements. Masar University's courses are designed for adults (aged 18 and over) and are delivered fully online.

Definitions

Safeguarding describes the broad preventative and precautionary approach to planning and procedures needed to protect learners, particularly young people and vulnerable adults, from any potential harm. Safeguarding means:

- protection from abuse and neglect;
- promotion of health and wellbeing;
- ensuring safety in the learning environment and activities;

- ensuring the best possible life chances.

Child or young person: an individual under the age of 18.

Vulnerable adult: a person aged 18 or over who is, or may be, in need of care or support by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. The following list is not exhaustive, but a vulnerable adult may be someone who:

- is elderly and frail;
- has a mental health condition;
- has a physical or sensory disability, or a severe physical illness;
- has a learning disability;
- misuses substances;
- is homeless.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It may be a single act or repeated acts, may be intentional or unintentional, and can take place in any relationship or setting, including online. Examples include:

- physical abuse, such as hitting or shoving, which a learner may disclose even though it happens outside the learning environment;
- sexual abuse, including any direct or indirect sexual activity, messages, images or innuendo against the learner's will or without their knowledge;
- emotional or psychological abuse, such as intimidation, bullying (including cyberbullying) or humiliation;
- discriminatory abuse, such as racial, sexual or religious harassment;
- financial or material exploitation, such as coercing money or goods, or scams targeting learners;
- institutional abuse, such as failure to ensure privacy or dignity, or to uphold individual rights;
- neglect or acts of omission, such as ignoring medical needs or withholding access to appropriate health, social care or educational services.

An abuser may be anyone, including relatives, friends, professional staff, other learners, volunteers and strangers.

Vulnerable adults and learners under 18

Learners who are, or may be, vulnerable adults can ask for additional support, and staff will take particular care to identify and respond to any concern about them.

Our courses are intended for adults. If a learner under 18 is ever enrolled, the consent of their parent or guardian is required before enrolment, the Safeguarding Lead is informed, staff communicate with the learner only through the University's official channels, and the learner's

parent or guardian may be contacted about any safeguarding concern where appropriate.

Online safety

- Staff communicate with learners only through the University's official channels: the learning platform (lms.masaruni.ae), the student information system (mysis.masaruni.ae) and official University email. Staff do not ask learners for personal social media contacts.
- Tutors are expected to behave professionally in live online sessions and to challenge inappropriate behaviour in sessions and discussion forums.
- Learners should not share passwords or unnecessary personal information on the University's platforms. The University will never ask for a learner's password.
- Any harassment, bullying, inappropriate content or suspicious contact on or through the University's platforms should be reported using the procedure below.

Our commitments

Masar University is committed to promoting safeguarding by providing an inclusive, supportive and safe environment for its learners, staff and others closely associated with its work, and affirms the right of every individual to be treated fairly and with respect. The University pursues this commitment in the following ways.

Promoting a culture of value and respect within a supportive and safe learning environment

- Following safer recruitment procedures, including verification of identity and qualifications, references where available, and background checks where permitted by applicable laws, for tutoring and support staff in contact with learners. The Human Resources department and the Safeguarding Lead are responsible for this.
- Providing accessible information for learners, staff and partner providers on equality, diversity, bullying, harassment, dignity and respect.
- Giving learners opportunities to voice any concerns about inappropriate behaviour, abuse, harassment or misconduct, and applying firm sanctions to deter victimisation or the cover-up of misconduct.
- Informing learners of the procedures for raising complaints about the conduct of staff or other learners.
- Ensuring that staff use their real names and official University accounts on the University's platforms; learners may verify a staff member's identity by contacting info@masaruni.ae.
- Assessing the online platforms and learning activities for safety and privacy risks.
- Ensuring that care and safety concerns are reported.

Providing information, training and briefings on safeguarding

- Including information on safeguarding and online safety in learner induction.

- Informing staff and learners of the standards we expect regarding confidentiality and disclosure.
- Providing appropriate training for staff on safeguarding, disclosure and diversity.
- Informing all staff of the signs of abuse and the action to take if abuse is reported or suspected.
- Providing accessible information for learners and staff on the complaints procedure.
- Providing learners with the contact details of the Safeguarding Lead and the procedure to follow in any case of bullying or harassment.

Gathering and analysing learner feedback on feeling safe

- Including questions in learner feedback forms about how safe learners feel in the online learning environment.
- Analysing the information obtained and acting on the results.

Monitoring and reviewing this policy

- Monitoring safeguarding practice across all provision.
- Identifying and sharing good practice in safeguarding with partner providers.
- Reviewing this policy annually.
- Keeping informed of current safeguarding guidance and, where appropriate, working with the relevant authorities in the learner's country.

Reporting a concern

Learners

If you are worried about your own safety or wellbeing, or about another learner, please contact the Safeguarding Lead by email at info@masaruni.ae with "Safeguarding – Confidential" in the subject line, or by telephone on +966 56 546 5105. If anyone is in immediate danger, contact the emergency services in your country first.

Staff

If a learner discloses abuse, directly or indirectly, or you notice signs of abuse, inform the Safeguarding Lead immediately, giving:

- what your concerns are;
- where, when, from whom and how the concerns arose;
- what you have done so far;
- whether the learner and, for a learner under 18 or a vulnerable adult, their parent or carer are aware of the referral;
- any additional information about the learner from their registration record, and contact details for anyone involved.

Write a report within 48 hours, including all details of the disclosure, who was present, and the reasons for your decision to make a referral, and send it to the Safeguarding Lead at info@masaruni.ae. If there is immediate danger, contact the emergency services in the learner's country.

Confidentiality

Safeguarding reports are stored securely, with access limited to those who need it. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis, but may be shared with the relevant authorities where this is necessary to protect someone from harm.

Contact

Email: info@masaruni.ae

Telephone: +966 56 546 5105

Approved by: Dr. Mahmoud Elgindy

Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, Masar University

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