

School of Philosophy Student Protection Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidance about the appropriate conduct and reporting to safeguard the students of the School of Philosophy Brisbane Incorporated (the School).

The School considers safeguarding as part of its primary duty of care.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all students enrolled in the School including children who attend School activities.

DEFINITIONS

Key terms are defined as follows:

Abuse is the 'violation of an individual's human or civil rights, through the act or actions of another person or persons'.

Neglect is a 'failure to provide the necessary care, aid or guidance to dependent adults or children by those responsible for their care'.

Safeguarding is protecting the welfare and human rights of people, including children, that are, in some way, connected with the School.

A Responsible Person is defined as the School Leader, Committee members, all tutors, assistant tutors and group assistants and those in charge of any school activity involving other students or children.

Students are people who attend the School for participation in School activities which may also include acting in the capacity as a tutor, group assistant, or a person in charge of a School-related activity.

POLICY

The School supports the active participation of students in our organisation. We want all those who participate in our courses and events to have a safe and fulfilling experience.

We encourage all students that attend School-related activities to listen to other students' views and respect what they say. The School is committed to ensuring all students enrolled in courses are protected from harm and abuse.

All tutors, assistant tutors and group assistants must ensure their behaviour towards and relationships with students reflects proper standards of care.

When the School receives any information alleging harm to a student while they are in the School's care, it will deal with the situation compassionately and fairly to minimise any likely harm.

All tutors, assistant tutors and group assistants will participate in training on Incident Reporting and Workplace Health & Safety. Updates of any aspects of these processes will be communicated by various means as relevant, including at scheduled pre-term events and tutor meetings.

PRINCIPLES

The School:

- recognises the safety, wellbeing and best interests of the students are paramount;
- recognises the right of students to feel safe and to be in an environment where they are protected from harm and abuse;
- encourages and supports any person who has witnessed harm or abuse of a student or child, or who suspects that abuse has occurred, to make a report;
- ensures that any person who makes a report can be confident of doing so without fear of retribution;
- acknowledges prevention is the best protection from abuse and recognises its duty of care obligations to implement prevention strategies, for example, training and awareness;
- maintains transparent procedures for tutors, assistant tutors, group assistants and students to raise concerns or complaints;
- where possible, discourages tutors, assistant tutors, group assistants from being alone with a student or out of “sight and/or sound” of other adults. Where this is not possible, the tutor, assistant tutor or group assistant will consult with the student to ensure they are comfortable with the arrangement. Where children are concerned, the School ensures all adult students caring for children are either their parents, have their parents in the area, are a registered teacher and/ or have a blue card.

Managing risks

While everyone involved in the School has a role to play in safeguarding people, the ultimate responsibility sits with its Responsible Persons.

The Responsible Persons must consider the unique and specific circumstances of the School’s operations and ensure it identifies and manages the relevant risks.

The action to manage risks are as follows:

- Identify and assess the risks and any legal and ethical obligations.
- Commit to managing risks of working with vulnerable people.
- Prevent harm and mitigate risks with a clear and comprehensive policy and procedure (this document)
- Engage tutors, assistant tutors, group assistants to help manage risks by adhering to the policy and procedure.
- Detect changes in risks, instances of harm and of non-compliance with obligations.
- Take action when concerns, suspicion or complaints arise.
- Assure the Committee that risks are being managed.

Prevention

- Due diligence. The research, background checks and preparation that the School does to minimise the possibility of doing harm to people.
- Segregating duties and providing supervision. Policies or procedures that ensure the responsibility for high-risk situations is shared by more than one person.

Reporting Procedures

The School actively encourages the reporting of any and all abuse.

The School is committed to building an environment where either a victim or another student, tutor, assistant tutor or group assistant feels able to report such abuse.

Tutors, assistant tutors or group assistants must report reasonable suspicions of abuse to the tutor in charge of the evening/event or the Leader, and a member of the Committee must also be informed.

Reasonable Suspicion means fair and practical reason to believe an incident involving abuse has occurred based on verbal communication, hearsay, rumour or observation of behaviour.

An independent person will be appointed by the School with the specific duty of dealing with any allegations of harm or abuse that may arise. The details of those reporting abuse will be kept private and confidential. A documented reporting process with escalating procedures has been established by the School for handling allegations of abuse.

Maintaining confidentiality

Any disclosures by a student, reports of suspected abuse and all details of the subsequent investigation will be documented promptly and the documents will be held in a secure location by the Committee where a breach of privacy is unlikely to occur.

Governance

The School's Committee will review the safeguarding policy and reporting procedure annually and after any incident to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Policy approved by:

Name: Tony Steel

Title: Treasurer

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tony Steel', written in a cursive style.

Date: 23 June 2021