

Safeguarding Policy of The Polish University Abroad (PUNO)

1. Preliminary

- 1.1 The Charity Commission has stated that safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities, regardless of size, type, or income, *not just those charities working with children or vulnerable adults*. It has also stated that it is essential for charity trustees to have and implement safeguarding policies and procedures and that they have to be adequate and appropriate for the charity's particular circumstances.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to all staff and volunteers of the Charity. In this Policy, "volunteers" means and includes the Charity's trustees and all other volunteers.

2. Commitment to safeguarding

- 2.1 Those who receive services or participate in the activities provided by the Charity or who come onto the Charity's premises are referred to in this Policy as its "Service Users".
- 2.2 Service Users may be at risk due to age, illness or disability. The Charity is committed to working in their interests, to promote their welfare, and to put in place safeguards and measures to protect them. In providing services and activities for Service Users, the Charity will endeavour at all times to minimise risk to them and to ensure that they are as safe as the Charity can make them.
- 2.3 The Charity aims to protect all of its Service Users from any act or behaviour of any member of staff or volunteer which, whether deliberately or unknowingly on the part of that member of staff or volunteer, gives rise to harm or ill treatment.
- 2.4 Such harm or ill treatment includes abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, discriminatory, institutional or organisational, financial or material), neglect, or impairment of the health or development of the Charity's Service Users.
- 2.5 The Charity recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It adopts a "zero-tolerance" policy of abuse within the Charity.

3. Safe recruitment

- 3.1 To aim to protect its Service Users, the Charity will seek to recruit staff and volunteers using appropriate procedures, safeguards and checks.
- 3.2 The Charity will take two references for all staff posts and volunteer roles prior to appointment.
- 3.3 Where the Charity should do so, it will use the Disclosure & Barring Service ("DBS") checks to help it to assess suitability of a candidate for a particular volunteer or staff role which is treated by the DBS as Regulated Activity and is therefore subject to a barring list check. In relation to a post or role which is eligible for an enhanced DBS check, where it considers it appropriate it will carry out an enhanced DBS check. The Charity will assess any criminal record

information that is disclosed in line with its data protection and equalities (treating ex-offenders fairly) policies.

- 3.4 The Charity will regularly review its recruitment and other human resources procedures in response to changes in legislation and systems external to the Charity, e.g. DBS and barring list checks.

4. Volunteers

- 4.1 All volunteer roles will be supported by a Volunteer Co-ordinator /Supporter.
- 4.2 Volunteers will be treated equally alongside paid staff, and all volunteers will be offered the same opportunities for advancement, responsibility, training and gaining qualifications, and acknowledgement for their contribution to the Charity.
- 4.3 In turn, volunteers will be required to adhere to the applicable parts of the Code of Conduct (Staff and Volunteers) at all times as a representative of the Charity. Before they take up their role, they will each be given a clear description of the requirements and responsibilities of their role and the member of staff or trustee recruiting them will discuss their role with them, to ensure that they understand what is expected of them.

5. Awareness of harm and abuse within the Charity

- 5.1 All incidents of harm to any Service User will require an appropriate response to reduce risks and improve the Charity's services and activities.
- 5.2 Harm is caused by accidents, deliberate abuse (physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, financial), neglect (deliberate or not) or factors such as bullying, prejudicial attitudes, or a failure to enable a person to participate in activities that are open to most of their peers.
- 5.3 Deliberate acts of harm (physical, psychological, sexual, emotional and financial) and neglect are abuses against the person. Those acts will incur disciplinary proceedings and require reports and referrals to social services, the police, other professional bodies, and the DBS if the act is by someone in Regulated Activity. If a criminal offence is thought to have been committed by any staff member or volunteer, the police will be informed.

6. Confidentiality

All reports and logs (including personnel records) will be kept securely and confidentially according to the Charity's Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality Policy or in line with the DBS Code of Practice for Registered Bodies if appropriate, until or unless it is necessary to share this material with the agencies named above. Information will be shared by the Charity on a "need-to-know" basis only.

7. Reports of possible or actual harm

- 7.1 Staff or volunteers can report, and have a responsibility to report, something that they become aware of if they suspect or discover that it is not right or is illegal or if it appears to them that someone at work is neglecting their duties, putting someone's health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing.

They may become aware of any of these things from what they see or hear or from something another person has disclosed to them.

- 7.2 In the first instance the staff or volunteer making a report should speak to their line manager who will then liaise with the Charity's trustee with appropriate responsibility. However, if the report implicates their line manager, the staff member or volunteer making the report should instead speak directly to that trustee.
- 7.3 The Charity prefers that anyone should use internal processes whenever possible to make a report as above, but this does not prevent them from making a report or referral, in their own right as a private individual, to statutory agencies such as social services or the police.
- 7.4 The Charity cannot promise confidentiality to staff or volunteers making an internal report (to the Charity's trustee with appropriate responsibility or their line manager) where it is has to be shared with any statutory agencies.
- 7.5 The Charity also supports its staff or volunteers to raise concerns or to disclose information, which they believe shows malpractice - whistle-blowing (disclosure in the public interest).

8. Safeguarding action

Where there is risk of Significant Harm to any Service User, volunteers or staff, the responsible trustee has the power to act as necessary and, in particular, as follows:

- log all conversations regarding the issue
- sign and request signatures on reports and statements
- confidentially seek advice from expert sources
- share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) internally with senior staff / Chair of the Board of trustees
- share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as social services or the police, as appropriate to the circumstances
- make a referral to the DBS regarding staff or volunteers in Regulated Activity whose conduct is harmful to Service Users and refer them to DBS when they are removed from Regulated Activity.

9. Communication by the Charity about safeguarding and this Policy

- 9.1 All staff and volunteers have an obligation to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities.
- 9.2 The Charity will communicate this Policy (using appropriate methods, formats and language to communicate the substance of it) to all of its staff, volunteers, and Service Users and their families / carers, and it will also make it available to the public.

10. Implementation of this Policy

10.1 This Policy must be followed by all staff and volunteers of the Charity and must be promoted by all of its trustees and senior staff. Failure to follow it will be treated as a very serious matter.

10.2 This Policy needs to be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures of the Charity:

Safe Working Practice Guidance
[Health & Safety Policy]
Code of Conduct and Regulation for Disciplinary Procedures
Data Protection Policy
Confidentiality Policy
[Equal Rights and Diversity Policy]
[Complaints Policy]
[Whistle Blowing Policy]

11. Adoption, coming into effect, and review, of this Policy

11.1 This Safeguarding Policy was approved by the Board of trustees of The Polish University Abroad on 26th October 2021. It also comes into force on that date.

11.2 The Board will, as appropriate, monitor and enforce this Policy,

11.3 The Board will revise this Policy from time to time. The date for review of this Policy by the Board will be the date of each Annual General Meeting (planned for October each year).

Signed by:

PUNO Trustees
PUNO Safeguard Lead: Katarzyna Karita,
PUNO Safeguard Deputy Lead: Jaroslaw Solecki

Authorized by: PUNO's Senat

London, 26th October 2021