Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

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1 Scope

1.1 This policy and its related procedures apply to all individuals engaged with the Engineering College of Technology (ECT), including:

- All current and prospective students, including those under the age of 18, apprentices and current students enrolled in part-time or full-time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- Students participating in placements, internships, or work-based learning, who must adhere to the safeguarding policies of their host organisations.
- Vulnerable adults (or protected adults, as defined in relevant legislation) enrolled as students or applicants.
- All ECT staff, including academic, professional, contractors and volunteers.
- External organisations and individuals involved in official ECT activities, including collaborative projects, outreach and recruitment.
- Any child or vulnerable adult who may be directly or indirectly connected to ECT activities, including those present during events, visits or online engagements.

1.2 ECT is committed to protecting children and adults at risk from harm, exploitation, abuse, and radicalisation. A full list of safeguarding concerns and types of abuse is provided in Section 2: Principles.

1.3 This policy, and the *Prevent Policy and Procedures*, also sets out ECT's approach to fulfilling its statutory obligations under the Prevent Duty, as outlined in Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

1.4 This policy will undergo an annual review (minimum). This is required by:.

- The Department for Education (DfE) in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*
- The Office for Students (OfS) for higher education providers
- Ofsted expectations across schools and colleges

1.5 More frequent updates may be required if:

- There are changes in legislation or statutory guidance
- There is a serious safeguarding incident
- There are significant structural/staffing changes
- Internal audits or inspections identify gaps
- ECT changes its safeguarding lead, policy owner, or reporting systems

1.6 This policy applies equally to activities delivered online (e.g., virtual classrooms, breakout rooms, discussion forums, study groups, messaging tools and recordings, to external speaker events delivered on ECT platforms; and to overseas participants studying remotely.)

1.7 Where concerns arise outside the UK**, the Student Support Manager will assess relevant local frameworks and liaise with appropriate authorities while following UK statutory guidance as far as practicable.

2 Principles

2.1 The Engineering College of Technology (ECT) is committed to:

- Taking all reasonable steps to safeguard children and adults at risk.
- Recognising safeguarding as everyone's responsibility.
- Responding proportionately and balancing confidentiality with protection.
- Recognising and responding to all forms of abuse, including:
    - Physical abuse
    - Emotional abuse
    - Sexual abuse (current or historic)
    - Neglect
    - Domestic abuse
    - Gender-based violence
    - Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
    - Financial abuse
    - Discriminatory abuse
    - Institutional abuse
    - Modern slavery
- Adhering to the Prevent Duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, with the following objectives:
    - Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism
    - Prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism
    - Work with sectors and institutions where risks of radicalisation exist
- ECT applies the six safeguarding principles (empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership and accountability) set out by the Social Care Institute of Excellence.
- ECT's approach to harassment and sexual misconduct (including online) follows the OfS Statement of Expectations and related guidance.
- ECT acts as soon as problems emerge, working with learners and agencies to prevent escalation.
- ECT protects academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law, while taking proportionate steps to reduce risk.

2.2 ECT recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff and students must be alert to the possibility that a child or adult at risk my experience abuse or neglect and must report concerns using the procedures outlined in this policy. It is not the role of staff or students to investigate or determine whether abuse has occurred.

2.3 Safeguarding referrals will be proportionate and based on risk assessment, with consideration given to the impact of those involved. Confidentiality will be respected, but not guaranteed, and information will be shared only when necessary and on a need-to-know basis, and when there is a concern that an individual may be at risk to themselves or others.

2.4 Safeguarding practices are overseen by the Student Support Manager supported by Learning Support Officers (LSO). Safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff and reviewed regularly to ensure best practice.

3 Safeguarding Procedure

3.1 If you become aware of any concerns regarding the safety or wellbeing of a child or adult at risk, please refer to the steps outlined below:

a. Recognising a Concern: Safeguarding concerns may arise from:

- Disclosure of abuse or neglect (current or historic)
- Witnessing harm, neglect, or radicalisation
- Reasonable suspicion based on behaviour or circumstances
- Information shared in conversation, written work, or online forums
- Safeguarding concerns include (not limited to): online grooming; sharing of illegal/inappropriate images; hate speech; threats; stalking/harassment (including online); sexual misconduct and sexual harassment; radicalisation indicators; self-harm or suicide ideation; county lines/CCE; forced marriage and so-called 'honour-based' abuse.

b. Immediate Risk: If someone is in immediate danger, act:

- Call 999 (or 112 if outside the UK)
- Notify the Student Support Manager (DSL) or Learning Support Officer (LSO)
- Complete the Safeguarding Concern Form as soon as possible
- If overseas, ensure local emergency services are contacted and provide the DSL with time-zone and location details.

c. Non-Emergency Concerns: If the concern is not urgent:

- Submit the Safeguarding Concern Form within 24 hours of becoming aware. If you need advice before submitting, contact your Learning Support Officer or the Student Support Manager.
- Include factual notes, dates/times, and any preserved evidence.

d. Out-of-Hours Support: If the concern arises outside business hours:

- Email hesupport@ect.ac.uk with a summary of the concern. The Learning Support Officer or Student Support Manager will review the mailbox at the start of the next working day and assess any urgent actions required.
- An auto-response will provide helplines (Samaritans/999), and a reminder to contact local services if overseas.

e. Internal Escalation

3.2 The Student Support Manager will assess the concern and determine next steps. If necessary, referrals will be made to:

- Local authority children's or adult safeguarding services
- Police or emergency services
- Internal support services
- If radicalisation is suspected, the Student Support Manager will convene a Prevent triage with the Prevent SPOC to consider referral to the Police Prevent Team/Channel.
- The Student Support Manager will record rationale for decisions and outcomes and maintain case-note chronology to aid annual reporting.

f. Staff-Related Concerns

3.3 Concerns about staff behaviour must be reported directly to the Head of Academic and Operations. These will be referred to Human Resources and managed under relevant disciplinary procedures. Concerns about staff behaviour must be reported directly to the Head of Academics and Operations. Where the allegation meets the harm threshold or indicates a potential criminal offence, the Head of Academics and Operations will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer and the police as appropriate, and HR will manage employment processes in parallel.

g. Record-Keeping

3.4 Safeguarding records will be accurate, contemporaneous and stored securely. Records support internal reviews and may be used in formal proceedings. Retention will follow ECT's Data Protection Policy. Logs generated by online sessions (e.g., chat/Q&A) are normally retained for 12 months unless an incident/legal basis requires longer.

h. Confidentiality

3.5 Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Information will be shared only when necessary and on a need-to-know basis, and where there is a concern that an individual may be at risk to themselves or others. ECT follows Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and DfE Information-Sharing advice (2024). Staff share information that is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure; they record decisions and rationale. Staff must follow the 'golden rules' for information sharing: share what is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure, recording decisions and rationale.

i. Online & Remote Safeguarding

3.6 ECT is committed to ensuring that safeguarding standards are upheld across all virtual learning environments. The following measures apply to all online and remote sessions:

- Standards of Conduct: all virtual sessions must adhere to published ground rules, which include:
  - Appropriate use of cameras and microphones
  - Participation from suitable, private environments
  - No student recording without explicit permission

- Respectful and professional behaviour at all times
- Keep discussion lawful and respectful
- Follow the moderator's directions
- No illegal/abusive content

- Moderation of Online Spaces: tutors are responsible for actively moderately chats, forums and other interactive platforms. Any inappropriate content is promptly removed and escalated in line with safeguarding procedures
- Platform controls: use verified registration and waiting rooms; admit named attendees only; disable attendee screen-share by default; appoint a moderator for chat/Q&A; save chat/Q&A logs where lawful; provide a visible Report a Concern button linking to the safeguarding form.
- Reporting Mechanisms: A dedicated 'Report a Concern' link is available on Moodle, allowing students and staff to report safeguarding concerns directly to the Learning Support Officer (LSO). Reports are time-stamped and include contextual information to support follow-up.
- Evidence Collection: Where safe and lawful, staff should preserve relevant evidence (e.g. screenshots, links, user IDs) to support safeguarding investigations. This must be done in accordance with data protection and privacy regulations. This should be uploaded with the concern form.
- Cross-Jurisdictional Safeguarding: For students locations outside of the UK, the Student Support Manager (DSL) will assess local safeguarding frameworks, and where necessary, liaise with relevant authorities (e.g. police, child protection services) to ensure appropriate action is taken.

4 Prevent Duty

4.1 The Prevent Duty, under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, places a legal obligation on higher education institutions to have due regard to the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

4.2 At ECT, the Prevent Duty is embedded within our safeguarding framework and is supported by a dedicated *Prevent Policy and Procedures* document. This outlines our approach to risk assessment, staff training, student welfare, information sharing and governance oversight.

4.3 All staff and students are expected to remain vigilant to signs of radicalisation or extremist behaviour and report concerns to the Head of Academics and Operations.

4.4 For full details, including escalation procedures and external referral pathways, please refer to the ECT *Prevent Policy and Procedures*.

5 Governance and Accountability

5.1 Safeguarding at ECT is overseen by the Governance Board, which provides strategic direction and ensures compliance with statutory duties. The Student Support Manager is responsible for the implementation of safeguarding procedures, supported by Learning Support Officers (LSOs).

5.2 The Governance Board reviews safeguarding reports and monitors policy effectiveness. The Academic Board may make recommendations for improvement. All safeguarding concerns are documented and reviewed in accordance with ECT's *Data Protection Policy*.

5.3 Staff receive mandatory safeguarding training, which is refreshed regularly to ensure best practice. Students are informed of safeguarding procedures during induction and can raise concerns through designated channels.

5.4 Responsibilities can be broken down as follows:

- Governance Board: Provides oversight, ensures statutory compliance.
- Student Support Manager (DSL): Responsible for safeguarding implementation.
- Head of Academics and Operations (Prevent SPOC): Prevent statutory lead. Maintains Prevent records and evidence of user notices and oversees online controls to facilitate reporting.
- Quality & Compliance Manager: Supports monitoring, reporting, and training.
- Academic Board: Advises on safeguarding in teaching and learning contexts;

6 Glossary

- **Adult at Risk**: A person aged 18 or over who may need care services due to disability, age, or illness, and who may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.
- **Channel**: A multi-agency programme providing early support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism; part of the Prevent programme. Referrals are considered by a multi-agency panel led by the local authority/Police Prevent Team.
- **Child**: A person under the age of 18.
- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**: Abuse where children are manipulated or coerced into criminal activity, including drug trafficking, theft, or violence.
- **Consent**: The voluntary agreement to engage in an activity or share information. Consent must be informed and can be withdrawn at any time.
- **Domestic Abuse**: Includes physical, emotional, sexual, financial, and psychological abuse within intimate or family relationships.
- **Emotional Abuse**: Behaviour that undermines a person's self-esteem or emotional wellbeing, including bullying, intimidation, and isolation.
- **Financial Abuse**: The misuse or control of someone's financial resources, including theft, fraud, or coercion.
- **Gender-Based Violence**: Violence directed at an individual based on gender or gender identity, including physical, sexual, psychological, or economic harm.
- **Harassment**: Unwanted behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- **Historic Abuse**: Abuse that occurred in the past, often during childhood, with ongoing effects.

- **Institutional Abuse**: Abuse occurring within care or educational settings due to systemic failures.
- **Online Abuse**: Harmful behaviour conducted via digital platforms, including cyberbullying, grooming, and sharing inappropriate content.
- **Low level concern**: Any concern that an adult's behaviour towards a child or adult at risk may be inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, but does not meet the threshold for a referral. Low-level concerns must still be recorded and reviewed to identify patterns.
- **Position of Trust:** a situation where a person is in a position of power or influence over a child or adult at risk by virtue of their work or role.
- **Physical Abuse**: Any act causing physical harm, including hitting, burning, or restraining.
- **Prevent Duty**: Government strategy to stop individuals being radicalised or drawn into terrorism.
- **Radicalisation**: The process through which individuals come to support extremist ideologies.
- **Safeguarding**: Protecting individuals from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and radicalisation.
- **Sexual Abuse**: Any sexual act forced upon someone without consent, including coercion or exploitation.
- **Vulnerable Adult**: See "Adult at Risk."

Appendix 1 – Reporting a Safeguarding Concern *(version to be created on Fill Out)*

1. Reporter Details

Your Name:

Job Title:

Email Address:

Contact Phone Number:

2. Individual at Risk

Has the person being reported been informed that you are making a safeguarding referral?

ECT Student Name:

ECT Student ID (if known):

3. Nature of Concern

Date and time disclosure initially shared:

Date and time actioned (if different from above):

Does the student have a disability? If so, please provide details:

Is the student a carer:

Are you aware of any children involved:

Context in which disclosure/concern was raised, i.e. email, phone call, form:

Record as accurately as possible the wording used regarding the disclosure/concern and any questions you asked to clarify the information received:

Was there any mention of any support in place (e.g. GP, Social Services, Family Support Worker, Mental Health Team):

4. Immediate Actions Taken

Please describe any initial action taken:

5. Declaration (Reporting Officer)

I confirm that the information provided in this report is accurate to the best of my knowledge and has been completed in accordance with ECT's safeguarding procedures:

Date:

6. Referral Outcome (Quality and Curriculum Manager)

Referral to external agency: Yes / No

Agency Name and Contact:

Date and Time of Referral:

Further Action Taken:

DSL Name:

DSL Signature:

Date:

Appendix 3 – Prevent Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Prevent Policy and Procedures*, which sets out full governance, training, IT security, and reporting structures. *(Insert link to policy here)*

Appendix 4 – Procedural Flowchart- Safeguarding & Prevent Reporting Flowchart

1. Concern identified (by staff, student, volunteer, external partner)
   ↓

2. Immediate danger?
    - Yes → Call 999 (112 if abroad) → Notify Student Support Manager → Complete Concern Form
    - No → Proceed to Step 3
    ↓
3. Report made
    - Submit Concern Form via Moodle/SharePoint Website link
    - Out-of-hours → Email hesupport@ect.ac.uk / contact local safeguarding services
    ↓
4. Initial review by Student Support Manager
    - Assess concern
    - Determine risk level
    ↓
5. Referral decision
    - Internal support (LSO, counselling, student services)
    - External referral (Local Authority Safeguarding Services / Police)
    - If radicalisation suspected → escalate to Head of Academics and Operations (Prevent SPOC) & Prevent Duty Task Team
    ↓
6. Prevent pathway (if applicable)
    - Prevent Duty Task Team conducts risk assessment
    - Referral to Prevent Coordinator / Channel Programme if required
    ↓
7. Follow-up
    - DSL/LSO documents actions
    - Confidential records stored securely
    - Governance Board receives anonymised reports for oversight*

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Revision History		
Version	**Date**	**Description of key changes**
1.1	August 2025	Document created in line with the UK Government requirements relating to safeguarding as applied in UK universities
1.2	Nov 2025	Updated to align to the Prevent Duty