# Safeguarding Policy

## 1.0 Introduction

The Association of Apprentices (AoA) is a not-for-profit membership organisation run for apprentices by apprentices. It is a national community for apprentices across the UK.  The AoA believes that it is always unacceptable for a child (a child is defined as a person who is aged under 18, this includes an unborn child) or adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all.

Safeguarding refers to the process, practice and culture embedded within an organisation to create a safe environment where children and vulnerable adults at risk are free from all forms of harm, abuse, or neglect.

Prevent refers to The Government's Prevent Strategy aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and extremism.

Extremism is a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance to faiths and beliefs.

Radicalisation is the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, then participate in terrorist groups.

## 2.0 Reason for Policy

This Policy statement is based on the commitment of The AoA to abide by the following principles:

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is the primary concern, and all children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse.
It is the responsibility of safeguarding and prevent experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.
All incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations should and will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with this policy.
Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 2000.

## 3.0 Policy Statement

The AoA is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of our members by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from harm and we accept our responsibility for the well-being and safety of our members, including children and vulnerable adults.

Our policy sets out the responsibilities of all parties in providing a safe environment whereby everyone is protected from abuse of any kind.

It is our intention to:

Set and implement standard procedures to protect the members first and foremost when suspected or actual abuse is reported.

Create a safe and positive environment for children and vulnerable adults, protecting them from abuse, regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, maternity, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership.

Ensure that staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and prevent and know where to access support.

Ensure that moderators are appropriately trained in safeguarding and prevent and know where to access support.

Ensure that all members are aware of and understand the expectations of the AoA community platform (AoA Connect) and how to report any concerns as well as knowledge that they can disable their account temporarily or permanently.

Ensure that appropriate additional recommendations for staying safe online is provided, to 16- and 17-year-olds.

Take all suspicions and allegations of abuse extremely seriously and to respond to concerns with due speed and consideration in line with this policy.

Work in Partnership and in accordance with our Safeguarding and Prevent Partners.

Have Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officers (DSPOs) in place to advise on and manage any concerns and referrals made.

Adhere to a strict recruitment process to undertake relevant employment and security checks to ensure that, unsuitable people are not employed or deployed.

Ensure that all personal information is confidential and should only be shared with the permission of the individual in line with GDPR/Data Protection regulations.

Ensure that where activities are delivered by partner organisations, we assist all of them to understand this policy and we promote good practice and actively challenge practices and behaviour that could be deemed harmful to children and vulnerable adults.

Regularly review and monitor our policies and procedures to ensure our legal, moral, and social responsibilities are met.

## 4.0 Roles and responsibilities

The responsibilities of the AoA are to:

Lead the production, monitoring, and review of this Safeguarding Policy.

Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty care for children and vulnerable adults, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse.

Recruit, train and supervise employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse.

Respond to any allegations appropriately and timely in accordance with this policy.

Requires all staff, direct employees and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Safeguarding Policy.

## Safeguarding Referral Flowchart

## 5.0 Review process and timescales

The AoA will review the Safeguarding Policy every year or whenever there is major change in legislation related to Safeguarding and Prevent.

## 6.0 Additional Support available

If you experience anything that concerns you or you find abusive or discriminatory on any of the Association's platforms, please report it immediately to:
members@associationofapprentices.org.uk.

**Where to go for additional support:**

**Should you need emergency medical, or Police assistant please call 999.**
**The Samaritans: Please call 116 123**
**Childline: Please call 0800 1111**

**Mental Health Support Networks**

- Mind
  Information including taking care of your mental wellbeing and finding support for benefits or housing.
- Rethink Mental Illness
  Online hub of practical support and information for people living with or supporting people with mental illness.
- Student Minds
  Guidance on looking after your mental health, including ways you can support friends and family, guidance for those experiencing xenophobia and racism, and for those with ongoing mental health difficulties.

You can also access a directory of support services with their contact details here.