

Safeguarding Policy

March 2025

Version 12

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1. Introduction & Purpose

1.1. Introduction

Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VTCT) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all employees, customers, and individuals who engage with our organisation. We have a duty to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from harm and ensure a safe and secure environment for all.

1.2. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities in two areas:

1. VTCT, as an employer, ensures the safety and protection of individuals within our organisation. This policy applies to all employees, contractors, workers, stakeholders, and trustees.
2. VTCT, as a specialist provider of vocational qualifications and assessments, believes that anyone who participates in learning and assessment activities which could be verbal, written and/or face to face, should be able to take part in an environment that is both safe and enjoyable.

The principles contained within this policy apply overseas and are subject to local laws and regulation.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

2.1. Legal

This policy is developed in accordance with relevant UK legislation, including:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2024
- The Care Act 2014
- The Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2023)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Modern Slavery Act 2015
- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)

2.2. Regulation

VTCT Skills operates within the regulatory requirements of:

- The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual)
- Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
- The Council for the Curriculum
- Examinations & Assessment (CCEA - Northern Ireland)
- Qualifications Wales.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding refers to protecting people's health, well-being, and rights to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Vulnerable Adult refers to someone aged 18 or over who may need care and support and is unable to protect themselves from harm.

Child and/or children refers to anyone under the age of 18.

Abuse includes physical, emotional, sexual, financial and neglect.

4. Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees appoints a Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding. This trustee provides strategic oversight of safeguarding and reports at every meeting on current safeguarding concerns and activities.

The Trustee works closely with the CEO and HR Director to ensure all safeguarding systems are fully operational and implemented.

Chief Executive:

- ensures the policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed;
- receives regular reports from the HR Director on safeguarding issues; and
- reports to the Safeguarding Trustee any safeguarding concerns.

Leadership Team:

- ensures the contents of the policy is communicated to managers and other appropriate individuals;
- supports individuals who have received information regarding safeguarding issues;
- co-operates/liases with the HR Director during the response and referral stages;
- maintains confidentiality of information; and

- supports any subsequent action required by third party or internal inquiry.

Executive Board:

- meets monthly and reviews any safeguarding issues that have arisen or may do so in the future.

HR Director:

- acts as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), commonly referred to as the Safeguarding Officer; if the HR Director is not available any safeguarding issues will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer;
- maintains, monitors and reviews this policy to ensure effectiveness;
- ensures staff recruitment, induction and People practices, policies and procedures reflect safeguarding best practice;
- ensures the Safeguarding Policy is available to all VTCT Skills staff and representatives as listed in section 1.1;
- receives concerns about safeguarding;
- responds to the concerns by identifying the most appropriate course of action;
- acts as a link with any external agencies;
- keeps confidential records of concerns and actions;
- keeps informed and up to date of any developments and issues in safeguarding and inform the Leadership Team and Board thereof; and
- submits high level report/s of any issues of safeguarding or poor professional practice to the CEO and the Board of Trustees as appropriate.

Directors and Managers:

- ensure teams are familiar with the contents of the policy and the appropriate responses required if a safeguarding concern arises.

5. Safeguarding Procedure

5.1. VTCT Skills – Employer

- Employees must immediately report any safeguarding concerns to the DSL using the Safeguarding Issue Report Form (appendix 1 – Safeguarding Issue Report Form (1FOHR13))
- If a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, emergency services should be contacted by calling 999

- Confidentiality must be maintained, and information should be shared on a need-to-know basis only.
- Concerns must be recorded accurately and securely.

5.2. VTCT Skills – Awarding organisation

As an awarding organisation, VTCT Skills engages with children and vulnerable adults at our recognised centres and employers through assessments and other services. This engagement could be face-to-face, virtually or through the review and marking of assessment materials. VTCT Skills has aligned its procedure to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) principles of safeguarding for children and adults at risk. As such, the action we take will be dependent on the specific circumstances.

Where a safeguarding concern is not related to a VTCT Skills employee or representative:

- The safeguarding concern will be reported to the centre
- VTCT Skills will ensure the concerns have been acknowledged by the centre
- VTCT Skills will record that a concern was raised and acknowledged by the centre (appendix 2 – Report Safeguarding Issue to a Centre – from (1FOHR21))

Where a safeguarding concern is related to a VTCT Skills employee or representative:

- VTCT Skills will follow its responsibilities and procedures as outlined in sections 4 and 5.1 of this policy.

Safeguarding concerns may also be identified through VTCT Skills' communication channels, such as email, our website and social media channels. Where the child or vulnerable adult can be identified, VTCT Skills will follow the most appropriate procedure, based on the circumstance, as outlined in this policy.

6. Recruitment and Training

Recruitment

Two references will be obtained for new starters, including from the recent employer where applicable. Evidence of identity will be required, such as a passport or driving licence with photograph.

If the role is classed as a regulated activity, satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS; Recruitment of Offenders and DBS Checks Policy (1POHR18)) clearance will be obtained.

Training

Employees are required to complete Safeguarding training when they join VTCT and annually thereafter and read this policy as part of annual compliance training.

Trustees are required to read this policy and attend annual refresher training at the December Board Meeting.

7. Whistleblowing Policy (1POHR21)

Employees are encouraged to report safeguarding concerns without fear of retaliation. Concerns can be raised confidentially with the DSL, or member of the Leadership Team, Director or Line Manager. Reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

8. Reporting and Record Keeping

All safeguarding incidents must be documented accurately, including dates, times, and actions taken. Records will be stored securely and in compliance with data protection laws. External agencies such as local authorities, social services, or the police will be contacted where necessary.

9. Monitoring and Review

VTCT Skills is committed to ensuring a culture of vigilance and proactive safeguarding. All employees, contractors, workers, stakeholders, and trustees are expected to uphold this policy and work collaboratively to maintain a safe environment for all.

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant safeguarding incidents. Regular audits will be conducted to ensure compliance with safeguarding measures.

10. Appendix 1: Safeguarding Issue Reporting Form

To be used to record Safeguarding Concerns/Allegations. All allegations of abuse or concerns about children and vulnerable adults must be recorded without delay. This is to ensure that accurate information is passed on to the relevant person and that there is a written record of the key information.

Item		Details	
Name and role of person completing report			
Source of information			
Name of vulnerable adult(s) or child(ren)			
Name and role of employee, including AA or EQA, contractor, casual worker, agency worker, Trustee whose behaviour is causing concern.			
Date and location of incident(s)			
Nature of concern/allegation (attach additional sheet if required)			
Concern/allegation discussed with: (name and job role of member of staff)			
Outcomes of discussion			
Actions Agreed			
Signed:		Date:	
Actions resolved or details of any further actions as issue is addressed			
Signed:		Date:	

11. Appendix 2: Report Safeguarding Issue to a Centre form

Where a safeguarding concern is reported to a VTCT Skills centre (as outlined in section 5.2) this form should be completed to ensure VTCT Skills has a record of the incident.

Item		Details	
Name and role of person completing report			
Source of information			
Name of vulnerable adult(s) or child(ren)			
Date and location of incident(s)			
Nature of concern/allegation (attach additional sheet if required)			
Was the concern raised with, and acknowledged by a representative of the centre?		Yes/No	
Centre representative name and job title			
Signed:		Date:	

12. Appendix 3: VTCT Skills Trustees and Staff Responsible for the Policy

Position	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kate Cornhill HR Director	07955 298056
Trustee with Safeguarding Responsibility	Stephanie Richardson Trustee	safeguarding@vtct.org.uk



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11	HR Advisor	September 2024	Updated safeguarding lead, updated template, updated CLT to Leadership Team, updated Staff names	HR Advisor
12	HR Director	March 2025	Update	HR Director

Document Review

Role	Review Status
HR Director	Update complete

Document Owner

Document Owner	Document shared with
HR Director	HR Advisor
	Chief Executive Officer

Document Sign-off

Role	Sign-off Date
HR Director	