

Safeguarding 2025 Annual Report

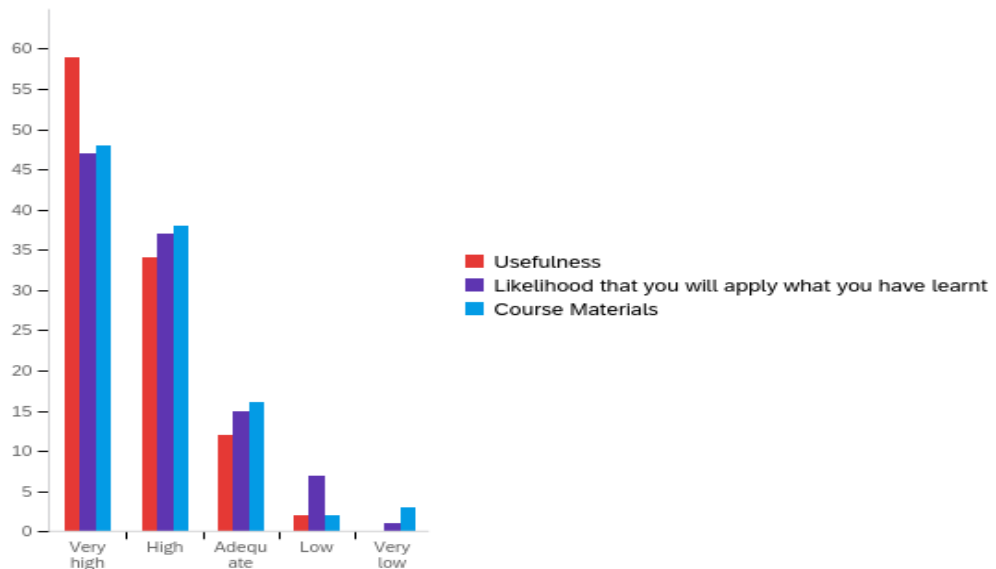
Prepared by the Division of the University Secretary's Safeguarding Lead

1. The purpose of this document is to provide an annual update on progress against the safeguarding priorities that were identified in the 2024 safeguarding annual report and to highlight areas for focus in the coming year.

Training

2. The Safeguarding e-learning course is part of the **Essentials suite of mandatory courses**. It is required for new starters to complete within six months of joining Imperial College and for existing staff to repeat every two years. From 2025, students who regularly work directly alongside under 18s or young people, for example, Graduate Teaching Assistants, are now also required to complete the course (or equivalent safeguarding training) within six months of commencing their duties.
3. In 2025 6,410¹ people completed the Essentials safeguarding training either for the first time or as a refresher. Feedback on the course continues to be positive with most rating the course highly.

SAFEGUARDING e-Learning Course feedback - January to December 2025



4. During the latter part of the year there has been a further review of the Essentials training material content to ensure it delivers proportionate learning of the key safeguarding messages that all staff need to know. An updated version has been developed that reduces the time to review the training materials and complete the test to under half an hour for new staff. This version will be implemented by summer 2026. Those staff reviewing the course as a two-year refresher are directed to the quiz first so they can focus their learning only where there are gaps in their knowledge, and without the need to repeat the course in full.

¹ This figure includes those on short term fixed contracts and is a course completion rate, for new staff and refresher requirements, of 87% of employees.

5. Two supplementary sets of training materials have also been developed for local use. The first is a slide pack for team-based delivery of the Essentials course. This has been designed for operational staff groups and for those who are not able to engage with the online material, perhaps because of language or learning difficulties. Completion of the team-based learning provides exemption from the online course. The second set of material has been developed for [Safeguarding in a research context](#) and contains role specific guidance and case studies. This has been supplemented by a research specific [Template Safeguarding Plan](#) and a [Risk Assessment Tool for Research](#).
6. An **annual CPD safeguarding training event** was held in November 2025. The topic was 'Responding to Disclosures'. Presentations covered responding to disclosures of sexual violence, domestic abuse, harassment and hate and responding to disclosures of serious mental health concerns, including suicide ideation. There were 57 attendees from a range of the University's student and staff support roles, many attending the annual safeguarding CPD training for the first time attracted by the relevance of the topic to their work. The event achieved a 4.6/5 feedback rating.

Policies and Procedures

7. [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) 2025](#) the focus of the latest statutory update was on technology and the need to be proactive in raising awareness of the risks to safety when online. This emphasised the importance of training on misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories as part of the safeguarding responsibilities. There were also additional resources to support early help for issues of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and requirements to improve school attendance which applied to our Early Years setting.
8. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Code of Practice had significant rewrites early in 2025 so the main addition to content proposed for the 2026 update is to cover the emerging safeguarding risks around the use of AI. Minor updates to job titles and responsibilities have also been made. The revised Policy and Code of Practice have been reviewed by the University's Legal and Regulatory Affairs team and by members of the Safeguarding Network. **The documents are commended to the Risk and Compliance Committee with a request that they be recommended to the University Management Board for approval.**

Casework and practice reviews

9. **Disclosure and Barring Checks** The Staff Compliance team continue to handle a high volume of DBS applications and follow up checks (1166 in total, 482 new/renewal applications and 684 update service checks), a slight increase on the previous year. The number of update checks has increased by 27% and is now exceeding the number of new/renewal applications. This is due to the team's continued work to improve uptake of this service. Additionally, 87% of applications (420 new/renewal applications) have had successful digital ID results (pass or partial pass) in 2025 which is a 19% increase from 2024. Forms and eligibility guidance have been reviewed and published, and all relevant documents have been updated. Quarterly account management meetings with Mayflower continue and allow for regular information sharing and feedback as well as discussion of issues and areas for improvement.

10. In 2025, as part of the statutory **safer recruitment requirements** set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, candidates' social media content is now reviewed if it is in the public domain and the individual would be working with children under the age of 18. No job offers were withdrawn following these reviews.
11. The DUS Safeguarding Lead met with subgroups during the year to review learning from casework and to identify opportunities to update guidance and procedures at both local and University levels. New material this year included guidance on [use of images](#) of children and the different consent and permission requirements based on the age of the child.
12. As identified as a priority in the 2024 Annual Report, there was a focus on a University wide integrated approach to preparing and managing safeguarding issues in the events organised for young people, particularly the residential ones run by Outreach, Thrive and the commercial summer schools. Lessons learned from case management issues will be reviewed and procedures adapted ahead of the 2026 programmes. This includes a formal reporting, escalation and communication framework for safeguarding serious incidents that has now been developed in conjunction with the University Risk and Resilience team and the Director of Security and Community Safety.
13. An important and welcome development in the last year was the delivery of a safeguarding case management repository for recording of safeguarding casework reported at University level. This provides one common record to track decisions, with reasons, for child protection cases. Access is tightly restricted and provided on a case-by-case basis. In the coming year, this repository will be made available to support a wider range of safeguarding case reviews and risk assessments, particularly those cases that require resource management from across University teams and departments.
14. **The Risk and Compliance Committee is requested to:**
 - Note and comment on the update on safeguarding activity and actions identified for the coming year.
 - Recommend the updated Child Protection and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Code of Practice to the University Management Board for approval.