

## **ANNEX E**

### **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF ON HOW TO RESPOND TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF HARM TO VULNERABLE ADULTS**

The definitions of a "vulnerable adult" and an "adult at risk" are complex and depend not just on the characteristics of the individual in question but the context in which they are interacting with others.

The legal definition of an adult at risk is an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs);
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Generally speaking, if staff suspect that an adult may be unable to take care of him or herself or protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation, or if an adult is in need of community care services because of disability, age or illness then it is sensible to proceed on the basis that he or she may be a vulnerable adult.

If an adult who may be vulnerable discloses that he or she has been harmed or abused, the person who receives the disclosure should follow the guidance in Annex A of the Code of Practice.

Anyone who has a concern about the safety of a suspected vulnerable student or staff aged 18 or over should contact one of the Lead Safeguarding Officers (Annex H).

The Lead Safeguarding Officer will then consult the Disability Advisory Service or the College's Occupational Health / HR department on whether the student or staff member is known to have declared a disability and if so whether this is likely to affect their vulnerability.

Guidance will be sought from the Local Authority where the Lead Safeguarding Officer feels this is appropriate, and where a crime is alleged to have been committed the matter will be reported to the Police (or if the Lead Safeguarding Officer is unsure whether it is appropriate to contact the Police guidance will be sought from the Local Authority).

The Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board's [Safeguarding Adults and the Care Act 2014 presentation](#) provides further helpful information.