Imperial College Union
Board of Trustees / 24 July 2024

Safeguarding Policy

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Purpose: To update the ICU Safeguarding Policy
Decision(s): To approve

1. Context & Background Information

Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-Committee approved an ICU Safeguarding Policy (FR/20-21/22) as part of a suite of Health & Safety Policies (FR/20-21/20) in April 2021. The policy was due for review in April 2024.

2. Situational Analysis

We consider that the existing ICU Safeguarding Policy requires updating in order to meet the needs of ICU's current operational delivery, due to gaps in the existing policy around CSPs, external hires, and reporting. Furthermore, a Code of Practice (CoP) which connects local protocols with College protocol is needed.

The updated ICU Safeguarding Policy presented here outlines a set of principles and responsibilities, as well as clarifying the role of the local policy within the College framework. Finance, Audit & Risk (FAR) considered the proposed policy at their June 2024 meeting and are recommending it to the Board for approval. FAR requested information on the number of Union members u18 y.o., which is provided below. Although FAR approved the previous Policy, we propose that moving forward the updated Policy be approved and owned for annual review by the full Board of Trustees, given trustee responsibilities around safeguarding[1].

A proposed CoP outlines reporting processes, scope (which includes CSPs) and a training expectation for staff and CSP leaders. We propose that the Code of Practice be approved/owned/reviewed at Management Committee level. It is presented here for information. Both the proposed Policy and CoP have been shared with the College's Director of Safeguarding for review, and their comments have been incorporated where appropriate.

Members Under Eighteen Policy

At the December 2021 Board meeting, a question was asked about the Union's approach to members who are under 18. At the May 2022 Board meeting, Board approved an updated version of the Members Under Eighteen Policy (TB/23-24/53b). Moving forwards, we propose to incorporate the detail of the Members Under Eighteen Policy into the CoP, as is presented here in these papers. For information, at April 2024 ICU had fifteen members under the age of eighteen (out of 24695 current students); four of those turned 18 by the time of Summer Ball, and five more will turn 18 before the end of September (i.e., before start of Autumn term). We usually start each academic year with a few hundred u18 members, with most turning 18 during October/November (we believe this is to do with the Scottish school year system).

3. Recommendation

FAR recommends the updated ICU Safeguarding Policy (appendix 1) to the Board for approval and recommends delegating approval of the CoP to Management Committee (appendix 2). The old Safeguarding Policy is linked above if Trustees wish to compare versions.

[1] See: Trustees' safeguarding duties | NCVO; Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk); Safeguarding for charities and trustees - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).