MICRO-CREDENTIALS
SCHEME DOCUMENT
PILOT PHASE

BAC

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

RAISING STANDARDS IN THE GLOBAL EDUCATION MARKET

Contents

1. Introduction

British Accreditation Council (BAC) accreditation is a voluntary quality assurance scheme for independent providers of further and higher education and vocational training courses.

The accreditation scheme for micro-credentials is designed to recognise the particular qualities and distinctive character of providers that offer micro-credentials, for example in providing courses for upskilling and reskilling participants or as part of formal partnership ('articulation') agreements between institutions, with the possibility of a course being recognised by a higher education institution and/or contributing towards a higher degree, known as 'stacking'.

On account of the short and often seasonal calendar of micro-credentials, and the increased digitalisation of educational offers, providers may, according to the specific requirements of each course, deliver the course fully online or may hire a variety of training venues for face-to-face delivery.

For the purposes of this scheme, a number of reference points have been consulted, including UNESCO characteristics[1] and Council of the European Union[2] descriptors. BAC acknowledges that, depending on the provider or the national context in which it is situated, courses that are designed, developed and delivered to meet the features described under the micro-credential umbrella may not necessarily use the designation of 'micro-credentials'. This will not impede the application for this scheme if the requirements are met.

The scheme can apply to one micro-credentials (MC) course (single-course accreditation) or a suite of MC courses (multi-course accreditation), depending on what the provider chooses.

The scheme does not result in a discipline- or subject-specific evaluation, and no judgement on the discipline or subject content will be issued. Rather the scheme focuses on the provider's capacity to design, develop, deliver and review its MC provision and maintain its currency, validity and accuracy, or initiate timely closure procedures, as necessary.

Once a provider has received BAC accreditation, the expectation is that for any future MCs developed, if these use the same management, delivery and quality assurance arrangements, they will also be covered. There will be no need to re-apply for accreditation until the cycle is complete.

The provider may choose to apply for MC accreditation before, after or during the delivery of its MC provision.

2. Eligibility to apply for accreditation

Any independent education or training provider is eligible to apply for accreditation for its MC provision if it meets the following requirements:

- The provider is led by a proprietor or designated principal/director, who has clear, written contractual responsibilities for the running of the institution and for the quality of its work.
- Effective control of the provider is the responsibility of accountable management.
- There are no grounds for believing the proprietor, principal/director or any other senior manager to be unfit to take responsibility for the provider (for example, in an assessment of any previous position held at another organisation known to BAC, and in particular any provider that has consistently failed to

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[1]

https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381668

[2]

https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9237-2022-INIT/en/pdf

meet BAC's standards or that has had its accreditation status previously withdrawn by BAC).

- If the MC is delivered face-to-face or in blended format, the provider uses training venues either on its own premises or on premises that have been selected specifically for the particular timetable and requirements of individual courses.
- The institution predominantly teaches participants aged 16 or over.
- The provider is established as a deliverer of educational courses for a minimum period of one year (unless the application is for candidacy status – please see below).

For all providers based outside the UK:

- The provider is licensed by a local, regional or national licensing agency if such licensing is mandatory, and/or holds accreditation from a nationally recognised educational or professional body and/or meets all mandatory requirements to operate, where such requirements are in place.

The MC provision is composed of courses that meet the following characteristics:

- notional workload for the MC of 100–1,000 hours;
- form of participation (online, blended, face-to-face) is identified;
- learning outcomes are explicit;
- information on recognition, articulation or stackability opportunities is provided, if relevant;
- mechanisms for the identification of the participant are applied;
- assessment types are clearly outlined;
- certification is issued on achievement of the learning outcomes.

The eligibility criteria are applicable throughout the accreditation cycle and it is the responsibility of the provider to prove that it meets the eligibility criteria. BAC can withdraw accreditation if a provider fails to

meet the eligibility criteria at any point in the cycle.

3. Accreditation process

Prospective applicants are invited to contact BAC to discuss their eligibility for the scheme. If BAC is satisfied that the eligibility criteria have been met, the provider is invited to submit a completed application form, along with supporting documents.

Once the application has been processed and passed, the next stage is the inspection. This process will assess the provider's MC provision and will also require evidence that the management team is capable of maintaining acceptable standards during the period of accreditation and the provider is operating within the requirements of relevant local legislation.

The inspection will measure the provider and its provision against BAC's minimum standards for micro-credentials. The inspection report is then considered by the Accreditation Committee, which determines whether to award, defer or refuse accreditation. This committee is independent of BAC and comprises members from the education sector.

For comprehensive information on the entire accreditation process, please see the BAC Accreditation Handbook.

4. Accreditation cycle

MC accreditation is valid for four years. During this time, a provider may choose to modify its MC provision by closing down MC courses, changing them to reflect industry trends or opening other MC courses. Unless there are significant changes to the quality assurance arrangements for the MC provision, the provider can choose to adjust its MC provision without notifying BAC.

An accredited provider is subject to an interim inspection during an accreditation cycle.

During an accreditation cycle, a provider is subject to all BAC requirements. If there are any significant changes to the management, quality assurance arrangements, provision or premises and facilities, a supplementary inspection may be required for the continuation of accreditation. Please see the BAC Accreditation Handbook for detailed information on inspections.

Accredited providers are notified six months before the end of the accreditation period so that a full inspection can be arranged. The inspection report is then presented to the Accreditation Committee for consideration of re-accreditation before the accreditation period ends.

5. Inspection process

A full inspection is arranged following the successful completion of the application process.

An appropriate inspector, or inspection team, is chosen to carry out the inspection. The number of inspectors is determined by the size of the provider and its provision. The duration and nature of the inspection are agreed between the relevant BAC staff and the provider once the application process has been completed.

Providers are required to complete and submit a self-evaluation report assessing their quality assurance and other mechanisms against the specific criteria of the scheme under which they are seeking accreditation prior to the inspection being conducted.

With newly accredited providers, an interim inspection is organised in the first twelve months of gaining accreditation. For accredited institutions, an interim inspection is organised in the middle of the four-year accreditation cycle.

5.1 Inspection areas

A full inspection covers the following inspection areas:

➜ Management, staffing and administration

➜ Teaching, learning and assessment

➜ Participant support

➜ Facilities

➜ Premises and facilities in the case of face-to-face delivery.

Management of quality and the provider's quality assurance procedures are assessed throughout each inspection area.

5.2 Minimum standards

The minimum standards for MC accreditation are set out in Section 10 below. Details are also provided of the documents that must be supplied and will be reviewed during the inspection.

5.3 Legal and statutory compliance

All new applicants and those applying for re-accreditation are required to sign a declaration stating that the institution complies with all relevant statutory requirements in the country of operation, in connection with such matters as:

- health and safety
- employment law
- copyright and licensing
- disability provision
- equal opportunities
- planning consent
- data protection
- public liability.

It is the provider's responsibility and the personal responsibility of the head of the provider to ensure that all requirements are met.

BAC inspectors will not inspect all the above areas, but will note and report on any observed breach of regulations. Although the compliance with all statutory requirements is not a BAC minimum standard, evidence of non-compliance may provide the

Accreditation Committee with grounds for refusal or withdrawal of accreditation.

6. Approved candidates for accreditation

The 'approved candidate for accreditation' process is available to any newly established provider offering micro-credentials that has not yet recruited participants to its courses:

➔ The status of 'approved candidate for BAC accreditation as a MC provider' can be awarded following a successful candidacy inspection.

➔ The provider will be approved as a 'candidate for BAC accreditation' if the Accreditation Committee is satisfied that the provider meets or exceeds BAC's minimum standards. For this, the inspectors need to be satisfied that robust quality assurance policies and systems are in place.

➔ 'Approved candidate' status is awarded for a period of six months, during which time the provider must become fully operational.

➔ If the provider fails to agree on a date for the accreditation inspection within this period, its 'approved candidate' status will lapse, unless the Accreditation Committee agrees to allow an extension.

7. Programmes and awards

Owing to the nature of MC providers and their focus on the specific training needs of participants, BAC accepts that MC courses may feature a significant element of bespoke training and that the successful completion of an MC course may not lead, in itself, to any specific qualification or traditional academic award. Under these circumstances, BAC's inspectors will consider the accuracy of any claims made by providers as to the level and status of internal awards.

BAC encourages providers to seek external input into their assessment procedures.

8. Accreditation statements and marks

Providers that have been awarded accreditation may use the statement of accreditation in their promotional materials, subject to certain conditions.

Acceptable forms of the statement are:

➔ 'Accredited by the British Accreditation Council as a Micro-credentials Course Provider'

➔ 'Accredited by the BAC as a Micro-credentials Course Provider'.

9. Contacting BAC

Further guidance and details of the generic requirements and responsibilities for BAC-accredited institutions can be found in the BAC Accreditation Handbook.

Please contact info@the-bac.org for further information.

10. Accreditation scheme standards

Inspection area: management, staffing and administration

Minimum standards 1–6

1. The provider and its MC provision are effectively managed

1.1 The MC management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body, and there are appropriate communication channels in place between all staff.

1.2 The head of the provider and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out, including in relation to the MC provision.

1.3 The provider has a written statement of its mission and goals that guides its activities, is communicated to all stakeholders, effectively implemented and regularly reviewed and includes the rationale for delivering MCs and their integration with lifelong learning objectives.

1.4 The mission, goals and strategy emphasise the importance of collaborations and partnerships that have undergone rigorous due diligence and can effectively support the recognition and stackability aims of MCs.

1.5 The provider takes concrete steps towards securing recognition of its MCs, which may lead to articulation or stackability arrangements.

1.6 The provider has a written risk management strategy relating to the delivery of MCs that includes financial planning and that is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.

1.7 The provider has a clear written policy on MC course closures that sets out the specific triggers and/or criteria for closing down the course.

2. The administration of the MC provision is effective

2.1 Administrators are suitably qualified and/or experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and duties with regard to the MC provision and are effective in carrying these out.

2.2 Administrative policies, procedures and systems relating to MCs are up to date, thorough, well documented and effectively disseminated across the provider.

2.3 Data collection and collation systems are effective in supporting the administration of the provider's MC provision.

2.4 The provider has a robust system with policies in place for protecting and keeping up to date the data of its participants and trainers.

3. The provider recruits appropriate staff to develop and deliver the MC provision

3.1 There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced staff which include, for self-employed staff, a signed performance service level agreement.

3.2 Experience and qualifications are appropriately checked and verified before recruitment and records are accurately maintained.

3.3 There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of all MC staff.

4. Publicity materials related to MCs, both printed and online, provide a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the provider, its courses and its awards

4.1 Information on the MC courses available is in a suitable format, and is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.

4.2 Information on the credentials awarded is comprehensive, accurate and up to date, and includes details on recognition, articulation or stackability opportunities, as appropriate.

4.3 The provider's key policies, with reference to MCs, are accessible through its website.

5. The provider takes reasonable care to recruit and register participants for its MC courses

5.1 Entry requirements for each MC course, including those relating to level of language ability and/or digital literacy, where applicable, are clearly stated in the course descriptions provided to prospective participants.

5.2 Applicants are provided with sufficient information to enable them to make a judgement on the suitability of the MC courses and their delivery methods, including technical requirements (e.g. hardware and software) and can discuss any concerns before registration.

5.3 The provider replies to all MC application enquiries in line with its appropriate target response times and all stakeholders are briefed properly on the nature and requirements of its courses.

5.4 The provider has effective systems to identify participants who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requiring additional learning support or other assistance.

6. The provider has effective systems to monitor its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to the continuous improvement of its MC provision

6.1 Policies for quality assurance cover MCs in an appropriate way and provide a balance between agility and value for recognition.

6.2 Ongoing monitoring arrangements are of appropriate frequency and result in

relevant changes being made promptly to benefit, as far as possible, existing MC cohorts.

6.3 External stakeholders, including industry partners, are invited to contribute to performance assessments.

6.4 The provider has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from participants on MC courses and from other relevant stakeholders, such as staff, partners and employers, on all aspects of the MC provision.

6.5 Participant feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.

6.6 The feedback is reviewed by management and appropriate action is taken.

6.7 Reports on the MC provision are compiled at least annually and include the results of the provider's performance reviews, an analysis of appropriate data, and action plans that are regularly reviewed with outcomes reported to management.

Documentation required (where appropriate)

The following is a list of examples of the documentation required. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and inspectors may ask for additional information depending on their inspection findings:

→ up-to-date organisation chart or outline description of the staff structure, with names of post-holders and individual roles and responsibilities, including specific responsibilities for the MC provision
→ a written statement of the provider's mission and goals
→ up-to-date marketing materials with information on the MC course(s)
→ copies of audits and academic reviews carried out by or on behalf of the awarding bodies or partnership organisations and the provider's responses as applicable
→ performance data maintained by the organisation, for example assessment pass rates/stakeholder feedback scores/attendance rates

- → annual performance reviews against strategic targets at the level of the organisation or relevant department(s) as applicable
- → samples and summaries of any participant and other stakeholder feedback, including completed feedback questionnaires
- → action plans for dealing with stakeholder feedback
- → internal quality assurance documentation including copies of any policies used as a means of the quality management of the MC provision
- → key policies underpinning the MC provision, for example relating to MC staff recruitment, performance monitoring, quality assurance, assessment and participant support etc.
- → staff and participant handbooks
- → minutes of staff meetings during which the MC provision and/or related matters are discussed
- → detailed curricula vitae (CVs) for all staff including all academic/teaching staff to include evidence of professional experience, and academic and teaching qualifications where relevant
- → staff performance review procedures and completed documentation
- → completed participant application forms and any participant contracts
- → participant files with details of registration, enrolment, attendance and qualifications
- → staff personnel files and records
- → self-employment contracts/agreements for all self-employed staff
- → other relevant management and administrative policies, procedures and systems that are used to support the MC provision
- → records of interaction with industry,
- → reports or evaluations from industry
- → policy on course closures
- → agreements regarding stackability and/or internal frameworks

Inspection area: teaching, learning and assessment

Minimum standards 7–13

7. MC course management is effective

7.1 There is a suitably qualified and/or experienced MC course manager or management team with responsibility for MC course delivery and the management of the trainers.

7.2 There are established processes that enable the provider to verify that the participant who is registered on the course is the same person who attends, completes the course and receives any course credit.

7.3 Staff monitor the online activity of participants and trainers and take action immediately if there are concerns about cyberbullying or other online risks to participants.

7.4 Training sessions are timetabled, and physical or online learning spaces are allocated appropriately and communicated in a timely manner.

7.5 For online or blended delivery, synchronous and asynchronous requirements, in terms of time and effort, are clearly detailed and provided for and effectively communicated to participants.

7.6 The commissioning of individual course materials is managed effectively and the content and style of the materials are checked.

7.7 There are appropriate policies and procedures for the acquisition of appropriate learning resources, including educational software, as necessary.

7.8 For online or blended delivery, there are effective arrangements in place to ensure connectivity, accessibility and security, and to guarantee content and delivery protection through appropriate back-up and storage.

7.9 The certificate given to participants on completion of the MC course includes the necessary information to enable the participant to make effective use of it in their next educational steps or their career journey.

8. The MC courses are planned and designed in ways that enable participants to succeed

8.1 The design of MCs is explicitly planned and considers features to enable the MC to deliver on the intended learning outcomes.

8.2 Any decision to break a degree into standalone components is supported by a clear rationale and accompanied by any necessary adjustments.

8.3 The design and content of MC courses reflect current knowledge and workplace practice and are regularly reviewed and revised.

8.4 MC courses are designed, in terms of workload and effort, to take account of participants' likely external commitments so as to allow them to fully engage with the course and develop the required knowledge and skills.

8.5 MC courses are designed with a clear view on options for stackability and recognition, for example by other educational providers, to allow for progression opportunities and/or by industry to facilitate employment or promotions, as appropriate.

8.6 MC course materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study.

8.7 MC course materials are appropriately presented and sufficiently comprehensive to enable participants to achieve the course objectives.

8.8 Teaching and training sessions maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of intended learning outcomes.

8.9 The academic and/or professional backgrounds and particular support needs of participants are taken into account in the planning and design of the MC course.

9. The technology used to deliver the courses is fit for purpose and effective

9.1 The provider uses appropriate and readily accessible technology to optimise the interaction between the provider and the participant and to enhance instructional and educational services.

9.2 The provider has access to the services of an experienced Information Technology (IT) technician who can ensure that systems are operative at all times and provide appropriate support to trainers and staff working remotely.

10. Trainers are suitable for the courses to which they are allocated and are effective in their delivery

10.1 Trainers have a level of subject knowledge and pedagogic and communication skills that allows them to deliver courses effectively.

10.2 Trainers have a good understanding of, and strong relationships with, the sector related to the MC course they are teaching and a good knowledge of its specific practices.

10.3 Trainers respond to the different backgrounds and particular support needs of participants in their delivery of synchronous and asynchronous teaching.

10.4 Delivery of the MC course is flexible, adaptive and highly responsive to the needs of both individual participants, and the participant group as a whole.

10.5 Trainers employ effective strategies to check participants' understanding of concepts and course content.

11. Trainers have an acceptable level of technical knowledge

11.1 Trainers demonstrate an understanding of the special challenges and demands of online and blended learning, if appropriate, and are able to use delivery technologies and pedagogic techniques effectively.

11.2 Trainers are properly trained with respect to the provider's policies relating to MCs,

participant needs, instructional approaches and techniques and the use of appropriate instructional technology, where necessary.

12. **Participants receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, both of which are effectively monitored**

12.1 Courses have scheduled assessments, the procedures and criteria for which are available in writing and that are provided in advance to participants and trainers.

12.2 Participants are made aware of how their progress relates to the learning outcomes.

12.3 Feedback is given to individual participants on a regular basis, tailored to meet their specific needs and constructive in its nature and delivery.

12.4 Participants have appropriate access to trainers in both synchronous and asynchronous modes.

12.5 The provider takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and plagiarism and penalises offenders.

12.6 Realistic deadlines are set and communicated well in advance to participants.

13. **There are satisfactory procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment**

13.1 There are effective systems in place for examination security and administration, including identity verification and examination conduct monitoring to safeguard authenticity.

13.2 There are clear procedures for participants to appeal against their marks.

Documentation required (where appropriate)

→ course descriptions, with details of synchronous and asynchronous requirements in terms of time and effort

→ syllabi and/or course content outlines
→ timetables for all courses
→ policies and procedures for the acquisition of learning resources
→ policies relating to MCs, participant needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of appropriate instructional technology
→ assessment procedures, and samples of assessment methods and assessment tools
→ samples of participants' marked work, with feedback to the participant
→ records of participant progress, as applicable
→ any learning analytics or statistics on interaction and monitoring of interactions between teacher and participant, if available
→ participants' academic appeals and grievance procedures
→ agreements with awarding bodies for recognition and stackability purposes
→ documents relating to external evaluations of the MC courses
→ evidence that the performance of teaching and training staff is evaluated
→ contracts with providers of services relating to technology connectivity, accessibility and security and the guarantee of content and delivery protection through appropriate back-up and storage.

Inspection area: participant support

Minimum standards 14–15

14. **Participants receive appropriate support**

14.1 Participants receive an appropriate induction and relevant information at the start of the MC course.

14.2 Suitable study aids are provided for participants through investment in technology and educational software, as appropriate.

14.3 Staff are available to assist participants to resolve issues of a general and/or

technical nature and all enquiries from participants are handled promptly and sympathetically.

14.4 The provider ensures that participants understand any system requirements and have access to appropriate technical advice to assist with technological problems that are the provider's responsibility.

14.5 The provider has policies to avoid discrimination and a procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour, including cyberbullying, and these are effectively implemented.

14.6 Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place for participants under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults, which are regularly reviewed.

14.7 A suitable policy and effective arrangements are in place to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

14.8 There is an e-policy in place that references any existing staff and participant codes of conduct and covers participants' use of social media and devices such as mobile phones, tablets and cameras.

14.9 The provider collects contact details for participants and their next of kin and appropriate staff can access the information quickly and easily, in and out of normal operating hours.

15. The fair treatment of participants is ensured

15.1 Participants apply for and are enrolled on courses under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions, which include appropriate refund arrangements and a cooling-off period.

15.2 Participants have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course.

15.3 Participants are advised of BAC's complaints procedure.

Documentation required (where appropriate)

→ induction packs
→ initial guidance documents for participants
→ policy documents related to discrimination, bullying and abusive behaviour
→ e-policy
→ policies relating to preventing radicalisation and extremism
→ radicalisation and extremism risk assessment
→ evidence of staff training in preventing radicalisation and extremism
→ contractual terms and conditions for participants
→ complaints policy and procedure documentation.

For documentation relating to safeguarding, please see Appendix A.

Inspection area: facilities

Minimum standard 16

16. The provider has formal arrangements in place demonstrating that it has suitable facilities

16.1 The provider has formal arrangements in place that mean it has possession of and/or access to suitable premises, for the administration or delivery of training, as appropriate.

16.2 In the case of online or blended provision, the provider has possession of and/or access to back-up and storage systems and facilities to ensure business continuity.

16.3 The provider has suitable arrangements for the legal use of any software or technology for its MC delivery, including licensing and copyright.

Documentation required (where appropriate)

→ agreements and maintenance arrangements with service providers

→ number, specification, location and accessibility of computing and related IT resources.

Inspection area: Premises and facilities in the case of face-to-face delivery (where applicable)

Minimum standards 17–19

17. The provider has formal arrangements in place that mean it has possession of and/or access to suitable premises

17.1 The provider has formal arrangements in place that mean it has possession of and/or access to suitable premises.

18. The premises provide a safe, secure and appropriate environment for participants and staff

18.1 Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.

18.2 The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness and are fit for purpose in terms of circulation space, signage, toilet facilities and heating and ventilation.

18.3 General guidance on health and safety is made available to participants, staff and visitors.

18.4 Participants have access to sufficient space, which could include a library and suitable IT facilities so that they can carry out their own private work and/or study.

18.5 Trainers have access to sufficient personal space for preparing teaching and training sessions, marking work and relaxation.

18.6 Participants and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink, including facilities that are located outside the premises.

18.7 Administrative offices are adequate in size and are resourced, including in terms of the provision of meeting rooms, for the effective administration of the provider.

19. Training rooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the MC courses offered

19.1 All training rooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation for the teaching and training sessions allocated to them and are appropriately equipped.

19.2 There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required for each course.

Documentation required (where appropriate)

→ floor plan of each site being inspected
→ health and safety guidance for participants, staff and visitors
→ number, specification, location and accessibility of computing and related IT resources
→ a guide to the use of the library and IT facilities.

Appendix A: Safeguarding checklist: under 18s and vulnerable adults

BAC does not generally inspect compliance with legal and statutory requirements. However, given the importance of safeguarding in educational contexts and the fact that we have a duty of care to ensure that providers are fully compliant with all safeguarding requirements, we are obliged to inspect this aspect of the provision. All organisations will still be asked to sign the Declaration of Compliance with Legal and Statutory Requirements, which also covers safeguarding.

Key definitions

Children: In accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004, a child is any person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Vulnerable adults: A vulnerable adult is generally defined as 'an adult who is unable to function cognitively or adequately undertake basic day-to-day functions without the help or oversight of someone not impaired in these ways, or who is unable to protect him/herself against significant harms or exploitation'.

During the inspection, the inspection team will assess an organisation on the following aspects of safeguarding:

1. Is there a suitable policy in place for the protection of participants under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults, that is reviewed at least annually?

2. Is there a named designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is responsible for implementing this policy effectively and responding to child protection allegations?

3. The policy should be a working document that is regularly reviewed and that sets out an organisation's commitment to protecting children from harm and the procedures in place to support this. It should cover: policy statements, codes of conduct, health and safety, safer recruitment, training, welfare provision and child protection procedures (including: awareness, how to raise concerns, responding to disclosure, named person(s) responsible, the decision-making process, systems for recording and reporting information, and handling allegations and incidents). The policy should be clear and relevant to the organisation and updated at least annually.

4. Has the provider made the safeguarding policy known to all adults who are in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation (including employees, sub-contractors, home-stay hosts, group leaders and volunteers) and provided guidance and/or training relevant to its effective implementation?

5. Is there a code of conduct for staff that is effective in covering relationships with participants under the age of 18 and that includes whistleblowing procedures?

6. Are there approved arrangements in place to identify any person who is vulnerable and to ensure that the right help and support are provided within a reasonable timescale?

7. Are up-to-date contact details recorded for a parent, carer or person acting in loco parentis for participants aged under 18 (and under 25 for participants with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, if the participant so wishes)?

8. Are participants aware of how they can access support or complain, if they do not feel safe?

9. Is there an appropriate course of action to follow should a participant report abuse or concerns about their well-being? In reports of abuse, the arrangements should indicate how to receive disclosures and pass them on to statutory agencies and deal with staff who are subject to

allegations.

10. Do recruitment and selection procedures follow safer recruitment best practice? Do the recruitment and selection procedures and other human resources management processes help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, or who are otherwise unsuited to work or care for them? Is appropriate information provided to job applicants? Do recruitment materials for roles involving responsibility for, or substantial access to, under 18s (e.g. staff and host families) include reference to the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and inform applicants that suitability checks will be required?

11. Are arrangements made for appropriate checks on staff, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks from 2013 onwards for staff who have regular, unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults, and where appropriate (based on risk assessment) on the proprietor, governors and volunteers?

Note: In accordance with best practice, appropriate DBS checks should be carried out on all staff and host families. These checks should be carried out prior to their appointment or prior to the start of their regulated unsupervised activities. If a new starter does commence employment prior to clearance being received, they must have signed a self-declaration and their access should be supervised at all times: they must not be left alone with children.

12. Does a single central record (SCR) exist of all checks on the provider's staff and, where appropriate, the proprietor, governors and volunteers?

13. Are references taken up on all staff prior to employment and recorded on the SCR?

14. Do all staff, volunteers and contractors undertake appropriate training on safeguarding that is recorded and monitored for currency? Is this training updated regularly in line with advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)?

15. For those regularly working with or hosting under 18s and vulnerable adults, does the training included how to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to disclosures from participants?

16. Is safeguarding training part of the induction training for all staff, temporary staff and volunteers who are newly appointed? Does this include the safeguarding policy, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct, and the identification and role of the DSL and how to recognise and respond to concerns?

17. Good practice is that all staff are trained to Level 1 (basic); management to Level 2 (advanced) and DSL to Level 3.

18. Is there a board-level lead responsible for safeguarding? Is there a designated senior member of staff responsible for safeguarding arrangements, who has been trained to the appropriate level (including in inter-agency working) and understands her/his responsibilities with respect to the protection and welfare of participants under 18 and vulnerable adults?

19. Is clear information provided to the parents or guardians of under 18s? Does the publicity or other information made available, before enrolment, give an accurate description of the level of care and support given to participants under 18, especially concerning any periods when participants are unsupervised, as well as including sleeping arrangements when accommodated overnight or when at leisure?

20. Are there safe working arrangements for off-site activities, such as any social programmes?

21. Are there effective arrangements to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism?

22. Is there an e-safety policy that references the staff code of conduct, participants' use of social

media and devices on site such as mobile phones and cameras?

23. Do managers and staff take action immediately if there are concerns about any form of bullying, including cyberbullying or other online risks to participants?

24. Are arrangements for accommodation, through home-stay, halls of residence or otherwise, appropriately managed, with adequate safeguards and levels of supervision and registered in accordance with national requirements?

25. When the institution arranges host family accommodation for under 18s, are enhanced DBS and barred list checks made for all permanent residents who are aged 16 or older?

26. Where under 16s are accommodated, other than with their parents or guardians, for more than 28 days, has the local authority been alerted?

Appendix B: Useful websites for further information and guidance on safeguarding

The Children Act 2004
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/pdfs/ukpga_20040031_en.pdf

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education
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