UCQ UNIVERSITY CENTRE QUAYSIDE

Appendix K: Child on Child Abuse

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1. Purpose and scope

1.1 This policy sets out UCQ's approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse, in line with the statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*. This policy applies to all staff, learners under the age of 18, and contractors working with UCQ learners across all provision, including further and higher education.

2. Policy statement

2.1 UCQ recognises that children can be vulnerable to abuse by their peers. We are committed to fostering an environment where all children feel safe, respected, and supported, and where staff are alert to the signs of abuse, including abuse perpetrated by other children.

3. Definition

3.1 Child-on-child abuse (also known as peer-on-peer abuse) refers to any form of physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse between children. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Bullying (including cyberbullying and discriminatory bullying)
- Physical abuse (e.g., hitting, biting)
- Sexual violence or harassment
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships
- Initiation/hazing-type violence or rituals
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (e.g. sexting)
- Upskirting

Further information on sexual misconduct is outlined in SA-018b Sexual Misconduct Policy: Students.

4. Culture and prevention

4.1 UCQ promotes a culture where harmful behaviours are identified and addressed early. Staff challenge inappropriate conduct such as dismissing sexualised comments as "banter" or "just part of growing up", in order to prevent normalisation of abuse. Our commitment includes:

- Clear codes of conduct for students and staff
- Robust safeguarding training for all staff
- Learner induction sessions that address respectful behaviour and reporting mechanisms
- Age-appropriate Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education where applicable

5. Recognising and responding to abuse

5.1 All staff must be alert to indicators of child-on-child abuse, including changes in behaviour, unexplained injuries, or reluctance to engage. If a learner makes a disclosure:

- Listen non-judgmentally and reassure them that they are being taken seriously
- Do not promise confidentiality—explain you may need to pass the information on to keep them safe
- Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Record the concern in writing, with factual and objective detail

6. Reporting and support

6.1 The DSL will lead the response in accordance with UCQ's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This includes:

- Risk assessment and safety planning for the victim and alleged perpetrator
- Engagement with external agencies (e.g., social care, police)
- Ongoing support for all involved parties
- Disciplinary processes as appropriate

7. Useful contacts

- NSPCC Helpline / https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/nspcc-helpline/ 0808 800 5000
- ChildLine 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk
- Kidscape / www.kidscape.org.uk
- Family Lives / Parenting and Family Support / www.familylives.org.uk

Other support links can be found on the UCQ website at: https://ucq.ac.uk/support-links/

8. False or malicious allegations

8.1 Where an allegation is found to be deliberately false or malicious, UCQ may consider disciplinary action. However, it is recognised that most disclosures are made in good faith, and care will be taken to support all individuals appropriately.

9. Training and monitoring

9.1 All staff receive annual safeguarding training which includes recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse. This policy is reviewed annually and whenever there are significant changes in legislation, guidance, or practice.

10. Document history

ISSUE NO.	DATE	PAGE	REVIEWER	DETAIL OF AMENDMENT
06	02/02/2024	3, 6	Tara Henderson	Periodic review conducted. Web links checked to ensure currency. Appendix revised to fit recommended document template as specified in quality procedure QP02. Sections 2, 7, 8 & 9 added. Paragraph numbers updated accordingly.
07	31/01/2025	3, 4, 6	Michelle Elliott	Periodic review conducted. Web links checked for currency and amended accordingly. Header updated. Sexual Misconduct Policy reference updated.
08	25/07/2025	All	Tara Henderson	Policy revised back to child-on-child abuse policy to ensure compliance with KCSIE. Separate bullying and harassment policy developed for students.
09	30/01/2026	All	Michelle Elliott	Periodic review conducted. Web links checked for accuracy and amended accordingly. Footer updated.