

ACADEMIA CEREBRA

Policy for preventing radicalisation and extremism and Risk Assessment

VERSION CONTROL STATEMENT

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This policy has been drawn up in accordance with HM Government Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (March 2015, updated April 2021); The Prevent duty. Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers, (DfE, June 2015); DfE guidance Keeping students Safe in Education, (September 2022); Working Together to Safeguard students (DfE, July 2018 also updated in December 2020 but retaining 2018 date) and DCSF resources Tackling Extremism in the UK, DfE's Teaching Approaches that help Build Resilience to Extremism among Young People and Peter Clarke's Report of July 2014.

- *Date Reviewed: January 2024*
- *Status: Non-Statutory*
- *Responsibility: The School's Senior Management Team (SMT) draws up and implements the Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy.*

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1. Introduction

Academia Cerebra (henceforth AC) recognises its duty under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Since 2011, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard students, young people and families from extremism. “Extremism” is defined in the Prevent duty guidance, June 2015 as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs”. Also included in the definition of extremism are calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable students and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations which may lead to the exploitation of vulnerable people by involving them in terrorism or in activity in support of extremism and terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make students and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

2. The School Ethos

AC promotes the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The School teaches and encourages students to respect one another and to respect and tolerate differences, especially those of a different faith or no faith. The School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs or ideologies as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, the School acknowledges that freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community

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safety and community cohesion. It is our most fundamental responsibility to keep our students safe and prepare them for life in modern, multicultural Britain and globally. Therefore, it is imperative that students and parents see the School as a safe place where they can discuss and explore controversial issues such as terrorism safely and in an unbiased way and where teachers encourage and facilitate this.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The School's Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is the Executive Director, George Bouvier.

The SPOC is the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.

For further information, please see Appendix A.

All members of staff, including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement have a duty to report instances where they believe a student may be at risk of harm or neglect. If they have concerns that someone may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism they should inform the SPOC, and the Head of Academic Registry and Learning Experience, Davide Gennarini.

The SPOC has undertaken Prevent awareness training and Channel General Awareness training in order to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting students from the risk of radicalisation.

All members of staff undertake regular training in preventing extremism and radicalisation. As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities, school staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by students of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where students have not actively sought these out
- Graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Local schools, Local Authority services, and police reports of issues affecting students in other schools or settings
- Students voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views

For further information, please refer to Appendix B.

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4. Risk Assessment

The SPOC and the SMT have assessed / or assess regularly the level of risk of any student becoming drawn into extremism and radicalism and put actions in place to reduce that risk. The School will continue to assess the risk on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration an individual's engagement with a group, cause or ideology and their intent and capability to cause harm.

The assessment may result in referral to the Channel programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into radicalisation and terrorism.

5. Safeguarding Students from Extremism and Radicalisation

The Curriculum

The School recognises that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and its influences can lead to poor outcomes for students. The School also recognises that if it fails to challenge extremist views it is failing to protect its students. Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people.

Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way. The School aims to build students' resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making.

AC provides a broad and rich curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students, delivered by skilled professionals. This helps students to understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and ensure that they thrive, feel valued and are not marginalised.

The majority of work done on promoting the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs is carried out across the curricula.

Assemblies

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The promotion of respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs along with the reinforcement of other fundamental British values will take place in both 1-2-1 meetings, or Whole School assemblies (where the case).

Pastoral Care

Students deemed to be at risk would be supported and monitored by Tutors, Executive Director and Head of Academic Registry and Learning Experience.

Behaviour Policy

The Behaviour policy upholds the values of the rule of law, freedom of speech and respect and tolerance for those of different faiths or beliefs. All students are expected to behave in a reasonable manner both to themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for students, teachers and members of the public.

ICT Policy and E-Safety

The School recognises its duty to safeguard students from online radicalisation as terrorist organisations seek to radicalise young people through the use of social media and the internet.

Staff take all reasonable precautions to ensure that students access only appropriate material.

6. Roles and Responsibilities of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

The SPOC for AC is the Executive Director, George Bouvier, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the School are aware that George Bouvier is the SPOC in relation to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism;
- Raising awareness within the School about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Acting as the first point of contact within the School for case discussions relating to students who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism;
- Collating relevant information in relation to referrals of vulnerable students

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7. Further Risk Assessment: Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as: The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts;
or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

4. There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

5. students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

6. Indicators of vulnerability may include:

- Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- Personal Crisis – the student may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;

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- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet Aspirations – the student may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration;
- Special Educational Need – students may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

7. More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

As further evidence of the Commitment of AC towards preventing Radicalisation and Extremism, we attach as well the Agenda of the upcoming Board of Directors - where this particular matter will be object of discussion and planning.