



ICEP Europe Safeguarding Policy

Introduction and Purpose

ICEP Europe is committed to fostering a safe and supportive environment for all individuals who engage with our services, including staff, students, partners, and visitors. This Safeguarding Policy is designed to protect the welfare of all individuals engaging with ICEP Europe, both online and offline, ensuring that they are safeguarded from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

The purpose of this policy is to clearly outline the responsibilities and procedures ICEP Europe has established to promote safety and wellbeing, as well as to provide a framework for responding to safeguarding concerns in a timely and effective manner. This document aligns with legal and regulatory standards, ensuring that our organisation remains compliant and proactive in maintaining a secure learning and working environment.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff members, including full-time, part-time, and contracted personnel.
- All students, including those enrolled in online courses and training programmes.
- Partner organisations and collaborators.
- Visitors and anyone who engages with ICEP Europe services, whether on-site or via digital platforms.

Policy Statement

ICEP Europe is committed to promoting the welfare, safety, and rights of all individuals involved with the Institute, including students, staff, partners, and other stakeholders. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard individuals from harm and to ensure that our environment, both online and offline, is safe and conducive to learning and professional growth. This policy outlines the measures ICEP Europe will take to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable individuals, with a particular focus on children, young people, and adults at risk.

Key Principles

ICEP Europe adheres to the following safeguarding principles:

- **Prevention:** By raising awareness and providing appropriate training, ICEP Europe strives to prevent abuse and harm.
- **Protection:** Procedures are in place to protect individuals from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- **Partnership:** ICEP Europe works closely with other organisations, including regulatory bodies, to safeguard individuals.
- **Empowerment:** Individuals are supported to make their own decisions and informed choices while being protected when necessary.
- **Accountability:** Safeguarding responsibilities and actions are clear and transparent to all stakeholders.

Recruitment and Training

ICEP Europe is committed to safe recruitment practices, ensuring that:

- The hiring process includes an applicant screening procedure including a reference check with at least two previous employers or supervisors to gain a comprehensive understanding of the applicant's character and professional conduct.
- The screening procedure may also include Garda Vetting in instances when an individual is required to work with children or adults at risk.
- Staff are provided with safeguarding training (Children First E-Learning Programme) aimed at helping them recognise potential signs of abuse and respond in line with best practices.

Code of Conduct

ICEP Europe expects all staff, students, and stakeholders to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Maintain professional boundaries and appropriate conduct in all interactions.
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as abusive, exploitative, or inappropriate.
- Ensure that online communication (emails, virtual platforms, social media) is professional and respectful at all times.

Online Safeguarding

Given the digital nature of many ICEP Europe courses and services, the organisation is committed to ensuring:

- Cybersecurity: All personal data and communications are protected under GDPR.
- Standards for Behaviour: Staff and students are educated on the expectations for appropriate online behaviour, with guidance provided on how to report any concerns or inappropriate content.
- Online Training for Safeguarding: ICEP Europe encourages staff to undertake training on how to stay safe online and avoid potential risks, especially for vulnerable individuals.

Research and Ethics

ICEP Europe is committed to ensuring that all research activities conducted under its name adhere to the highest ethical standards, particularly in relation to safeguarding vulnerable individuals. Researchers must obtain informed consent, respect confidentiality, and prioritise the welfare of participants, especially children, young people, and adults at risk. Any research involving vulnerable groups will be carefully reviewed and monitored to ensure that it upholds the principles of dignity, respect, and protection from harm, in accordance with both ethical guidelines and safeguarding best practices.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Management Team: Responsible for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the safeguarding policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): The DSL is responsible for the day-to-day management of safeguarding issues and serves as the first point of contact for any concerns.

Staff and Faculty: All staff have a responsibility to:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and relevant procedures.
- Participate in safeguarding training.
- Recognise signs of abuse and know how to report concerns.

Students and Partners: Expected to uphold ICEP Europe's safeguarding standards and report concerns using the appropriate channels.

Procedures for Responding to Concerns

Reporting a Concern

- Concerns should be raised immediately with the DSL, either in person or through a confidential email system.
- If a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger, contact emergency services immediately.

Responding to Concerns:

- The DSL will assess all concerns and take appropriate action, which may include referring the matter to external authorities such as the Health Service Executive (HSE), Tusla, or An Garda Síochána.
- All reports and concerns will be documented and kept confidential, except where disclosure is required to protect an individual or by law.

Supporting the Individual

- ICEP Europe will ensure that anyone who discloses concerns is offered appropriate support, whether through internal resources or external organisations.
- Counselling and pastoral care will be made available when needed.

Whistleblowing and Complaints

ICEP Europe encourages an open and transparent culture where safeguarding concerns can be raised without fear of retaliation. If a staff member or stakeholder feels that concerns have not been adequately addressed, they are encouraged to escalate the issue through the organisation's whistleblowing or complaints procedures.

Monitoring and Reviews

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure it remains current and in line with legal and regulatory changes. All feedback and incidents will be used to inform future updates to the policy.

Contact Information

For any safeguarding concerns, contact:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Aleksandra Szproch, Senior Research Officer
- Email: a.szproch@icepe.eu

This safeguarding policy ensures ICEP Europe's commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for everyone associated with the organisation.

Related Policies and Documents

- ICEP Europe Child Safeguarding Statement

Relevant Legislation

- Children First Act 2015
- Criminal Justice Act, 2006
- Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998
- Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse (2014) National Policy & Procedures
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012-2016
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017