

LAAT Prevent Policy and Risk Assessment

Document reference: LAAT-GOV-POL-PRR-001

Department / Function: Safeguarding and Compliance

Owner: Designated Safeguarding Lead, Jay Sharda

Oversight committee: Academic Board

Approving body: Academic Board (recommended) / Board of Governors (final approval)

Status: Draft

Date approved: TBC

Review date: Annually from the approval Date

Supersedes: None

Regularity Alignment with Office for Students (OfS) Conditions

The Prevent and Risk Assessment Policy forms part of the London Academy for Applied Technology's (LAAT) safeguarding, risk management, and regulatory compliance framework.

The policy establishes arrangements to identify, assess, and mitigate risks related to safeguarding, including those associated with the Prevent duty. It aligns with **OfS Condition E2 (Management and Governance)** by ensuring that risks are effectively identified, monitored, and managed through robust governance processes. The policy also supports **OfS Condition B2 (Resources, Support and Student Engagement)** by ensuring that appropriate safeguarding measures and support mechanisms are in place to protect students and staff.

In addition, it aligns with **OfS Condition C1 (Consumer Protection Law)** by ensuring transparency in how risks are managed and communicated. Through this policy, LAAT demonstrates its commitment to maintaining a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all students and staff.

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Prevent Policy is to articulate how LAAT fulfils its statutory obligations under **Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**, which requires higher education providers to *have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism* while preserving the foundational values that define a university. The policy sets out a coherent, proportionate, and safeguarding-centred approach to the Prevent duty that protects the wellbeing of students, staff, visitors, and others in our community, recognising that radicalisation constitutes a potential form of harm that must be addressed within wider safeguarding responsibilities.

This policy reaffirms the University’s commitment to **academic freedom, freedom of speech**, and the open exchange of diverse, challenging, and sometimes controversial ideas—principles that are essential to scholarship, research, and the intellectual mission of higher education. UK universities emphasise that free expression and academic freedom are fundamental rights without which a university “cannot properly function as a place of higher learning,” and must therefore be protected even as Prevent requirements are implemented.

The University recognises that the Prevent duty must not be interpreted or enacted in a manner that overrides or diminishes academic freedoms. Rather, it must operate *alongside* them, ensuring that the University remains a space where difficult conversations can take place safely, respectfully, and legally.

The policy further aims to support staff and students in understanding their responsibilities, recognising indicators of vulnerability, and accessing appropriate support pathways—while ensuring that all interventions remain measured, confidential, and rooted in safeguarding best practice. This aligns with the sector-wide understanding that radicalisation is one of many potential harms and should therefore be addressed with the same care, and professional judgement applied to other safeguarding concerns.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

Institutional Scope:

- All LAAT campuses
- Online and distance learning environments

Individuals Covered:

- Students (all levels and modes of study)
- Staff (academic and professional services)
- Contractors and agency workers
- Visiting speakers and event participants
- Student societies and Students’ Union

Activity Scope:

- Teaching and research
- Events and speaker programmes
- IT systems and digital environments
- Welfare and safeguarding systems

3. Definitions

- **Prevent Duty** – Statutory obligation under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- **Radicalisation** – The process by which a person comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies.
- **Extremism** – Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values.
- **Channel** – A voluntary, confidential multi-agency safeguarding programme.
- **Freedom of Speech within the Law** – Legal right under the Education (No.2) Act 1986.
- **Academic Freedom** – Freedom within the law to question received wisdom and advance new ideas.

4. Principles

- Risk-Based Approach
- Proportionality
- Safeguarding Framework
- Freedom of Speech Balance
- Non-Discrimination
- Lawful Information Sharing
- Approves the Prevent Policy
- Reviews annual Prevent compliance reports
- Reviews and approves the institutional risk assessment

Executive Oversight:

- The Academic Dean/Vice-Chancellor is the accountable officer for Prevent compliance.

Prevent Steering Group (TBC):

- Responsible for reviewing risk assessment, monitoring referrals, reviewing training completion, and reporting to governance committees.

5.2 Oversight Committee – Terms of Reference

In relation to this policy, **the Oversight Committee** will:

1. **Approve and periodically review** this policy and recommend any substantial changes as required.
2. **Receive and consider evidence** on how effectively the policy is working (e.g. annual reports, KPIs, audits, incident data, student/staff feedback).
3. **Monitor compliance** with relevant regulatory, partner and legal requirements (e.g. OfS conditions, validating university policies, statutory duties).

4. **Recommend improvements** to strengthen policy implementation, mitigate risks and enhance student/staff experience.
5. **Report annually** to the Board of Governors / SMT on key issues, trends and actions arising from this policy area.

6. Responsible people / roles includes

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Owner): Mr Jay Sharda**
Leads on Prevent duty implementation, safeguarding concerns, and risk assessments.
- **Dean: Dr Manoj Ponugubati**
Provides strategic accountability for safeguarding and institutional risk management.
- **Governance Lead: Dr Abul Hossain**
Ensures regulatory compliance, oversight, and alignment with OfS requirements.
- **Student Support / Wellbeing Lead: To be appointed**
Manages student-facing safeguarding support and early intervention for at-risk individuals
- **HR Manager: Ms Ginny Mishra**
Supports staff training, vetting, and safeguarding compliance

List of people and contact email:

Role	Name	Contact Email
Safeguarding Lead	Mr Jay Sharda	Jai.sharda@laat.ac.uk
Dean	Dr Manoj Ponugubati	manoj@laat.ac.uk
Governance Lead	Dr Abul Hossain	abul@laat.ac.uk
HR manager	Ms Ginny Mishra	Ginny.m@laat.ac.uk
Student wellbeing and Support Lead	To be appointed	To be inserted

7. Policy Statement

LAAT recognises its statutory duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the Prevent Duty”) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

LAAT supports:

- Freedom of speech within the law

- Academic freedom
- Open debate and intellectual challenge
- Equality, diversity and inclusion

The Governing Body receives annual assurance that the University:

- Has undertaken an evidence-based Prevent risk assessment
- Has appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Delivers proportionate staff training
- Operates effective governance oversight
- Maintains effective partnership arrangements

8. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Overview

Reporting Concerns:

All concerns are reported via LAAT's safeguarding reporting routes.

Triage:

Prevent Lead/Safeguarding Lead assess credibility and vulnerability.

Decision Pathway:

- No further action
- Internal safeguarding support
- Channel referral
- Police referral

Records are securely stored and GDPR compliant.

9. Regulatory, Partner and Legal Alignment

Aligned with:

- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Prevent Duty Guidance (HE)
- OfS Regulatory Framework (E2)
- Education (No.2) Act 1986
- Higher Education and Research Act 2017
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998

10. Monitoring, Compliance and Review

An annual Prevent report includes:

- Updated risk assessment
- Training compliance rates
- Referral data (anonymised)
- Speaker approval statistics
- Emerging risk analysis
- Action plan

Policy reviewed every two years or upon legislative or regulatory change.

11. List of Document

- Safeguarding Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- External Speaker and Events Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

12. Evidence

- Risk register and risk assessments
- Safeguarding and Prevent incident reports
- Training and awareness records
- External speaker risk assessment records
- Committee and governance minutes

Mapping Table for Evidence Items Related to OfS Conditions

Evidence Item	Purpose / What it Demonstrates	Relevant OfS Condition
Risk register and risk assessments	Demonstrates systematic identification and management of safeguarding risks.	Condition E2 – Management and Governance
Safeguarding and Prevent incident reports	Shows that incidents are recorded, assessed, and managed appropriately.	Condition B2 – Resources, Support and Student Engagement

Training and awareness records	Demonstrates that staff are trained to identify and manage Prevent risks.	Condition B2 – Resources, Support and Student Engagement
External speaker risk assessments	Shows compliance with Prevent duty in managing external events.	Condition E2 – Management and Governance
Governance minutes	Demonstrates oversight and accountability in safeguarding and risk management.	Condition E2 – Management and Governance