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LAMDA Examinations Online Safety Policy

Introduction

This document sets out LAMDA's policy with respect to the management of online safety of all Learners entered for LAMDA Examinations.

LAMDA has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and adults at risk, to whom it provides services. In recognition of this duty of care, LAMDA has developed this policy with the NSPCC to provide a clear framework on our approach to online safety and ensuring at risk children and adults are safeguarded.

This policy is implemented alongside the LAMDA Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy.

Legislation & Guidance

LAMDA's policy is underpinned by English legislation and statutory guidance. It seeks to protect at risk children and adults in the UK and Internationally. Key legislations and guidance include:

- UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
- Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act 1998 (COPPA)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Working together to Safeguard Children & HM Government 2015
- What to do if you are worried a child may be being abused HM Government 2015
- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The SEND codes of Practice 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014 (for Young Adults 18-25)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Charity Commission Guidance; The Essential Trustee 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Online Safety Bill 2021
- Learning.nspcc.org.uk

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Definitions

Online – this is defined as forums allowing digital communication, such as:

- Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, Reddit etc.)
- Text messages and messaging Apps (WhatsApp, Telegram etc.)
- Email
- Online Chat Rooms and DMs (Direct Messages – Facebook Messenger, X (previously Twitter), Threads, Instagram, Discord etc.)
- Comments on streaming platforms (YouTube, Twitch, TikTok etc.)
- Voice Chat in online games

Online risk

This can be classified in three ways:

- **Content risk**
 - Children receiving mass-distributed content. This may expose them to age-inappropriate material such as pornography, depictions of extreme violence, or materials involving hate speech and radicalisation.
- **Conduct risk**
 - Children participating in an interactive situation. This includes bullying, sexting, harassing, being aggressive or stalking; or promoting harmful behaviour such as self-harm, suicide, anorexia, bulimia, illegal drug use or imitating dangerous behaviour, such as taking part in “Online Challenges” (e.g Tidepod Challenge, Planking Challenge). A child’s own conduct online can also make them vulnerable - for example, by sharing their personal information or by harassing or bullying others.
- **Contact risk**
 - Children being victims of interactive situations. This includes being bullied, harassed or stalked; meeting strangers; threats to privacy, identity and reputation (for example, through embarrassing photos shared without permission, a house location being identified, someone impersonating a user, users sharing information with strangers); and violence, threats and abuse directly aimed at individual users and/or groups of users.

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Illegal contact, conduct and content

Some online risks can not only lead to harm but also result in illegal activity. This can occur both online and offline. These can include:

- Sexual grooming and sexual exploitation.
- Sexting (pressure or coercion to send sexual messages or to create sexual images).
- Creation and distribution of child abuse images.
- Bullying / Cyberbullying.
- Emotional abuse and blackmail (e.g. pressuring children / young people to comply with sexual requests via technology).
- Physical and mental abuse of children.
- Online aspects of child trafficking.
- Selling and distributing illegal drugs.

Implementation

We believe that:

- Children, young people and adults should never experience abuse of any kind.
- Children, young people and adults should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

We recognise that:

- The online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges.
- We have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online.
- We have a responsibility to help keep children, young people and adults safe online, whether or not they are using LAMDA's network and devices.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, guardians and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.

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We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Appointing an online safety coordinator.
- Providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our Code of Conduct.
- Supporting and encouraging the young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
- Supporting and encouraging parents and guardians to do what they can to keep their children safe online.
- Developing an online safety agreement for use with young people and their parents/guardians.
- Developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child/young person.
- Reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly.
- Ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively.
- Ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only when appropriate.
- Ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.
- Providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety.
- Providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying/cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.
- Examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.
- Reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:

- Having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse).
- Making sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and our organisation as a whole into account.

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Version control

Version number	Date	Initial	Comments
V1	6/9/2023	JRC	New Document
V1.1	19/02/2025	KR	Minor updates