



MUSIC EDUCATORS ONLINE

www.musiceducatorsonline.co.uk

Policies and procedures

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Safeguarding

General principles

MEO is committed to creating a safe environment for the students and employees it serves. It is recognised that all its users will be adults and that some of the guidelines for young people are not entirely relevant to what we do. In the instance of this type of organisation the focus will be more of the current legal term of vulnerable person rather than vulnerable adult or child. In this instance the safeguarding policy seeks to provide a policy that applies to adults and children.

This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely

- Children's act 1989
- United convention on the rights of the children 1991 • Data Protection Act 1998 • Human rights Act 1998
- Sexual offences Act 2003
- Children's Act 2004
- Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2004
- Protection of freedoms act 2012
- Children and families act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
- Working together to safeguarding children; a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2022

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- Safeguarding is a responsibility of all adults within the organisation.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are particularly vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

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

- Designating an officer as a lead officer for safeguarding
- Ensure all necessary checks are made when taking on staff
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families and staff via publicity material and one-to-one discussion and in accordance with privacy regulation.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children's young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children, young people and staff by applying health and safety measures in accordance with law and regulatory guidance.

MEO staff should:

- Immediately report concerns or disclosures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Follow up if no action is taken and escalate if necessary.
- Communicate clearly with vulnerable persons working in MEO
- Value them, listen to and respect them
- Encourage participation in all aspects of the course but not force them to do some they may not be comfortable with.
- Respect the physical, emotional and mental health of those they come in contact with.
- Not smoke, drink alcohol or take illegal drugs whilst on MEO duty.
- Not do anything of a personal nature for anyone who can do it for themselves.
- If possible, avoid taking students alone in a car journey, however short. If it is unavoidable, then one of the directors should be informed and adequate business insurance should be applied to the vehicle.
- Not have any unnecessary physical contact with students. If it is unavoidable, then permission should be obtained and the reason for the contact made clear. Please note that others may misinterpret these actions, however well intentioned.

Physical contact

In the context of MEO there should be little requirement for physical contact with students. In the unlikely event of it being required then:

- Consider if there is another way of achieving what is needed, i.e. by demonstrating to the student. Physical contact should always be a last resort.
- If it is deemed necessary, then the person should be clear about the reason for being touched and that their agreement/permission be sought. The teacher should have clear

unambiguous permission from the student before proceeding. If this is not the case the teacher must not go ahead.

- Be aware that even with the agreement of the student a touch can be misconstrued. A teacher must make sure that the contact is appropriate to the request and that it is respectful of the student.
- If the student does not agree then the teacher must respect that and not proceed. They must find another way of teaching.

Group activities

- Whilst it is expected and encouraged that students should interact to discuss the course, any formal meetings between students should be transparent and logged with the time and date and a member of MEO staff should attend.
- Where meetings are more informal between individual students then it should be logged and recorded so that any relevant material may be used in portfolios. It should also be made clear who is speaking if it is not easy to differentiate between participants.
- Online meetings should adhere to the guidelines in the online teaching strategy.

Communications

- All communications between staff and students, and between students and staff must be conducted in a professional and respectful manner.
- Where possible all communications between students should be via MEO resources through the allocated email addresses or via MEO recommended video links. In any event communications should be transparent and available for scrutiny if required.
- Students should be wary of sharing any personal information such as email addresses or phone numbers and think very carefully about adding others to their social media channels.
- MEO staff including mentors and moderators should not ask for more personal information than is necessary to execute their responsibilities.

Code of conduct

All employees or contractors to MEO will adhere to a strict code of conduct.

- The code of conduct's purpose is to set out the responsibilities of MEO while on MEO business. The code is very sensible and most teachers will follow it as a matter of course but for clarity it is set out here.
- All staff must read and understand "[Working together to safeguarding children; a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2022](#)" and agree to abide by its provisions.

Position of trust

MEO teachers, mentors and contractors are in a position of trust, and it is their responsibility to always keep a professional relationship. Although we will be dealing primarily with adult learners the main responsibility is to deliver the course and the CME qualification as efficiently as possible. Any concerns or difficulties with students should be referred to the course directors as soon as possible so the matter can be resolved. To further protect themselves all communications with students should go through MEO email addresses and vice versa.

MEO staff have a responsibility to safeguard students from abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

They are under an obligation to report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Their duty done they need not have any further involvement in the matter.

In general staff must:

- Not demean, intimidate or undermine students or work colleagues or anyone else they come into contact with on MEO business.
- Staff must take reasonable care of students and ensure their safety and welfare. They should not enter inappropriate discussions and must report to the directors any student action which is of concern.
- Ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse.

Lone worker policy

Much of MEO work will be on their own, face to face or online with a student. A lone worker needs to be aware of the following:

- Be familiar with relevant MEO policies, safeguarding, code of conduct, equal opportunities and special needs.
- Ensure good lighting particularly when working online.
- Mobile phones should be charged and available for easy use.
- Ensure that their body language, non-verbal signals, tone of voice and language are appropriate for the student and the setting.
- When working online keep as much eye contact as possible by speaking to the camera on the computer.
- Wear appropriate clothing
- In the instance of a lone worker feeling uncomfortable or at risk then the sessions should be ended immediately and the directors advised of the situation.
- Ensure that the student always has your attention and that you should make it clear you are listening to them.

Malpractice

Students and staff are strongly encouraged to ensure that they are informed about appropriate study approaches to prevent cheating, malpractice and plagiarism in teaching and learning. Students must always submit their own work and conform to academic standards. Inappropriate material – Inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or obscene material is not acceptable.

Plagiarism

Any other persons or organisations work must refer properly using the Harvard or APA referencing system. Training will be given on this if necessary.

Examples of plagiarism (not exhaustive) are:

- Using a choice phrase or sentence come across elsewhere

- Copying word for word directly from a text
- Closely paraphrasing words from an existing text
- Using downloaded text
- Copying of notes or text from another student

Whilst MEO is aware that there is a difference between intentional and unintentional plagiarism, vulnerable learners or those from outside the UK need to know about referencing and other rules. Training will be given on this aspect.

Initially this should be monitored by mentors who should satisfy themselves that work submitted is by the student concerned. Mentors should be fully conversant with referencing and ensure that it is applied to the work being submitted.

Cheating

Cheating is unlikely in the setting of MEO. Tests and exams will be rare, but if this does occur students must not take unauthorised material into the exam or test. Work submitted must be the student's own work and have no direct input from third parties. Students will be asked to sign a declaration that the work submitted is their own work.

Malpractice

Examples of malpractice are as follows, but not exhaustive:

Students

- Interfering with or gaining access to assessment papers or examination papers prior to their official publication
- Destroying the work of another student/learner (paper or digital)
- Acting in a disruptive manner in any setting of the course.

MEO staff

- Breaking regulations and guidance that relate to Trinity College London's validation of CME through MEO
- Acting in a manner that undermines the integrity of assessment.
- Taking the same assessment to use as a model for submission.
- Failing to keep learners' work safe (paper, digital, audio, video etc.)

MEO directors

- Breaking the assessment regulations or guidelines of Trinity College London

- Failing to keep assessment material secure prior to assessment or moderation.
- Failing to keep learners work safe.

In the first instance an investigation will be carried out by the course directors. If found to be confirmed the student may be either asked to amend their work and resubmit or in the most serious cases i.e. transgressions which make the student unsuitable for working in the teaching environment may mean that student is asked to leave the course. In this instance no refund of fees will be considered. If it cannot be resolved then the student could appeal directly to Trinity College London.

Sanctions

Students

In the first instance mentors should advise students of any areas they identify do not conform with academic standards and ensure the student makes necessary amendments. In the event of a formal allegation of plagiarism being made via the mentor or any other way, the matter will be investigated by the course directors in conjunction with the appropriate mentor.

If the allegation is upheld then the student may face the following sanctions:

- Rewrite and resubmit an acceptable piece of the work concerned.
- In serious cases of malicious plagiarism students may be disqualified from the course. In this instance there will be no refund of course fees.

Mentors

In the instance of a mentor, after due process, being found to have knowingly encouraged or supported a student in plagiarism they will be immediately removed from the role and their contract will be immediately revoked.

Complaints

In the first instance complaints, whether about the course or individuals, must be submitted to the course directors who will investigate the matter and try to resolve it informally. If it cannot be resolved this way then the matter can be appealed to Trinity College London. In the instance of a complaint made against a course director then this must be referred directly to Trinity College London.

Special needs provision

MEO will make every effort to identify those with special needs at the application process and assess their particular needs to provide reasonable adjustments where necessary.

- This may include:
- Where possible Subtitles and transcriptions of any recording or seminar that a learner attends
- Enable chat facilities at any meeting to aid effective communication.
- Where possible use a background colour other than white for documents and presentations
- Advising on hardware and software that may be useful

Privacy Policy

By registering for courses, placing an order, or otherwise sending us your personal information whether via our website or otherwise you consent to the collection, use and transfer of your information under the terms of this policy.

Information that we collect from you

When you teach, register for courses or order products or services you may be asked to provide certain information about yourself including your name, address, contact details and bank details. We may also collect information about your usage of our website as well as information about you from application forms, e-mails or letters you send to us.

Use of your information

- Your information will enable us to provide you with the services you have requested. It will also enable us to invoice you and to contact you where necessary concerning your lessons. We may also use and analyse the information we collect so that we can administer, support, improve and develop our services.
- We may use this information to inform you about important changes to our services and unless you have told us that you do not wish us to do so, we might also use your information to let you know about other products and services which we offer which may be of interest to you and we may contact you by post, telephone or fax, as well as

by e-mail. If you change your mind about being contacted in the future, please let us know by e-mail to joinus@musiceducatorsonline.co.uk.

- For those who intend to teach for MEO, we may also use this information to obtain DBS checks for individuals who are intending to teach on behalf of MEO.

Disclosure of your information

- The information you provide to us will be held on our computers and online servers, some of whom may be located outside the UK but who do not have access to your information. Wherever possible they will be held on encrypted servers, and those parties may process information, fulfil and deliver orders, process bank transfers and provide support services on our behalf.

Security and data retention

- We employ security measures to protect your information from access by unauthorised persons and against unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction and damage. We will retain your information, including any videos you have uploaded, for a reasonable period or as long as the law requires.

- Accessing and updating

You are entitled to see the information held about you and you may ask us to make any necessary changes to ensure that it is accurate and kept up to date. If you wish to do this, please contact us. We are entitled by law to charge a fee of £10 to meet our costs in providing you with details of the information we hold about you.

- Changes to our privacy policy

Any changes to our privacy policy in the future will be posted to our website at www.musiceducatorsonline.co.uk and, where appropriate, through e-mail notification.

Health and safety

- MEO is committed to ensuring that the health and safety of staff and students is paramount. This applies to both online and offline teaching and learning. The lone worker policy, safeguarding policies combined with DBS checks which are all referenced are essential parts of the strategy.
- All facilities used by MEO will be checked by staff to ensure they are safe to work in. Equipment should be regularly checked to ensure that it is in working order and in a safe condition.

This will include ensuring:

- That there is adequate lighting available, either natural, internal lighting or a mixture of both.
- Where possible do not use black on a white background for material.
- Toilet facilities are available and accessible.
- Refreshments such as tea and coffee may be provided, or students may be asked to bring their own refreshments if it is a longer session.
- Sufficient seating and space are available and appropriate for the attendees.
- Regular breaks are taken, particularly in longer sessions.
- When working at home Mentors and students should ensure that:
 - There is a private area they can work without interruption and be kept clear of distractions. This will not always be easy but should be the goal.
 - Ensure that seating appropriate for the task with adequate back support
 - Computers and laptops should have a keyboard that is angled appropriately for the user.
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- External headphones and microphones can improve the sound quality and computer screens should be set at a brightness that reduces eye strain.

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Remote learning

1. Remote seminars will take place using appropriate video conferencing software provided by MEO.
2. Mentors and assessors may decide to use their own choice of video conferencing software for their one to one meetings but Zoom or Teams are recommended platforms.
3. The software account must be held in the name of an adult over 18. If it is in a child's name it may also be in breach of the software providers terms and conditions.
4. Where possible one to one sessions should be held in a common living area and not a bedroom. If this is unavoidable then the door must remain open.
5. Software settings to automatically save contact details should be disabled.
6. Appropriate attire should be worn by both staff and students at all times during the lesson.
7. Messages and chat should not be undertaken with vulnerable students via the video conferencing software. Appropriate chat forums will be created and monitored by MEO for the use of students to discuss aspects of the course.
8. Live seminars hosted by MEO will be recorded and made available via a secure online channel to registered participants to make them available to anyone who cannot attend.
9. Participants will be able to upload videos of lessons for the purposes of observation. These will be retained as per the GDPR policy but MEO will have the right to delete these in order to preserve storage space but only if absolutely necessary. It is the responsibility of the student to secure these videos for their portfolios.

Risk assessment

MEO doesn't operate any property such as offices and the likely risks are regarding remote working which have been covered in other parts of this document. Currently no further action is required.

Equal opportunities

MEO is committed to treating students fairly and without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. Applications will be submitted to a merit-based system where adherence to criteria are clear and transparent.

Advertisements will be written in such a way that the posts details areas of responsibility, are clearly outline and not written in such a way that it restricts the audience and who may apply. They will not imply a preference for any of the above-mentioned groups unless there is a clear reason or qualification that is required. In this case the reason for the requirement must be clearly stated.

The selection of individuals will be solely on defined criteria, and any necessary personal questions will be carefully selected and must be related to the job. They must also be asked to all candidates.

Employees and contractors will be expected to treat everyone with respect at all times and anyone who has a complaint about equal opportunities should pursue the matter through the complaint's procedure.

DBS checks

All staff and students will have a current DBS clearance. Certificate numbers will be stored for those who have subscribed to the update service in order for us to do regular checks. We will notify those affected when this will be done. MEO will obtain a check and will encourage those to subscribe to the update service. Checks will be renewed or reviewed every two years.

Contact

All comments, queries and requests relating to these policies should be directed to either:

Marie McNally

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07887 538050

or

Chris License BMus DipABRSM (performing) CME MISM

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