

Paper T5

Safeguarding Advisory Group

Safeguarding Training Framework

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Adrian Bulley adrian.bulley@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	Resolution 48 a) General Assembly adopts the Safeguarding Training Framework for use across the United Reformed Church. b) General Assembly instructs synods to oversee the implementation of the framework.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	The Past Case Review indicated the need for standardised mandatory safeguarding training for those working with children, young people and adults at risk of harm (page 21 in the Learning Group report). The Safeguarding Advisory Group was instructed by the Mission Council (November 2018) to implement the recommendations of the learning group. This paper aims to set out the Safeguarding Training Framework.
Main points	The framework outlines a) the four levels of training: pre-foundation, foundation, intermediate and advanced b) which level is relevant for different roles within the church c) whether the training is mandatory or not.
Previous relevant documents	Resolution 29 and its two appendices, General Assembly, Book of Reports 2020 (pages 227-254). Paper R3 at Mission Council, March 2020. Paper R2 at Mission Council, November 2019. Paper R2 at Mission Council, May 2019. Paper R2 at Mission Council, November 2018.
Consultation has taken place with...	Members of SAG Safeguarding Training Review Working Group Synod Safeguarding Officers Synod Moderators Church Safeguarding Coordinators Ecumenical Safeguarding colleagues.

Summary of impact

Financial	Synod training with some support from Assembly funding if required.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The United Reformed Church recognises that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard others and thus needs to ensure that people holding specific roles and responsibilities are specifically equipped to protect vulnerable groups.

2. URC's Safeguarding Training Framework

- 2.1 In order to achieve this goal, the URC will offer regular safeguarding training for all those working with children and adults at risk as well as those responsible for their care. They need to know how to promote the welfare of those in their care, reduce the likelihood of harm, abuse or neglect and respond effectively to concerns or allegations of abuse which arise.

- 2.2 The Safeguarding Training Framework details a tiered structure of training; pre-foundation, foundation, intermediate and advanced. It is hoped that the pre-foundation training will be taken up by a wide range of people involved with the life of the church: members, volunteers and staff. Some role holders in the life of the church, paid or voluntary, are required to undertake safeguarding training; for these individuals that will be either at foundation, intermediary or advanced level. The aim of all training is that we become a safer church for all.

3. Safeguarding Training Structure

- 3.1 The URC's safeguarding training programme has been structured into four distinct but related modules; pre-foundation, foundation, intermediate and advanced training. Training is designed not just to be informative but based on case example. Some training will be available as online learning which will enable more participants to engage in safeguarding training. The pre-foundation model will be made as accessible as possible so that anyone who wishes to learn may do so.
- 3.2 The table at Appendix Two illustrates the recommended level of training for individuals in various roles.
- 3.3 Training should be renewed every three years.

Appendix One

The content of the training framework

Whether this is in-person, online or self-taught training, the contents of the training will remain consistent at all levels. This framework is for England and Wales.

Scotland

The National Synod of Scotland currently has a service agreement with the Church of Scotland to provide safeguarding training due to the differing national legislation, policy and practice. The Church of Scotland will ensure that their framework aligns with the URC framework insofar as possible and that anything directly related to the URC processes and procedures will be added to the training materials so that participants receive all relevant information.

Pre-foundation Safeguarding training

Pre-foundation training represents the minimum level of safeguarding training that needs to be undertaken. It is suitable for everyone in the life of the local church.

Every pre-foundation module will contain the following material:

- The 4Rs (recognise, respond, record and report) and their importance in Safeguarding
- An introduction to Good Practice 5 (and its successors) including the role of local church Safeguarding Coordinators and Synod Safeguarding Officers and where to find a policy framework and how to implement it
- Understanding how to conduct risk assessments
- The importance of record keeping, monitoring and reporting
- Understanding the principles of safer recruitment
- Dynamics at work in a small church.

Pre-Foundation training is estimated to last 60-90 minutes

Foundation Safeguarding training

The foundation module will contain the following material, building on pre-foundation training:

- An introduction to the importance of safeguarding and the risks posed by those who seek to groom and exploit the Church
- Legislation, policy and guidance including Good Practice 5 (and its successors) and its appendices
- The types of abuse and an awareness of the signs of abuse and neglect
- A review of the 4Rs and how to effectively use these in a church context
- Real case examples and the opportunity for participants to discuss their thoughts in a collaborative environment
- Good Practice guidance related to maintaining a safe everyday environment
- The role of local church Safeguarding Coordinators and Synod Safeguarding Officers and how they can support local churches to be as safe as possible
- The voice of survivors, their experiences of abuse and how important it is to get our responses right when working with those who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Foundation training is estimated to last 60-90 minutes.

Intermediate Safeguarding training

Intermediate training is complementary to the foundation module and enhances the knowledge that participants gained, whilst also introducing new topics and focusing on safer practices:

- Legal obligations placed upon faith based organisations including the role of Trustees and Elders as stipulated by the Charity Commission
- The unique safeguarding risks that churches face as 'open communities'
- Good practice guidance including security in church buildings, food hygiene, safe transportation, insurance and hire of premises
- Safer recruitment principles and the need for a consistent approach across the denomination. This includes an understanding of the common barriers to recruiting paid staff and volunteers safely
- Confidential record keeping and the importance of seeking and recording consent in relation to church activities
- A review of the 4Rs and how to challenge inappropriate behaviours
- Handling allegations against those involved in the church whether paid or voluntary, lay or ordained
- Online safety and how to effectively safeguard children, young people and adults at risk online.

Intermediate training is estimated to last 60-90 minutes.

Advanced Safeguarding training

Advanced training is to support those who have safeguarding leadership roles in which they manage and oversee safeguarding arrangements and practice.

The advanced module contains the following content:

- The attitudes and values of the individual and how these can impact safeguarding decision-making. This includes how to recognise personal prejudices and biases
- Managing the safer recruitment process, and the importance of ensuring safe and suitable people are appointed
- Supporting those who may pose a risk to children or adults, whilst maintaining policies that place safeguarding at the heart of the church
- Managing allegations against people in the church, whether paid or voluntary, lay or ordained
- Working with multiagency partners, including how to assess thresholds of harm and working with the Designated Officer (DO)
- The principles of safeguarding adults at risk, including issues of capacity and when to override consent in an adult's best interests
- Systemic grooming, and the impact on the entire denomination. This includes how to have safe relationships with appropriate boundaries in place
- How to identify and respond to domestic abuse, and an awareness of how deeply held views can contribute to a culture where abuse is condoned
- An advanced understanding of how to recognise, respond, record and report safeguarding concerns, deal with allegations, complaints and disciplinary procedures, and how to support others in the Church.

The advanced module is estimated to last approximately four hours.

Specialist training modules

Synod Safeguarding Officers and some others may need to undertake specialist training as part of their professional development.

Recognising other training providers

Those who hold a role in the URC requiring completion of the Advanced level of training should complete this with the URC regardless of previous experience or other training undertaken because content relates directly to URC processes and procedures for safeguarding.

Appendix Two

Levels of mandatory training

Note: Pre-Foundation training is recommended for everyone in the life of the local church.

Roles requiring mandatory training:	Foundation Training	Intermediate Training	Advanced Training
Synod Safeguarding Officers / Advisors	✓	✓	✓
Managers of Synod Safeguarding Officers / Advisors	✓		
Church Safeguarding Coordinators	✓	✓	
Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator	✓	✓	
Members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group (or its successor), Synod Safeguarding Committees and Reference Groups	✓		
Active Ministers and CRCWs (including retired ministers who meet the requirements of active ministry)	✓	✓	
Synod Moderators	✓	✓	✓
Youth and Children Workers including volunteer leaders	✓	✓	✓
Youth and Children's Workers (volunteer helpers) **	✓	✓	
Adult Workers including volunteer leaders	✓	✓	✓
Adult Workers (volunteer helpers) **	✓	✓	
Managers of Children, Youth and Adults Workers	✓		
Pastoral Workers / Visitors	✓	✓	
Synod Clerks	✓		

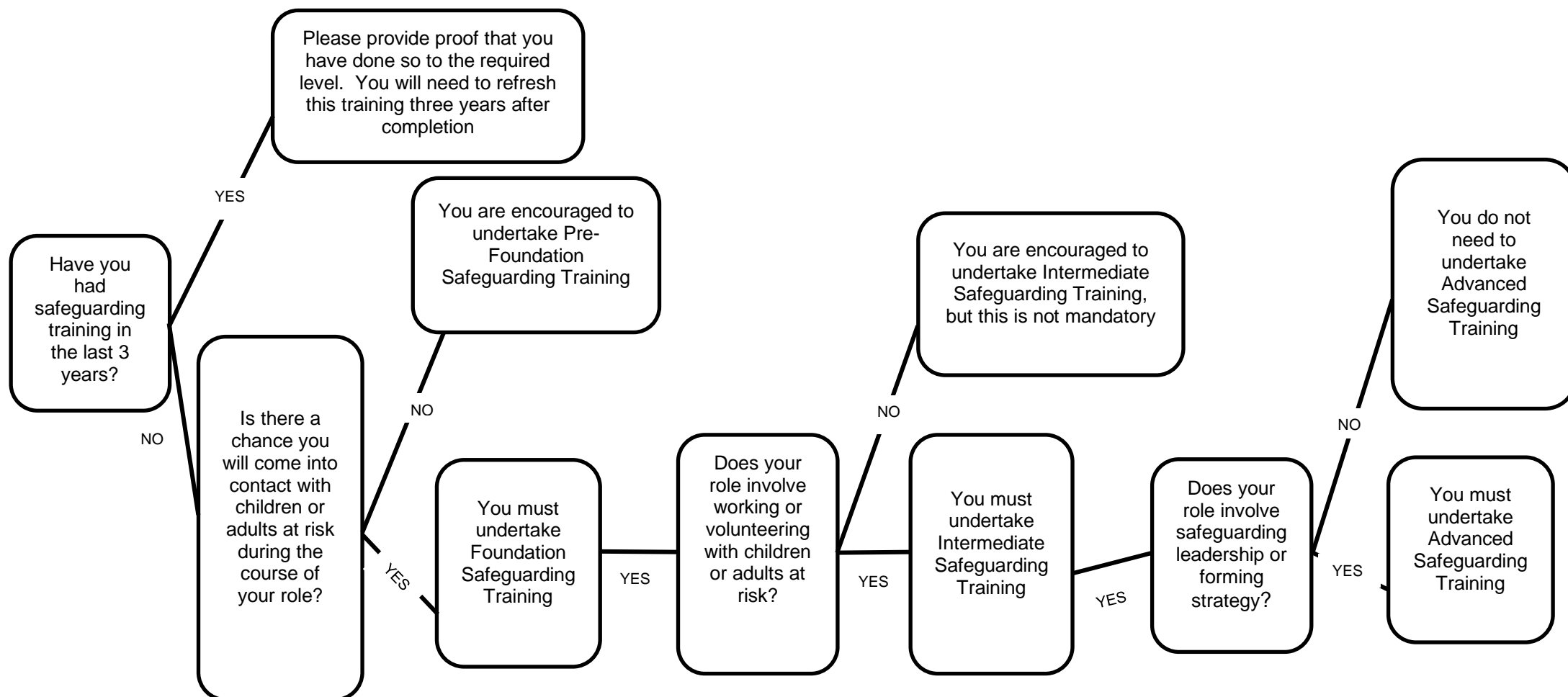
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Section O Investigation, Commission and Appeal Panel Members	✓	
Worship Leaders and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers	✓	✓
URC Trustees and Synod Trustees	✓	
Elders as local church trustees	✓	

** those helping at a holiday club, assisting occasionally with Sunday school, running a craft activity at Messy Church, running the tuck shop at a youth group, helpers at a craft club / lunch / trip, etc, where it is clear these people are in 'helper' roles are always working in the presence of, and under the supervision of, a 'leader'.

Appendix Three

Flowchart of Safeguarding training



Appendix Four

Implementation plan

As from General Assembly 2021:

1. All synods will have safeguarding support in implementing training from pre-foundation to advanced level.
2. Training will be mandatory for all active ministers of Word and Sacrament and Church Related Community Workers. Failure to comply will be considered a disciplinary matter.
3. Training will become mandatory for other groups named in the grid in Appendix Two date yet to be confirmed.
4. Training will be rolled out by the Synod Safeguarding Officers (or equivalent) on behalf of the synods.
5. SAG to report on progress of implementation to Mission Council in November 2021.

Key implementation

1. Agree clear requirements
 - Agree framework
 - Agree attendance process
 - Agree non-compliance process.
2. Implement training
 - Agree timetable in synod
 - Agree timetable by which training should be complete
 - Filter out any who have done training since 2018
 - Deliver training
 - Audit attendance
 - Deliver any non-compliance processes.
3. Agree clear data handling processes
 - Agree synod-based administration
 - Agree Assembly safeguarding administration
 - Agree how URC database is used
 - Create fields in database training area
 - Set up access for data entry.
4. Review and update training and processes
 - Capture emerging process information
 - Capture emerging training feedback
 - Review findings
 - Implement changes.