



Guidance on the Channel Programme (Prevent)

Introduction

Channel is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being radicalised, drawn into violent extremism or terrorist behaviour. Channel works in a similar way to existing safeguarding partnerships aimed at protecting children and vulnerable adults.

Channel has been designed to work with individuals of any age who are at risk of being exploited by extremist or terrorist ideologies. Although there are particular stages of the referral process, it shapes around the individual circumstance and provides support for any form of radicalisation or personal vulnerabilities.

The Process

Internal process

Should any member of staff have a concern about a student who is vulnerable to being radicalised they must first refer to the appropriate, established internal policies, for example the Safeguarding Policy or the Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy. Should there be an immediate risk then the emergency services should be contacted. If there are concerns that the student may be vulnerable to terrorist ideologies, this must be escalated to the local Prevent Coordinator, if appropriate, or the local Prevent police. .

Referrals

Referrals are passed to the local Prevent police team who will then open it as a case on their Prevent Care Management (PCM) systems. All referrals are first screened by the police to ensure taking any further action will not interfere with any live investigations. The police also assess the case to ensure the referral is not malicious, misinformed or misguided. Many referrals are screened out at this stage.

The police will then liaise with other safeguarding agencies (panel partners) to provide information. The police use the information gathered to complete a Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF). If there is deemed to be a genuine vulnerability to radicalisation the police will refer the individual to Channel.

Review by Channel

Each Channel Panel is chaired by a Local Authority Channel Panel Chair (CPC). The panel includes local multi-agency safeguarding partners eg: health, mental health, youth services, housing and education.

If the panel decides the individual is suitable for Channel, it will develop a support package that is bespoke to that individual. Support packages are delivered by local partners and

specialist agencies. The support may focus on health, education, employment as well as providing specialist mentoring or faith guidance. These support packages are provided by Home Office approved Channel intervention providers. Cases are reviewed every 6 and 12 months.

It is important to highlight that individuals are always the first to know if it is felt that they would benefit from Channel support. The process is voluntary and their consent is needed prior to them engaging with the process. This is managed very carefully by the Channel Panel.

Information Sharing and Data Protection

Channel is an early intervention scheme to divert people away from radicalisation. Therefore behaviour which may be of concern is addressed before any criminality (from a terrorism perspective) actually occurs or before the individual has crossed a criminal threshold. When addressing the legality of information sharing from a Channel perspective, this is a fundamental issue.

Where possible, the consent of the student must be given prior to sharing information. This ensures that the student understands how their information will be used and for what purpose. However, there will be circumstances which mean this is not always practical. In these instances, Norland can legally share information with the police regarding an individual of concern without first seeking their consent, provided the case meets one of the legal gateways or exemption conditions – please see Annex A of the Channel Duty guidance at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425189/Channel_Duty_Guidance_April_2015.pdf

Any judgements regarding information sharing should assess whether it is both necessary and proportionate.

All information must be handled in line with the Data Protection Act.

All internal referrals will be processed confidentially and stored electronically within the student's file on Promonitor. The Prevent Lead will also keep electronic copies of this information confidentially on a restricted access drive. This information will be kept on file for one year after the individual student has graduated with their Norland Diploma.

All information collated as part of the referral process to Channel is recorded on the Channel Case Management and Information System (CMIS) for the purpose of administering the programme. This information is kept separate from other databases, and is only accessed by the Channel personnel involved with the case.

Data held on CMIS is subject to the Code of Practice on the Management of Police Information (MOPI). Records are kept for a minimum of six years from the date of the last data entry. After this timeframe, the police will assess whether it is necessary to retain the information for a further year.