

# Paper L1

## URC's safeguarding training framework

### Safeguarding Advisory Group

#### Basic information

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<b>Action required</b>	Decision.
<b>Draft resolution(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. On behalf of the General Assembly, Mission Council, adopts the safeguarding training framework for use across the United Reformed Church.</b></li><li><b>2. Mission Council instructs the Safeguarding Advisory Group to oversee the implementation of the framework in partnership with Synods.</b></li><li><b>3. Mission Council resolves that training for those office bearers, staff and volunteers indicated within the framework shall be mandatory. It instructs the Safeguarding Advisory Group to ensure appropriate monitoring and compliance.</b></li></ol>

#### Summary of content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	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 introduce and describe the Safeguarding Training Framework and provides a table of those roles for whom the training is mandatory.
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	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.
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	Members of SAG Safeguarding Training Review Working Group

	Synod Safeguarding Officers Safeguarding Practice Group (SSPG) Synod Moderators Church Safeguarding Coordinators Safeguarding Training Coordinators of other denominations.
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## Summary of impact

<b>Financial</b>	Synods will make their own funding arrangements related to safeguarding training provision for local churches. They will also have the capacity to access Assembly-level support if required.
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	The URC is a member of a national ecumenical group that shares good practice and resources for safeguarding training.

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

In 2018 Mission Council, in alignment with the recommendations of the PCR Report, agreed that safeguarding training is mandatory for those working with children and young people. The adoption of the Safeguarding Strategic Plan (2020-2025) in November 2019 prioritises appropriate and accessible safeguarding training for all those who are accountable for and working with children, young people and adults (strategic priority 5). The Safeguarding Strategic Plan (2020-2025) refers specifically to the need for a standardised training programme to be used across the denomination.

As part of this process, Mission Council understood that this was a significant undertaking and approved the appointment of a Training and Development Coordinator a year ago to oversee this process, consult with and support Synods to standardise and implement the training programme. A Safeguarding Training Review Group was created which is comprised of Synod Safeguarding Officers, Synod Training Officers and members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group. Their task has been to develop this training framework to be used across the denomination. The group is chaired by the Training and Development Coordinator, Penny McGee, and reports to the Safeguarding Advisory Group.

The Framework has been reviewed by all Synod Safeguarding Officers and their feedback has been incorporated into the document. Local church safeguarding coordinators were also consulted with 18 responses being received. Feedback has also been sought from survivors of abuse who have reviewed the document in its entirety and provided feedback. The majority of those who have reviewed the framework believe that it is sensible and robust and they believe that they will be able to implement it in their local areas. Equally, the majority of those who have reviewed the framework understand and respect the need for a standardised approach to safeguarding which is supported by the PCR as well the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).

The Safeguarding Training Framework details the tiered structure of the training; basic, intermediate and advanced. It is hoped that basic training will be taken up by a wide range of people involved with the life of the church such as 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 intermediary

or advanced level, we recognise the commitment of time that many volunteers give to enable church life to thrive, and that this may feel like an imposition that takes the valuable time of busy people. We hope that the church will see that asking certain role holders to give a few hours every few years to think carefully about how we can be a safe church is part of us responding appropriately to those who in the past we have all too frequently failed to keep safe. The aim is that we become a safer church for all.

The framework clarifies the purpose and content of each training package as well as a detailed list of specialist modules that are currently being developed. A tiered system will ensure that safeguarding training reflects the roles of individuals in a church community that sees safeguarding as being everybody's responsibility. The tiered system also aligns with Good Practice 5 and the requirement of the Synods to offer regular safeguarding training arranged and agreed by the Synod Safeguarding Officers, while covering all aspects of good practice. The packages have been created with PowerPoints, training guides and workbooks which have already been shared in Synods and endorsed by Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisers. Due to the global pandemic, the modules have been developed so that they can be used in face to face and online settings. Indeed, the basic and intermediate modules are currently being used across the denomination and the feedback from participants is overwhelmingly positive.

After two years of consultation, preparations and trialled delivery in some synods, the Safeguarding Advisory Group (SAG) decided on 2 October to set up an Implementation Plan which will address all practicalities of rolling out this training framework across the denomination in consultation and close collaboration with Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisers. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be developed alongside a Safeguarding Training Privacy Notice for participants. A centralised recording system is currently under development in collaboration with Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisers and will be ready to be used across the denomination following this Mission Council's decision. The URC central database has been updated and customised so that the recording and monitoring of training is supported without needing additional software or further funding.

## **Safeguarding training framework and practice guidance**

### **Structure and scope of document**

This document sets out the context in which the safeguarding training programme of the United Reformed Church (URC) is practiced and reviewed. The purpose of this document is to ensure consistency in safeguarding training policy and practice throughout the URC and supports the overall goal that all church workers, paid and voluntary, have a standard of safeguarding training that is sufficient to enable them to carry out their individual roles. Regardless of the role, it is helpful for everyone to understand safeguarding in order to protect children, young people and adults at risk.

The framework aligns with our safeguarding policy and guidance, Good Practice 5 (GP5) and recognises the responsibilities placed upon faith-based organisations to comply with "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2018) (WTSC). This states that;

"Every VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise), faith-based organisation and private sector organisation or agency should have policies in place to safeguard and protect children from harm. These should be followed, and systems should be in place to ensure compliance in this. Individual practitioners, whether paid or volunteer, should be

aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children from harm, how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to local authority children's social care or the police if necessary." (WTSC 2018 paragraph 61, page 71)

This training framework seeks to go further to detail the training which will support all participants to fully comply with their safeguarding responsibilities. This framework recognises the Care Act 2014 as the legal basis for adult safeguarding in England whilst the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 cover the provisions of this Act in Wales. This document seeks to codify the URC's commitment to promoting the safety and wellbeing of those with "care and support needs" but also those who may not fall within legal definitions but who, nonetheless, may be more vulnerable to experiencing abuse or neglect.

To reflect the needs of each Synod, congregation and affiliated group, their participants and their worshipping communities, the safeguarding training programme of the United Reformed Church has been segmented into basic, intermediate and advanced training packages that can be delivered in person or online. The intended audience of this document is those directly involved with safeguarding training such as Synod Safeguarding Officers and local church safeguarding coordinators. However, this document is relevant to anyone who wishes to understand more about the process and content of safeguarding training in the URC. A full list of the types of safeguarding training and the requested attendees can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

## **1. URC's Safeguarding Training Policy**

### **1.1 An ethos of care and service**

Safeguarding people is integral to the URC's mission. The URC strives to create a church environment that is safe for all and that supports and recognises the experiences of those who have been abused or neglected. We also support those who have abused to live an offence free life with appropriate care and support.

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

Faith based communities aim to offer a place of safety and trust for everyone, where people care for each other regardless of their circumstances. They are 'open communities' where everyone is welcome. This also means that Church communities are vulnerable to those who seek to harm others and the potential for grooming of adults and children, and those who work with and care for them, is high in communities where people believe the best in each other. The URC is a small denomination where people often know each other very well, may be related to each other and may carry out several roles within the Church. This can lead to a conflict of interests in some cases or even hinder the reporting and investigating process of allegations.

The presence of robust safeguarding policies is one part of supporting a safer church for all. These need to be supported with a training provision that reflects the different roles

that everyone has and fosters a culture and ethos that has the protection of the vulnerable and marginalised at its heart.

## **1.2 Needs of the training participants and trainers**

Due to the widespread nature of abuse, it is very likely that there will be people participating in the training that have experienced abuse either as children or as adults, or have been impacted by the abuse of someone they know. Training is designed to equip participants with skills and knowledge such that they can adequately protect people from any form of abuse, harm or neglect. It is not intended to be unduly upsetting or triggering for participants.

All training includes a warning to participants that the content may be upsetting, and participants should feel able to recognise whether they are finding a topic particularly difficult for whatever reason. Learning aims and objectives allow participants to prepare for the content ahead and to make an informed decision about how to manage any emotional implications for themselves. Trainers are available, during breaks, to speak with participants who may be finding some of the material difficult and there will be signposting to different support groups and agencies that can provide further help and support. Equally, when individuals are encouraged to attend training, they can be familiar with the content of the provision and they can discuss any areas of potential concern ahead of the training date.

The individual needs of the participants are considered in training materials and those who have additional needs will be supported to be able to access the content fully. It is the role of church safeguarding coordinators to be aware of any additional needs of participants. They need to pass this information to synod safeguarding officers who will make any reasonable adjustments to the delivery of training in conversation with the participants.

When training is conducted in person, it is far easier to support participants who may become distressed. Participants can speak to trainers or leave the room if they find the topics difficult. In an online setting, this can be harder, however, it is not unmanageable. Trainers can support those in online forums by giving a content warning at the beginning and advising participants that they can leave the training if they feel that they need to. If participants do not wish to draw attention to themselves by leaving the meeting, then audio can be paused, and an instant message sent to the trainer advising that they feel unable to continue with the training. The trainer can then support the person at the end of the training session and signpost them to support agencies that can provide out of hours support if this is required. For those who have experienced trauma, it may be that a discussion with that person is required to support them to access training in the safest way possible for them.

## **2. Basic training**

Basic training represents the training that will be available to all within the life of the church and the hope is that there will be a wide take up. It also forms the first part of the intermediary and advanced training that some role holders who work with children, young people and adults at risk will be required to undertake. Basic training is designed to give an overall understanding of safeguarding and would be beneficial for anyone seeking to enhance their knowledge of good practice and to ensure the safety of church. A table that lists the type of training for different roles within the URC is contained in 'Section 8' of this document.

## 2.1 Components of basic training

Basic training will equip participants with the following:

- An understanding of why safeguarding is important in a church context. This includes an understanding of the processes and procedures of the United Reformed Church and how these could be subject to exploitation by those wishing to groom.
- The current legislation, policy and guidance that underpins our responsibilities and duties as well as an appreciation of the URC Safeguarding Policy (GP5) and its appendices which are applicable across the denomination.
- A knowledge of the types of abuse and neglect that can be experienced as well as an understanding of the signs that could be displayed by children, young people and adults at risk.
- The ability to;
  - **recognise** the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect.
  - **respond** supportively to potential survivors of abuse as well their families, or to potential perpetrators of abuse and anyone else impacted by safeguarding concerns.
  - **record** any safeguarding information and disclosures in an appropriate manner which preserves best evidence.
  - **report** safeguarding concerns internally through the appropriate safeguarding channels or, in the case of emergency, to feel able to refer directly to the Police or Children's Services.
- An understanding that safeguarding is taken seriously by the URC and that anyone who reports a concern will be supported and taken seriously without fear of reprisals. This is linked to an understanding of the need for confidentiality and transparency during the entire process.
- A collaborative environment with the opportunity to discuss real case studies in a safe space where participants will be supported to manage their own emotions and feelings whilst fostering a collective ethos for safeguarding.
- An awareness of the impact of grooming, both individually and as a worshipping community.
- An understanding of good practice and how maintaining a safe environment daily supports the safety of children, young people and adults at risk.
- An understanding of the role of church Safeguarding Coordinators and Synod Safeguarding Officers, and how they can support you in your roles within the church.
- An understanding of the importance of getting our responses right. This will be illustrated through the voice of survivors, their experiences of abuse, how the abuse affected them and how inadequate safeguarding practices impacted their lives, sometimes having the effect of retraumatising them.

## 2.2 Delivery of basic training:

The basic training package has been adapted to be delivered online or in person, according to need and circumstance.

The training package for physical delivery has been supplemented with case studies and activities to embed learning and to encourage a culture of collaboration, peer learning and discussion.



The case studies relate to specific issues raised within the training. Synod Safeguarding Officers can choose their own case examples from their experience of working in different safeguarding environments. Case studies should be carefully chosen to ensure that they are appropriate for participants and to mitigate against the possibility of examples being used that participants may be personally aware of.

Each session is estimated to last approximately 60-90 minutes but can be longer if there is good discussion and everyone consents to continue. Where training is being delivered online, it is suggested that there should be a maximum of 12-15 participants, but this is ultimately up to the trainer to decide. This enables the trainer to ensure that all participants are being adequately supported and to manage the delivery of the content. When the course is delivered online, the trainer has the autonomy to decide whether it should be delivered over two sessions depending on the needs of the group.

## **3 Intermediate safeguarding training**

### **3.1 Components of intermediate safeguarding training**

For certain role holders within the life of the church Intermediate training will be required (please see the table in Appendix one). The intermediate training aims to enhance the knowledge already gained in the basic training and focus on how to maintain safer practices within the general day to day activities of the congregation or group.

Intermediate training will equip participants with the following:

- An understanding of legal obligations placed upon faith-based organisations including the role of Trustees and Elders as those with “primary responsibility” for safeguarding (Charity Commission).
- An understanding of the unique role that churches play bringing together the community and the safeguarding concerns that this can present.
- An understanding of how good practice can be implemented in the following areas.
  - Security in church buildings
  - Food hygiene
  - Safe transportation
  - Insurance and hire of premises
- Introduction to the requirements of Safer Recruitment and how this needs to be carried out in their Church. Participants will understand the need, both practically and legally, for safer recruitment to be carried out, in respect of volunteers and paid workers, the barriers to achieving this and how to overcome these.
- An understanding of how to keep adequate records and seek appropriate consent in relation to Church activities.
- A review of how to respond to safeguarding concerns using the 4R (recognise, respond, record, report) approach and inappropriate behaviours to challenge.
- An understanding of how to manage allegations made against church staff, paid or voluntary, or lay or ordained.
- An understanding of how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns online, as well as guidance regarding how to stay safe online.

### **3.2 Delivery of intermediate training**

The intermediate training can be delivered online or in physical settings depending on the need of the trainer and the participants. The online module contains the same core content as the group delivery package, but the group delivery package is supplemented

with further case studies and a workbook to embed learning. Where this training is being delivered online, it is suggested that there should be a maximum number of 12-15 participants, but this is ultimately the trainer's decision. This enables the trainer to ensure that all participants are being adequately supported and to manage the delivery of the content. When the course is delivered online, the trainer has the autonomy to decide whether it should be delivered over two sessions depending on the needs of the group.

## 4. Advanced safeguarding training

The purpose of the advanced safeguarding training is to support those who have safeguarding leadership roles to manage their responsibilities and oversee safeguarding arrangements and practice on a permanent basis. It is a requirement for those who hold specific safeguarding leadership responsibilities (please see the table in Appendix one). As part of our commitment to embedding a culture of safeguarding within the whole Church it is also a requirement for all ministers and CRCWs, who do not explicitly hold safeguarding leadership responsibilities but who are frequently, in reality, called upon to support those who do. It will draw upon concepts from basic and intermediate training and will explore these in greater detail.

Advanced training seeks to allow participants to understand more complex and nuanced safeguarding ideas and to take an active role in directing others in the church and promoting effective practices in and beyond their Church.

Advanced training also builds upon the premise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility but there are those who have specific responsibilities for creating and sustaining a healthy and positive culture in respect of safeguarding. This applies within the URC and in the working relations with statutory authorities and other denominations/agencies.

### 4.1 Components of advanced safeguarding training

Advanced training is designed to equip participants with the following:

- An understanding of how attitudes and values can impact safeguarding decision making and how to recognise our own biases and prejudices.
- A deeper understanding of managing the safer recruitment process and its importance in creating safer places with suitable people in them.
- A working knowledge of how to support those who may pose a risk to children or adults at risk whilst maintaining policies that place safeguarding at the heart of the Church.
- An understanding of policies and practices in managing allegations for workers who serve the Church on a paid or voluntary basis.
- An understanding of working with multiagency partners, including how to manage thresholds of harm and collate information in the most useful way. This includes how to work with the Designated Officer (previously LADO).
- An advanced understanding of safeguarding adults at risk including how to manage issues of capacity and when to override consent in a person's best interest.
- The ability to respond to grooming in a systemic way recognising its impact on the whole organisation. This includes being aware of the stages of grooming and how to have and maintain safe relationships with appropriate boundaries in place.



- An understanding of how to recognise and respond appropriately to domestic abuse, including an awareness of how deeply held values can create a culture where abuse is condoned.
- An understanding of how to develop effective policies and procedures that support Church to be as safe as possible.
- An understanding of the overall structure of the Church and the role of safeguarding designated persons (Church Safeguarding Coordinators and Synod Safeguarding Officers and Advisers), and how they can support local Churches to effectively safeguard their worshipping groups.
- 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.

## **4.2 Delivery of advanced training**

The advanced training package will support Synods to deliver the package physically or online depending on local needs.

The advanced modules require a far more in-depth discussion to embed learning and ideally this would be delivered in person. This would enable a more collaborative environment where individuals could share knowledge and good practice with each other.

However, if this is not possible then these modules will be adapted to be delivered online, with activities and case studies that support participants' learning.

## **5. Flexibility of delivery**

The demographic of the denomination is vastly different across Synods, with an array of different training and learning needs identified. As such, where one Synod may be able to offer modular training sessions over the course of several weeks, another Synod may only be able to offer one training session which covers the entirety of the basic and intermediate content. In order to ensure that safeguarding training is made as accessible as possible there needs to be some flexibility in how Synods deliver the training provisions. Synods will have the capacity to adopt the package to their needs as long as the core content is covered.

## **6. Ensuring minimum standards across the denomination**

As part of the PCR Learning Group recommendations, there is a clear argument for why safeguarding should be a special topic area that transcends ordinary URC structures. A standardised approach would offer much improved survivor experience, capacity to learn from frontline practice and the ability for all those involved in safeguarding in the URC to present robust evidence of good practice. It is therefore important that a standard is set for training with regards to contents and requirements. This can only be effectively achieved through a standard package, which enables Synods to deliver safeguarding training in line with URC's safeguarding policy (Good Practice 5).

Synod Safeguarding Officers lead on safeguarding within their Synods. In order to achieve the above goal, they have the responsibility of arranging the delivery of safeguarding training and may wish to designate others to deliver it. Synod Safeguarding Officers should ensure that the process of selecting trainers is based on

their proven ability to ensure the quality of the training provision. 'Train the Trainer' modules may be useful in these circumstances. Synod Safeguarding Officers should be available in person to support a delegated person until they are confident that they are able to manage the requirements of this training framework. Consideration should also be given as to whether Synod Safeguarding Officers would be available either in person or on the telephone during training sessions run by a trainer, to ensure that the person delivering training feels supported to manage questions that may arise that may not be their area of expertise.

The Safeguarding Training and Development Coordinator at Church House can provide ongoing support to Synods to deliver all levels of training and, when the need is identified, can be involved in training other persons to deliver training in more local settings. This supports the Synod Safeguarding Officers to manage their workloads and supports the overall goal of ensuring that as many people as possible are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

## **7. Monitoring and compliance**

It is important that safeguarding training is monitored and refreshed every three years to enable people to remain confident about how to respond, and to keep up to date with good practice. Refresher training should be completed at a three-yearly interval and will keep knowledge and skills up to date. Refresher training should be undertaken at the highest required level. For example, a leader of youth work activities who would have been initially required to complete basic training, and then intermediate safeguarding training should be refreshed in the intermediate module only every three years.

### **7.1 Ensuring attendance and engagement with training**

It is the responsibility of the Church Meeting and the central role of Church Safeguarding Coordinator(s) to ensure that the people involved in regulated activities with children or adults (including Ministers, CRCWs, staff and volunteers) have undergone safeguarding training. To this end, a booking system will be introduced to ensure participant attendance and engagement will be adequately and consistently recorded and reviewed. Attendance records will be kept at every training event and linked with the URC central database. The central safeguarding office will use a system that will provide monitoring records to churches and Synods with no further cost to the URC. The central database provides a platform tailored to training recording and monitoring. Practically speaking, Synod Safeguarding Officers or an approved trainer will deliver the relevant training, and then collate a record of who attended. This will be then be recorded on the URC database which will enable Synod Safeguarding Officers to have oversight of who needs training, at what level and when they are due for a refresher. Synod Safeguarding Officers will then be able to get in touch with local church safeguarding coordinators and advise them of what refresher training is needed within their church so that coordinators can then support those in their churches to attend.

Certificates will be given for those who complete training, as a way for participants to demonstrate their own personal development.

Safeguarding training is designed as a safe space for participants to learn and expand their understanding. Where participants do not engage, this will be discussed with them afterwards to ascertain if there are any issues preventing this and to find a way that they can successfully engage in learning. If individuals consistently fail to engage with training, and there is no explanation for this, or if they behave in an inappropriate

manner or are disruptive they will be spoken with after the training and this will be followed up with their line manager, the person accountable for them (a supervisor for a volunteering group for instance) or other appropriate person in the Church. In the case of Ministers and CRCWs this will be addressed with their Synod Moderator. Where participants do not attend the entire training session, they will not be awarded a completion certificate.

## **7.2 Outcomes of non-attendance**

The table that lists specific roles attending specific levels of training sets up an expected standard for the whole denomination. Attendance is encouraged for all, but mandatory for those as set out in Section 8. According to Good Practice 5, a worker is a person who is appointed by the church to work with children or adults at risk on behalf of the church, on a paid or voluntary basis. This term includes Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs), youth workers, adult workers, and others, including volunteers, who are involved in regulated work and activities with children, young people and adults at risk. The basic training package has been designed so that it is appropriate for everyone, regardless of their current levels of understanding.

In case of workers' non-attendance, this will be addressed with their line manager or the person accountable for them or other appropriate person in the Church. If the individual concerned is a Minister or a CRCW, then the Synod Safeguarding Officer will inform the Synod Moderator who has pastoral oversight and who is responsible for warning and disciplinary processes. There will be a process of warnings and time limits for Ministers and CRCWs to complete safeguarding training. Further details will be contained in the Implementation Plan which will be devised by the Safeguarding Advisory Group and activated in consultation with the Ministries office at Church House.

As part of the safeguarding annual return process, church safeguarding coordinators will be expected to collate a record of safeguarding training within their church. This can then be reviewed by the Synod Safeguarding Officers. This will enable areas to be identified where there is a need for more support and the Training and Development Coordinator can work collaboratively with Synod Safeguarding Officers and local church coordinators to put a strategy in place to improve attendance rates.

## **7.3 Ensuring quality of safeguarding training across the denomination**

Quality assurance will be monitored through the feedback from the participants which is collated at the end of every training session. This ensures that comments can be listened to and training programmes improved in the light of such feedback. A further quality assurance system will be embedded in the annual church returns process. This will enable the denomination to have a picture of the quality of the safeguarding training provision annually as well as to review the training needs of specific roles and assess the areas of strength and where further support may be needed.

The Safeguarding Advisory Group will support Synods where the returns indicate that there are outstanding training needs or that the quality of training needs to be improved. There will be an opportunity for areas of strength in the denomination to be showcased, such as through the safeguarding newsletter, and there could be a peer review system which would support the sharing of good practice and good ideas across the Synod. Mission Council and General Assembly will be regularly informed about the implementation of the safeguarding training framework and the uptake of training.

## 7.4 Indicators of success

Success indicators include:

- Training programmes coproduced by the Safeguarding Training Review Group and Synod Safeguarding Officers are in use across the denomination with accompanying guidance, handbooks and workbooks and these are kept up to date reflecting any changes in practice, policy and legislation.
- Adequate supervision and support are provided across the denomination to support all involved in safeguarding, relevant to their roles and responsibilities.
- Members, office-holders and workers of the church, paid and voluntary, will articulate an appropriate understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and this will be contained in the feedback provided at the end of training sessions.
- There will be an increase in the number of Elders, and other leaders attending training. In turn this will improve the quality of feedback that is collected.
- There will be numerical evidence of training attended and a system to monitor attendance, non-attendance and renewals.
- Those with additional responsibilities will be able to access specialist training modules eg DBS verifiers, those providing pastoral care, those in charge of managing complaints and historical abuse.
- Training packages are shared with ecumenical partners who can certify the URC training as being of a good enough standard to be used in Local Ecumenical Partnerships and by other denominations.

## 8. Attendees

### 8.1 Basic training

Basic training is designed to be useful and accessible to the widest range of those who participate in the life of the church. This might include:

- Local church employees (such as administrative or facilities staff)
- Synod staff or officers
- Members of Synod or General Assembly committees
- Church Members
- Volunteers in local church projects.

The wider the range of people who can access it, the more successful we will be in embedding an ethos of safe practice within the whole church. For those with roles who are required to do mandatory training at Intermediate or Advanced level, basic training will form the first part of their training package.

### 8.2 Intermediate training

The content contained in the intermediate training package enhances and embeds the learning from the basic package and everyone would be encouraged to continue their learning journey. However, the following people are identified as participants who are required to attend due to their roles within the church. This list is not exhaustive, however. It is for Synods to determine whether there are additional role holders for whom Intermediate Training would be mandatory. This might include situations where Synods have forms of accredited lay leadership, where an individual is serving as an interim Moderator who does not otherwise fall within the categories below, or individuals who regularly lead worship but who are not formally authorised or recognised. The intention is that anyone whose role causes them to engage with children or vulnerable adults be trained to Intermediate level.

- Church Safeguarding Coordinators and their Deputies
- Members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group
- Active Ministers, including Synod Moderators, retired ministers who meet the requirements of active ministry and CRCWs
- Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs)
- Serving Elders
- Youth/Children/Adult/Pastoral Workers
- Section O Investigation, Commission and Appeal Panel Members
- Accredited and recognised Lay preachers
- Pastoral visitors
- Directors of the URC Trust Company, Directors of Synod Trust Companies, Trustees of Synod Charities and trustees of the local church charity.

### **8.3 Advanced Training**

With regards to the advanced module, the following people are considered to hold safeguarding leadership responsibilities and need to have an advanced understanding of safeguarding;

Mandatory List of attendees

- Synod Safeguarding Officers and Advisers
- Managers of Synod Safeguarding Officers
- Synod Moderators
- Church Safeguarding Coordinators and their Deputies
- Members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group
- URC trustees, synod trustees, and Elders as local church trustees, including those with safeguarding oversight delegated by the elders meeting.

In addition, to foster a culture of safeguarding across the denomination, and to enable them to understand safeguarding processes at an advanced level, and support appropriately those with safeguarding leadership responsibilities (Church Safeguarding Coordinators and Synod Safeguarding Officers), active Ministers will also be required to attend advanced safeguarding training.

### **8.4 Elders' and Ministers' Learning**

The members of the elders meeting in a local church (i.e. the minister together with the serving elders) have major responsibilities for safeguarding. Many Elders appoint safeguarding coordinators to oversee this work or have an Elder who holds safeguarding expertise and can then bring this to the Elders meetings, similar to the structure of other governing bodies. With this flexibility in mind, all Elders should complete the basic and intermediate training and at least one Elder from a local church should complete the advanced training module so that they are able to comply with their legal obligations effectively. The Elders meeting have the responsibility of deciding who will complete the advanced training.

Safer Sacred Space is not safeguarding training. It is a professional boundary training, mandatory for Ministers and CRCWs, which includes safeguarding awareness, but it does not substitute safeguarding training. Safer Sacred Space will continue to be delivered in synods in the preestablished manner without alteration. New learning opportunities for ministers and CRCWs (such as pastoral care for survivors of abuse) will be considered by the Safeguarding Advisory Group.

## 9. Specialist training modules

Due to varying needs and experiences across Synods, more specialist modules will be developed to meet specific and more specialised training needs..

Drawing from the PCR Learning Group recommendations, annual safeguarding reports of the Church (synods' and the denomination) and current practice, specialist modules will cover the following identified areas;

- Understanding and responding to spiritual abuse and bullying
- Pastoral care and support for survivors of historical abuse
- Supporting those impacted by domestic violence and abuse (DVA), this will include all of those affected by DVA e.g. women, men, child on adult DVA and DVA in same sex relationships.
- Responding to gangs and serious youth violence, including criminal exploitation.
- Recognising and responding to child sexual exploitation and grooming.
- Safeguarding and supporting adults at risk, including those impacted by mental health conditions, financial abuse and fraud and an awareness of how to support those who present as suicidal.
- Supporting those impacted by substance misuse issues and their families.
- Understanding the impact of trauma on the developing brain and the cumulative impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).
- Safer Recruitment, DBS Eligibility, PVG legislation on checks.
- Safeguarding Governance for URC and Synod Trust Directors and trustees.

## 10. Transferability of other relevant training

It is commonly agreed between Christian denominations that in single congregation LEPs, the church will decide which safeguarding policy to follow and all denominations involved are aware of this. Where an LEP decides to use a policy other than the URC, then they have an obligation to let all sponsoring denominations know which policy they are following. The delivery of safeguarding training should line up with the policy that the LEP follows.

In order to work effectively with our ecumenical partners, there is a move towards mutual recognition of each other's courses based on agreed levels. This would enable those who are mandated to undertake safeguarding training to move between different denominations without having to repeat training programmes. It would also enable individuals to choose which training they wished to attend as there would be a consistent standard and content agreed. This enables the delivery of the safeguarding strategic plan and the PCR Learning Group recommendations that closer working with our ecumenical colleagues supports a safer denomination.

The Synod of Scotland currently utilises the training provision offered by the Church of Scotland. A plan will be formulated in liaison with the Synod of Scotland to review their current arrangements to explore how existing training provision will fulfil the requirements of this URC framework. The purpose is to benchmark across the Church and enable the Synod of Scotland to be part of the process in setting up our 'own' standards and culture of safeguarding in the United Reformed Church.



## **11. Continuing development for Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisors**

The development of Synod Safeguarding Officers is a vital part of ensuring a consistent and robust safeguarding training programme across the denomination. As part of the Safeguarding Strategic Plan, Synod Safeguarding Officers are leaders in safeguarding across the denomination and they need opportunities to develop their skill set and share their expertise. The Synod Safeguarding Practice Group (SSPG) meeting is held every three months where training and personal development is discussed, and Synod Safeguarding Officers can suggest areas that they wish to develop. There is General Assembly funding available to support continuous professional development for synod safeguarding leads.

## Appendix 1: Quick guide to safeguarding training participants and content

Basic training	Provides a basic awareness of child protection and safeguarding adults and is appropriate for those involved in regulated activities and optional for everyone. It forms the first part of mandatory training for certain role holders.	
Intermediate training	Mandatory for certain role holders. Provides a greater understanding of safeguarding people, premises and programmes.	
Advanced training	Mandatory for certain role holders. Provides an in depth understanding of leading and managing safeguarding, including how to embed good practice guidance into practice.	
Specialist training	Bespoke training created in response to areas of safeguarding policy and practice.	
<b>Roles requiring mandatory training:</b>		
	<a href="#">Intermediate Training</a>	<a href="#">Advanced Training</a>
Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisors	✓	✓
Managers of Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisors	✓	✓
Church Safeguarding Coordinators	✓	✓
Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator	✓	✓
Members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group, Synod Safeguarding Committees and Reference Groups	✓	✓
Active Ministers, retired ministers who meet the requirements of active ministry.	✓	✓
Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs)	✓	✓
Synod Moderators	✓	✓
Youth and Children Workers	✓	
Adult Workers	✓	
Managers of Children, Youth and Adults Workers	✓	✓
Pastoral Workers	✓	
Synod Clerks	✓	
Section O Investigation, Commission and Appeal Panel Members	✓	
Accredited and Recognised Lay Preachers	✓	
Pastoral Visitors	✓	
URC Trustees and Synod Trustees	✓	✓*
Elders	✓	✓*

\*please see section 8.4 relating the training of Elders