



Mental Health Safeguarding Policy



Statement of APA Procurement and Supply Training (APA) Mental Health Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

APA Procurement & Supply Training Ltd (APA) is dedicated to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment that prioritizes the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and students. In recognition of the unique challenges posed by remote working, exams and career development, this policy outlines our commitment to addressing various aspects of mental health and providing comprehensive support.

This policy is an extension to APA's general safeguarding policy, and thus should be read in conjunction with APA's Safeguarding Policy document.

2. Remote Learning and Mental Health

- a. APA acknowledges that remote learning can amplify feelings of isolation and stress for both staff and students. We are committed to promoting a sense of belonging and community through regular communication, virtual support sessions, and opportunities for social interaction.
- b. Staff and students are encouraged to engage in open dialogue about their mental health concerns, with confidentiality and non-judgmental support provided by designated mental health champions.
- c. Resources for managing stress, maintaining work-life balance, and accessing mental health support services will be readily available through our online platforms and communications.

3. Exams and Anxiety

- a. APA Procurement & Training recognizes that exams can be a significant source of anxiety for students. We will provide guidance and support on exam preparation techniques, stress management strategies, and relaxation exercises to help alleviate exam-related stress.

- b. Flexibility will be offered to students who require reasonable adjustments or accommodations due to mental health conditions, in accordance with relevant legislation and guidelines.
- c. We will ensure that exam procedures are transparent, fair, and supportive, with clear communication of expectations and feedback provided to students throughout the assessment process.

4. Career Development and Mental Health

- a. APA Procurement & Training acknowledges the pressure that career development can place on individuals, particularly when outcomes are dependent on exam results. We will promote a growth mindset approach, emphasizing personal development, resilience, and continuous improvement over solely outcome-driven measures.
- b. Career guidance and support services will be available to assist students in setting realistic goals, exploring alternative pathways, and managing career-related stressors.
- c. We will foster a culture of peer support and collaboration, encouraging students to share experiences, seek advice, and celebrate achievements within the procurement community.

5. Additional Considerations

- a. **Social Support and Community:** APA Procurement & Training will promote networking opportunities, peer support groups, and mentorship programs to foster a sense of belonging and support within the community.
- b. **Work-Life Balance:** Resources and guidance on time management, boundary-setting, and self-care will be provided to help individuals maintain a healthy balance between work, study, and personal life.
- c. **Stigma Reduction:** We will actively challenge stigma surrounding mental health issues through awareness campaigns, education, and promoting open dialogue within the organization.
- d. **Crisis Intervention and Emergency Response:** Clear protocols will be in place for responding to mental health crises or emergencies, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of individuals in distress.

e. Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity: APA Procurement & Training will provide culturally sensitive support services and accommodations to ensure that all individuals feel valued and supported in their mental health journey.

f. Trauma-Informed Approach: Staff members will be trained to recognize and respond sensitively to signs of trauma, and specialized support services will be available to individuals who have experienced adversity or trauma.

6. Staff Training in Safeguarding Mental Health

APA Procurement & Training recognizes the crucial role that staff members play in safeguarding the mental health and wellbeing of both employees and students. To enhance our ability to identify and respond effectively to potential mental health issues, the following measures will be implemented:

a. Safeguarding Training: All staff members, including instructors, administrators, and support staff, will receive comprehensive training in mental health awareness and safeguarding. This training will cover topics such as recognizing signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions, understanding the impact of workplace factors on mental wellbeing, and learning appropriate communication and intervention techniques.

b. Referral Pathways: Staff will be informed of the appropriate referral pathways and support services available within APA Procurement & Training and externally. This includes guidance on how to refer individuals experiencing mental health concerns to designated mental health champions, internal support services, or external organizations for further assistance.

c. Confidentiality and Professional Boundaries: Training will emphasize the importance of maintaining confidentiality and respecting professional boundaries when addressing mental health issues. Staff members will be provided with clear guidelines on handling sensitive information and seeking support from designated safeguarding leads or management when necessary.

d. Continuous Professional Development: Safeguarding training will be incorporated into the ongoing professional development program for staff members, ensuring that knowledge and skills related to mental health awareness and support remain up-to-date and relevant.

e. Collaboration and Communication: Staff will be encouraged to collaborate and communicate effectively with colleagues, sharing observations and concerns related to mental health in a supportive and non-judgmental manner. Regular meetings and discussions will provide opportunities for staff to exchange best practices, seek advice, and address any challenges encountered in safeguarding mental health.

By equipping staff members with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources, APA Procurement & Training aims to create a culture of awareness, support, and proactive intervention to safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of all individuals within our community.

7. Sources of Support

This policy will be supported by a comprehensive list of resources, including:

NHS Every Mind Matters
Mind
Samaritans
CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)
YoungMinds
Anxiety UK
Heads Together
Mental Health Foundation
Rethink Mental Illness
CIPS Mental Health Resources

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness in promoting mental health and wellbeing within APA Procurement & Training and to incorporate any necessary updates or improvements.

Approved by the Senior Management Team APA

Last reviewed February 2024.