


Policy relating to approval of students for participation in environments with children or vulnerable adults		
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Policy relating to approval of students for participation in environments with children or vulnerable adults

<u>Sign off</u>	
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Revision History

Revision	Date	Revision Description	Originator
01	23 October 2008	Original document	Registrar
02	5 November 2008	Revisions based on staff consultation 5 November 2008	Registrar
03	9 April 2009	Technical amendment to accommodate change of practice of GUV relating to minors	Registrar
04	6 August 2009	Appendix 1 updated for new programme on Social and Community Development	QA Officer
05	21 September 2010	Update to authorised signatory, appendix 1 and 2	QA Officer
06	27 January 2012	Update to procedure	Registrar
07	1 August 2012	Appendix 1 revised	Registrar's office
08	13 September 2012	Appendix 1 revised	Registrar's office
09	16 July 2013	Updated reference to 3AD15	Garda Vetting Administrator

1. Purpose

- The purpose of this document is to outline key policies and responsibilities relating to approval of students for participation in environments with children or vulnerable adults, at locations within and outside the Institute, as part of approved academic programmes.

2. Scope

- This policy applies to students registered on academic programmes listed in appendix 1.
- The policy is also relevant to potential applicants to programmes listed in appendix 1
- The policy is relevant to staff supervising students on programmes listed in appendix 1

3. Definitions

Children	People under 18 years or age
Vulnerable adults	A person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.
HSE	Health Service Executive
Vet	Definition of service by Garda central vetting unit
GCVU	Garda central vetting unit. The Garda Central Vetting Unit deals with requests to vet certain prospective employees. At present, those employees include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prospective employees of the Health Service Executive and agencies funded by the Health Service Executive where the work involves access to children and vulnerable adults.• New teachers in the primary and post-primary sector• New employees and volunteers in the youth work sector and certain sports organisations• Staff, students and volunteers in the childcare sector• Staff working in care homes for older people
Nominating signatory	Person responsible for ensuring authorised signatories are available to engage with the GCVU
Authorised signatory	Person authorised to communicate with GCVU on behalf of the Institute

4. Reference

3AD15	Garda Vetting Procedure for student placements in an environment with children or vulnerable adults
4FAD22	Application form for Garda vetting
	The child care (special care) regulations (2004)
	National Standards for Children's Residential Services
	Our duty of care. The principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people. Department of Health and Children 2002.
3SS09	Student appeal process

5. Background

- The child care (special care) regulations (2004) provide that the HSE or voluntary bodies or any other person providing or maintaining a special care unit will ensure that staff or others who have access to children or vulnerable adults are appropriately vetted. Students of Institute programmes on placement in a work environment would be considered as "others" within the spirit of this regulation.
- The National Standards for Children's Residential Services which states that " All staff, relief staff, students and volunteers are appropriately vetted before taking up duties, through the taking up of past employer references, including the most recent reference, and requesting criminal records checks from An Garda Síochána or other Police authorities as appropriate".
- A number of programmes in the Institute require students to undertake placements that will bring them into contact with children or vulnerable adults and in which they will assume positions of trust. To ensure the protection of the public, and justify public trust and confidence, the Institute is committed to ensuring that only suitable candidates are allowed to undertake these programmes. The Institute uses the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) vetting service to assess the suitability of applicants for academic programmes. In some cases, the Institute may also require applicants to provide an enhanced disclosure by the completion of an affidavit, which may include additional medical information.
- Disclosure of mental health difficulties or mental illness will not adversely affect a person's application to College or legal rights in any way. However, certain physical and mental conditions may preclude the safe practice of a chosen profession.

6. Policy

It is Institute policy that:

- The public are protected and their confidence maintained by ensuring that only suitable candidates participate in components of academic programmes where students may have access to children or vulnerable adults.
- The student is responsible for informing themselves of the requirements under this policy. This includes issues relating to minimum age limits in force relating to applying for Garda vetting.

- Students must proactively disclose any relevant information relating to the process of Garda vetting to the Institute. This includes information relating to periods of residence outside the Republic of Ireland.
- Students do not participate in environments with access to children or vulnerable adults until approval is obtained from the Institute.
- Final decisions relating to approval of a student for specific placement in an external agency rests with the management of that agency.
- Costs incurred by the student in complying with this policy are borne by the student
- Information collected as part of this vetting process will be treated in confidence, on a need-to know basis, but will be released to interested parties as deemed necessary by the Institute.
- Registration as a student of the Institute is deemed agreement with participation with this policy.

To achieve these objectives, it is policy that:

- Each student is responsible for informing themselves of the need for Garda vetting to ensure suitability for specific programmes prior to embarking on specific components of programmes
- Each student is responsible for providing information in a timely manner to the Institute of their suitability for specific academic programmes as required to complete the current Garda vetting application process (see appendix 1 for current list).
- Garda vetting is obtained according to Institute procedures for all students participating on modules listed in appendix 1
- Operational protocol relating to communication with the GCVU is consistent with National procedures as agreed with the Irish Association of Social Care Educators (IASCE).
- Additional information is provided by the student to the Institute as requested and may include medical or other assessments or references relating to suitability for placement.
- Failure to meet Institute requirements in this regard will make completion of the programme impossible and thus students will be unable to obtain an award.
- Information relating to requirements for Garda vetting will be provided in a clear, consistent and timely manner to students

To effectively manage the vetting process, it is Institute policy to:

- Appoint a nominating signatory as proposed by the President of the Institute
- Appoint an authorised signatory to liaise with the GCVU as listed in appendix 2. The authorised signatory will be proposed by the nominating signatory.
- Ensure the authorised signatory completes training with the GCVU before engaging with the authorising process.

- Appoint an Institute vetting committee to consider output from the GCVU and make determinations on behalf of the Institute.
- The Institute vetting committee will consist of members as follows (see appendix 2) for current membership)
 - Registrar of the Institute
 - Nominating signatory for Garda vetting
 - Authorised signatory for Garda vetting
- The Institute vetting committee may second a subject-matter expert to the vetting committee for technical advice, if deemed necessary by the committee.
- The Institute vetting committee may seek character references from previous employers or other character references of applicants for vetting, as deemed necessary by the committee.

The Course-co-ordinator or placement co-ordinator will:

- Bring to the attention of students the requirement, timing of presentation of information, and process relating to engagement with this process.
- Confirm with the agency supervisor that the appropriate letter has been presented to the relevant placement supervisor within the placement agency within 1 week of placement initiation.

The student will:

- Inform themselves of the age limitation and time required to complete the vetting process.
- Complete application form 4FAD22 in a complete, timely, honest and comprehensive manner.
- Return completed form with required additional documentation to the authorised signatory (see appendix 2 for relevant names).
- In the case of an applicant between the age of 16 and 18, provide written consent of parent/guardian.
- Inform the Institute (authorised signatory) of any changes to their Garda vetting status subsequent to receiving a Garda vetting letter from the Institute.

The authorised signatory will:

- Screen all applications submitted to the Institute (refer to 4FAD22).
- Submit complete and authorised applications to the GCVU
- Bring relevant communications to the Institute vetting committee meetings.

The Institute vetting committee will:

- Consider information on all students requiring participation in an environment with children or vulnerable adults as part of their academic programme on an individual case-by-case basis
- Make determinations relating to participation of students in environments with children or vulnerable adults
- Operate in line with procedures described in Institute procedure for vetting students for involvement in environments with children or vulnerable adults (refer to 3AD15).
- Keep relevant records of decisions made.

Depending upon the outcome of the deliberations of the Institute vetting committee, and consideration of individual students on a case-by-case basis, the Institute reserves the rights:

- To refuse registration of a student.
- To withdraw registration of an existing registered student.
- To refuse participation of students in environments with children or vulnerable adults, and so prevent registration on specific modules of specific courses.
- To delay the participation of students in environments with children or vulnerable adults, and so delay registration on specific modules of specific courses.
- To inform any placement agency or their representative of the existence of any matters evident from the GCVU process including convictions/cases pending, if deemed appropriate by the vetting committee.
- To inform any placement agency or their representative of the existence of any matters evident from medical reports received pending, if deemed appropriate by the vetting committee.
- To review previous decisions made relating to approval for participation of students in environments with children or vulnerable adults at any time.
- To require any student to re-apply for Garda vetting upon instruction.

Transfer of information to the relevant agency

- The student is required to present the original and a copy of their letter from the Institute relating to Garda vetting to their approved placement supervisor.
- The College placement supervisor will confirm with the agency supervisor that the appropriate letter has been presented to the relevant placement supervisor within the placement agency within 1 week of placement initiation.

Appeal process

- A fair appeal process will be employed in the event of the student being dissatisfied with the decision of the vetting committee (refer to 3SS09). This process will, as required by the 3SS09 process, include the participation of an Independent Chairperson.

- Appendix1: List of Institute courses to which this policy currently applies.

Banner/ITB code	Programme name	Module code and name
BN011 BN_HAPSS_D	Bachelor of Arts in applied social studies in social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APSS H2018 Placement 1 • APSS H3017 Placement 2
BN107 BN_HAPSS_8	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in applied social studies in social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APSS H2018 Placement 1 • APSS H3017 Placement 2
BN908* BN_HASW1_7	Bachelor of Arts in applied social studies in social care (work-based/industry)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASW1 H2013 Professional Practice 1 • ASW1 H3017 Professional Practice 2
BN020 BN_BSMCO_7	Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management and Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMCO H2011 Coaching and exercise psychology 1 • SMCO H2021 Coaching and exercise psychology 2 • SMCO H3011 Coaching special populations • SMCO H3021 Personal training
BN111 BN_BSMCO_8	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sports Management and Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMCO H2011 Coaching and exercise psychology 1 • SMCO H2021 Coaching and exercise psychology 2 • SMCO H3011 Coaching special populations • SMCO H3021 Personal training • SMCO H4013 Elite coaching • SMCO H4022 Adapted physical activity
BN412 BN_BSMCO_B	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sports Management and Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMCO H4013 Elite coaching • SMCO H4022 Adapted physical activity
BN025 BN_HSACD_7	Bachelor of Arts in Social and Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SACD H2025 Professional Project Practice 1 • SACD H3025 Professional Project Practice 2
BN115 BN_HSACD_8	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social and Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SACD H2025 Professional Project Practice 1 • SACD H3025 Professional Project Practice 2
BN030 & BN030WB* BN_HECHC_7	Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Care and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All placement modules
BN118 BN_HECHC_8	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Care and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All placement modules
BN022 BN_SHTSC_7	Bachelor of Science in Horticulture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All placement modules
BN113 BN_SHTSC_8	Bachelor of Science in Horticulture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All placement modules
Individual students on any programme where students on placement engage with children or vulnerable adults		

**Students on work-based programmes may not have to complete ITB garda vetting provided they can show proof of garda vetting from their current employer. Your course co-ordinator will provide you with further information.*

Appendix 2

Nominating signatory for Garda vetting

Appointee recommended by President of the Institute	Celesta McCann James
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Authorised signatory for Garda vetting

Appointee nominated by nominating signatory	Linda McWeeney
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Institute vetting committee

Registrar	Diarmuid O'Callaghan
Nominating signatory	Celesta McCann James
Authorised signatory	Linda McWeeney

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