



## The Viaduct Federation of Schools Prevent Duty Policy

Based on DfE Statutory Guidance – Oct 2023

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## Section 1: Status and scope of the Prevent duty

### Summary

#### About this guidance

This guidance replaces the ‘Revised Prevent duty guidance : for England and Wales’, the ‘Prevent duty guidance : for further education institutions in England and Wales’, and the ‘Prevent duty guidance : for higher education institutions in England and Wales’ of 2015 (updated in April 2021).

This guidance is addressed to specified authorities in England and Wales. Those specified authorities are listed in Part 1 of Schedule 6 to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015), being those to whom the Prevent duty under section 26 of the Act applies. This guidance does not concern specified authorities in Scotland, which are listed at Part 2 of the Schedule and are also subject to the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty does not confer new functions on any specified authority. The term ‘due regard’ as used in the CTSA 2015 means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions. The purpose of this guidance is to set out the expectations for each of the main statutory sectors and describe the ways in which they should comply with the Prevent duty.

This guidance also includes sources of further advice to support best practice. There is separate guidance for specified authorities in Scotland.

We use the terms ‘must’ and ‘should’ throughout this guidance. We use the term ‘must’ when the specified authority is legally required to do something, and ‘should’ when the advice sets out expectations and good practice for complying with the Prevent duty.

## Who is this guidance for?

This statutory guidance is intended for use by:

- senior leadership teams in any of the specified authorities listed in Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the CTSA 2015
- those with dedicated Prevent and/or safeguarding responsibilities
- people in specified authorities with responsibility for how resources and funding are used, and for external partnerships
- those in a frontline role and likely to engage with people who may be susceptible to radicalisation

Specified authorities are the people, organisations and institutions listed in Schedule 6 of the CTSA 2015 to whom the Prevent duty applies. It is their responsibility to consider this guidance in carrying out the Prevent duty.

The list of specified authorities subject to the provisions can be found in [Schedule 6 of the CTSA 2015](#). Further details are in the sector-specific sections of this guidance.

This guidance may also inform best practice for other sectors that are not specified authorities but may wish to consider how to prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or from supporting terrorism.

## What is the status of this guidance?

This is statutory guidance from the Home Office, issued under Section 29 of the CTSA 2015.<sup>[\[footnote 1\]](#)</sup> It comes into force on 31 December 2023.

The Prevent duty applies to specified authorities in England and Wales, and Scotland. While counter-terrorism is the responsibility of the UK government, many of the local delivery mechanisms in Wales and Scotland, such as health, education and local government, are in devolved areas.

## Section 2: Introduction

The overall aim of our counter-terrorism strategy, [CONTEST](#), is to reduce the risk from terrorism to the UK, its citizens and interests overseas, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence. Prevent remains one of the key pillars of CONTEST, alongside the other three 'P' work strands:

\* Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism

- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
- Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

## **The Prevent duty**

The aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent also extends to supporting the rehabilitation and disengagement of those already involved in terrorism.

The Prevent duty requires specified authorities such as education, health, local authorities, police and criminal justice agencies (prisons and probation) to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It sits alongside long-established safeguarding duties on professionals to protect people from a range of other harms, such as substance abuse, involvement in gangs, and physical and sexual exploitation. The duty helps to ensure that people who are susceptible to radicalisation are supported as they would be under safeguarding processes.

In fulfilling the Prevent duty in Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015), we expect all specified authorities to participate fully in work to prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. We acknowledge that how they do this in practice will vary depending on factors such as the local context and risk, the most appropriate type of Prevent activity for them to be involved in, and the nature of their primary responsibilities and functions. As an example, for those who work directly with people who may be susceptible to radicalisation to terrorism, activity is most likely to be around identification and early intervention. Relevant factors may include relationships held with the person or the frequency of interaction.

When carrying out the Prevent duty, specified authorities should also ensure that they comply with other legal obligations, particularly those under data protection legislation and the Equality Act 2010 (for example, the Public Sector Equality Duty). Further education and higher education settings should be especially mindful of duties to protect freedom of speech and academic freedom.

## **Prevent's objectives**

The objectives of Prevent are to:

- tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

## **Prevent delivery model**

The Prevent delivery model (Tackling the ideological causes of terrorism, Early intervention, Rehabilitation) sets out how we tackle the ideological causes that lead to radicalisation, intervene early to support those who are susceptible to radicalisation, and rehabilitate those who have already engaged with terrorism.

To tackle the ideological causes of terrorism, Prevent focuses on reducing the influence of radicalisers on susceptible audiences, as well as reducing the availability of, and access to, terrorist content. Our work to counter radicalisation and reduce permissive environments extends across academia, civil society, communities, government and industry. Prevent takes a partnership approach to disrupting radicalisers, including those who sow division and hatred, by working with local, regional and national partners, law enforcement agencies, and other government partners.

Prevent intervenes early by identifying people who are susceptible to radicalisation and providing support to those suitable for intervention. Where the police assess a radicalisation risk following a Prevent referral, a Channel panel will meet to discuss the referral, assess the risk and decide whether the person should be accepted into Channel. Once accepted, the panel agree a tailored package of support to be offered to the person. The panel is chaired by the local authority and attended by multi-agency partners such as police, education professionals, health services, housing and social services. Channel is a voluntary process, and people must give their consent before they receive support. In cases where the person is under 18 years of age, consent is provided by a parent, guardian or the agency that has responsibility for their care. Where risks cannot be managed in Channel, they will be kept under review by the police.

Rehabilitation seeks to reduce the risk of people who have been involved in terrorist-related activity, including those who have been convicted of offences. The Desistance and Disengagement Programme provides specialist Home Office-approved intervention providers to give support in the form of theological, ideological and practical mentoring to reduce the offending risk.

## **Threat and risk**

Prevent deals with all kinds of terrorist threats to the UK. Prevent's first objective is to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism. The ideological component of terrorism is what sets it apart from other acts of serious violence. Islamist ideology is resilient and enduring. Extreme Right-Wing ideology is resurgent. Other ideologies are less present, but still have the potential to motivate, inspire and be used to justify terrorism.

In the UK, the primary domestic terrorist threat comes from Islamist terrorism. Islamist terrorism is the threat or use of violence as a means to establish a strict interpretation of an Islamic society. For some this is a political ideology which envisions, for example, the creation of a global Islamic caliphate based on strict implementation of shari'ah law, drawing on political and religious ideas developed in the 20th century by Sayyid Qutb and Abdallah Azzam. Many adherents believe that violence (or 'jihad' as they conceive it) is not only a necessary strategic tool to achieve their aims, but an individual's religious duty.

Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism describes those involved in Extreme Right-Wing activity who use terrorist violence to further their ideology. These ideologies can be broadly characterised as Cultural Nationalism, White Nationalism and White Supremacism. Individuals and groups may subscribe to ideological trends and ideas from more than one category. Unlike Islamist terrorist groups, Extreme Right-Wing terrorists are not typically organised into formal groups with leadership hierarchies and territorial ambitions, but informal online communities which facilitate international links.

Prevent also tackles other ideologies and concerns that may pose a terrorist threat. Established terrorist narratives exhibit common themes such as antisemitism, misogyny, anti-establishment, anti-LGBT grievances and religious or ethnic superiority. Left-Wing, Anarchist and Single-Issue Terrorism currently represents a significantly smaller terrorist threat to the UK than Islamist terrorism or Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism and is not currently present in the UK at any significant scale (although there has been some activity that has met a terrorism threshold in recent years). The majority of related activity in the UK has consisted of lawful protest, and where these have involved violence, it has resulted in offences relating to public order.

Conspiracy theories can act as gateways to radicalised thinking and sometimes violence. In some cases, a blurring of ideologies with personal narratives makes it harder to assess the risk that people may pose. The need to understand motivation and intent is why in some cases it can take time for an incident to be declared terrorism or not, and why sometimes it remains unclear.

Counter-terrorism efforts encounter a range of personal and ideological motivations to violence, where a traditional terrorist narrative may only be part of a much more complex picture. Terrorists can hold a range of personal grievances alongside the primary ideology for committing an attack. Individuals are increasingly adopting a mix of ideas from different ideologies into their grievance narratives. This contributes to the increasing challenge of assessing the motivation behind an individual's violence, determining the most appropriate mitigations to put in place and judging whether or not that violence constitutes an act of terrorism. It is possible that violent adherents to movements and subcultures, such as Involuntary Celibacy (Incels), could meet the threshold of terrorist intent or action, should the threat or use of serious violence be used to influence the government or intimidate the public. [\[footnote 2\]](#)

Prevent work should always be aware of the risk presented by the people or group in question and recognise the agency of people in aligning with extremist groups. Encouraging susceptible people to commit acts of terrorism on their own initiative is a deliberate strategy of terrorist groups in their propaganda and is exacerbated by communities who glorify acts of violence against society or specific groups within it.

There is rapid proliferation of terrorist content on multiple online services. Research has demonstrated that the internet has become the 'preferred' avenue for those searching for terrorist propaganda or contacts. The internet continues to make it simpler for individuals and groups to promote and to consume radicalising content. Government analysis of the Terrorism Act (TACT) offenders and TACT-related offenders' radicalisation pathways in England and Wales found that online radicalisation had become the predominant pathway for an increasing proportion of TACT offenders.<sup>[footnote 3]</sup> Previously, it had been a hybrid pathway, involving both online and offline influences.<sup>[footnote 4]</sup> This can involve people, including a concerning number of children under the age of 18, committing offences by downloading and disseminating terrorist materials.

Prevent continues to monitor emerging radicalisation trends and ideologies to establish whether they represent a terrorism risk or play a role in radicalising people. [Annual statistics on the people referred to Prevent, which includes a breakdown of ideology and type of concern, can be found on GOV.UK](#). Information and analysis on extremist and terrorist ideologies is available from the [Commission for Countering Extremism](#), the government's 'centre of excellence' on counter extremism.

## Responding to the threat

### Security Threat Checks

At strategic leadership level, to ensure that all Prevent delivery and activity is guided by the threat, decision making within the Home Office's Homeland Security Group and Counter Terrorism Policing is informed by the Security Threat Check (STC). This is a series of principles as set out below:

\* Is this action mindful of the UK's current terrorism and extremism threat picture?

- Is this action proportionate when placed against the UK's current terrorism and extremism threat picture?
- Is this action likely to reduce the threat of terrorism or terrorist-adjacent narratives?

While the STC is recommended for strategic Prevent boards in the Home Office's Homeland Security Group and for Counter Terrorism Policing, local authorities



should also conduct the STC when developing their Prevent partnership plans. Other strategic Prevent boards should consider whether these principles could be helpful to inform their decision making, such as when developing action plans in response to local risk assessments or [counter-terrorism local profiles](#).

In fulfilling their responsibilities under the Prevent duty, specified authorities should ensure any decisions taken are proportionate to the risk of terrorism and radicalisation in their local area, sector or institution. Local delivery should be tailored to reflect and respond to local threats.

For practitioners, it is key that, when carrying out functions under the Prevent duty, they are mindful of the need for proportionality. A risk-based approach should always be followed, using professional judgement and curiosity. There should be one consistent and proportionate threshold applied to Prevent activity across all extremist ideologies and radicalisation concerns. Where frontline professionals have identified a concern that they consider requires a referral into Prevent, it is important that they can indicate why this risk is relevant to Prevent. As Prevent is a counter-terrorism capability, the presence, or possible presence, of any terrorist or terrorism-linked ideology will be an important consideration.

## **Susceptibility to radicalisation**

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. Most people who commit terrorism offences do so of their own agency and dedication to an ideological cause.

There is no single profile of a radicalised person, nor is there a single pathway or 'conveyor belt' to being radicalised. There are many factors which can, either alone or combined, lead someone to subscribe to terrorist or terrorism-supporting ideology. These factors often include exposure to radicalising influences, real and perceived grievances – often created or exacerbated through grievance narratives espoused by extremists – and a person's own susceptibility.

A person's susceptibility to radicalisation may be linked to their vulnerability. [A person can be vulnerable](#) if they need special care, support or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect. A person's vulnerabilities may be relevant to their susceptibility to radicalisation and to the early intervention approach that is required to divert them away from radicalisation.

In other cases, vulnerabilities may not be present or relevant to the early intervention approach required. Not all people susceptible to radicalisation will be vulnerable, and there are other circumstances, needs or other underlying factors that may make a person susceptible to radicalisation but do not constitute a vulnerability.



## Early intervention: referral to Prevent

### Referral

Prevent's second objective is to intervene early to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. This means providing bespoke interventions for people who are susceptible to radicalisation.

Prevent referrals are likely to be made in the first instance by people who come into contact with those who appear to be at risk of being radicalised. There is no single model of a person's radicalisation journey or single profile of a radicalised person. Frontline professionals, when deciding whether to make a referral, should consider whether they believe the person they are concerned about may be on a pathway that could lead to terrorism.

Signs that extremist views are being adopted, including changes in behaviour that might signal a concern, can be used to consider whether a referral should be made to seek support under Prevent. In determining whether a concern meets the threshold for referral to Prevent, it is important to consider the harm posed to the person, as well as whether accessing support through Prevent might stop potential wider societal harm committed by the person.

The process will vary, but when a concern is identified, the [notice, check, share procedure](#) should be applied as outlined in the Prevent duty GOV.UK awareness course. Specified authorities should use the Prevent [national referral form](#).

Often, the concern will be escalated to the organisation or institution's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Prevent lead to check. If there is a concern about potential radicalisation or a reason to believe that someone is at risk of becoming involved in terrorism or supporting it, a referral should be made to police, who will assess whether the person is suitable to be considered by a Channel panel for support.

Anyone making a referral should ensure there is concern that someone may be susceptible to becoming involved in terrorism or supporting it. There may be times when the precise ideological driver is not clear. Yet, like any safeguarding mechanism, it is far better to receive referrals which turn out not to be of concern than for someone who genuinely needs support to be missed.

Providing feedback on referrals is not always possible to protect the confidentiality of the person referred once received by police.

If you are unsure whether a concern constitutes a Prevent referral, we encourage seeking advice from your DSL (or equivalent), local authority Prevent lead or police, in the first instance. Consideration should also be given to whether the person may

be susceptible to radicalisation or may instead be more suitable for a different type of support or safeguarding referral.

Further guidance on making a referral and how to apply the notice, check, share procedure can be found by completing the [GOV.UK Prevent duty training](#).

For members of the public who have concerns about someone being radicalised into terrorism or supporting terrorism, the [ACT Early](#) website offers advice and guidance, including signs of radicalisation to look out for, case studies and information on how to share those concerns.

### **Gateway assessment**

Once a referral is submitted to Prevent, it is assessed by specialist police officers and staff. These officers determine whether there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a person is susceptible to becoming a terrorist or supporting terrorism and should therefore be considered by the Channel panel for support through Prevent. This is called a 'gateway assessment'. If other support mechanisms are simultaneously required or being considered, these should proceed unless there is a good reason not to do so.

The police officers and staff who are assessing whether a referral should progress through to Channel will draw on robust decision-making frameworks to determine whether a referral meets the threshold for Prevent, and to ensure that a consistent threshold is applied. This includes, but is not limited to:

- determining the presence of an ideological driver
- determining what harm may be caused by the person (or could be caused to the person being referred)
- considering factors such as a person's agency, as well as any predisposition to exploitation

Those making an assessment will use a combination of frameworks, guidance and professional judgement to ensure there is no disparity in the threshold for making a referral dependent on ideology. Ensuring that specialist police officers and staff assessing referrals have appropriate training, including on ideology, will help to ensure consistent decision making.

### **Channel**

The gateway assessment should determine the most appropriate forum to discuss the referral. Those who are appropriate for consideration at Channel are subject to a further, more detailed Prevent assessment led by the Channel case officer. This assessment is informed by information sharing with wider Channel partners.

Once the gateway assessment and multi-agency information gathering is complete, where appropriate, and where the Channel panel agrees, the person may be adopted into Channel and receive tailored support to reduce their susceptibility to being radicalised into terrorism.

Channel is a multi-agency programme across England and Wales that provides support to people susceptible to becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, underpinned by Section 36 of the CTSA 2015. The person (or their parent or legal guardian, if under 18) referred to it must give consent before any support can be provided under Channel. [Further information on Channel is available on GOV.UK.](#)

Channel panels are chaired by the local authority, and attended by multi-agency partners such as police, education professionals, health services, housing and social services. They will meet to discuss the referral, assess the risk, and, if appropriate, agree a tailored package of support to be offered to the person. Channel is a voluntary process, and the person must give their consent (or, where appropriate, their parent's or guardian's consent should be obtained) before they receive support.

Where Channel is not considered suitable, alternative options will be explored where appropriate. The person may be offered alternative support, such as by mental health services or children's social care services. Where consent for Channel has not been given or the level of risk posed makes it unsuitable, the person can be considered for Police-led Partnerships. Police-led Partnerships cover the management of people, groups or institutions that are not suitable for Channel, but which have identified Prevent-relevant issues requiring support or mitigation. Police-led Partnerships are led by police but work in partnership with other agencies and employ many of the same type of approaches used within the multi-agency processes of Channel.

[Further details on referrals can be found on GOV.UK](#), and there may also be guidance specific to your sector.

### **Section 3: Compliance with the Prevent duty**

Compliance with the Prevent duty will look different across each specified authority, due to their different functions, structures and remits.

The risk of radicalisation will vary greatly, but no area, institution or body is risk free. All statutory partners will therefore need to consider the risk within their area, institution or body, and consider the type and scale of activity that is appropriate to address it.

This guidance sets out the expectations, requirements and recommendations for activity within each statutory sector, grouped into the following themes:

- leadership and partnership
- capabilities
- reducing permissive environments

By following this guidance, specified authorities will be well placed to comply with the Prevent duty.

The guidance also sets out monitoring and assurance arrangements for each sector.

## **Leadership and partnership**

Specified authorities should develop and maintain appropriate leadership and partnership working to help them have due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

### **Leadership**

Within each specified authority there should be a designated person in a leadership position who is responsible for overseeing Prevent delivery, including ensuring that relevant staff have appropriate training and induction. How Prevent is delivered within each service, institution or body will vary. For example, some specified authorities may use dedicated Prevent roles, whereas others may deliver Prevent through wider safeguarding duties.

For all specified authorities, leadership in delivering Prevent should be demonstrated by:

- ensuring staff understand the risk of radicalisation that results in support for terrorism or involvement in terrorism by making sure they can access training resources and further guidance
- building and promoting the capabilities to deal with radicalisation concerns, such as a formal pathway to escalate concerns and refer through to Prevent
- promoting the importance of Prevent and the role staff play in countering terrorism

### **Partnership working**

Effective partnership is a key component of delivering Prevent. To demonstrate compliance with the duty, specified authorities should work with local Prevent leads,

the police and local authorities. This should be facilitated through multi-agency forums, such as local, regional or national strategic Prevent boards.

Where a Prevent referral is adopted, specified authorities must co-operate as reasonably practicable with local authority-led Channel panels, in accordance with Section 38 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015). Further details are outlined in the [Channel duty guidance](#). Multi-agency involvement in Channel is essential to ensure the full range of information is accessible to the panel, so that susceptibility, vulnerabilities, risk and support needs can be fully assessed.

## Capabilities

Specified authorities should develop and maintain appropriate capabilities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being radicalised into terrorism. They will be well placed to do so by having capabilities for:

- understanding risk
- managing risk
- sharing information

## Understanding risk

### Training and induction

It is important that specified authorities know why radicalisation is relevant to their setting and how it may present. As a starting point, all specified authorities should demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the risk of radicalisation by ensuring and recording that appropriate staff undertake training, particularly on radicalisation. By understanding the risk, as well as how to raise a concern, those under the Prevent duty play a role in ensuring that people who are at risk of being radicalised can have their views challenged where appropriate, receive suitable support and be diverted away from terrorism.

People with responsibility for Prevent within a specified authority should ensure that relevant staff have appropriate training on Prevent.

We anticipate that appropriate training may differ depending on a person's role. This guidance makes sector-specific recommendations, and specified authorities should ensure they undertake any training required for their sector at the earliest opportunity to ensure they are adequately equipped for their role. The frequency and type of

training required may depend on factors such as the local context and risk, or the nature of their responsibilities and functions, and should be determined by an organisational assessment of training needs.

Radicalisation is a personal and individual process, which will look different from person to person. When talking about the 'risk of radicalisation', it is therefore challenging to describe exactly what it looks like. Various signs or indicators may signal a person is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism.

There are resources and guides that specified authorities can access to improve their understanding and awareness of radicalisation. The Home Office's Prevent page on GOV.UK sets out in further detail how to spot the signs of radicalisation and [what to do if you are concerned about someone](#). This is supported by the [Prevent duty training, also on GOV.UK](#). Each specified authority may also provide their own supplementary training and guidance.

Staff who engage with the public should understand what radicalisation means and why people may be susceptible to extremist ideologies used to encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism. They should be aware of the terms 'radicalisation', 'terrorism' and 'extremism'.

Staff should know what measures are available to prevent radicalisation into terrorism and how to recognise the extremist ideologies that drive people to become terrorists or support terrorism. Staff should have awareness of the signs of radicalisation and should understand how to escalate and refer concerns to Prevent. In some cases, this may mean contacting their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent, who would then be able to assist with referring onwards to Prevent, either by contacting the police or local authority.

Those with Prevent-specific responsibilities, such as DSLs, are likely to require additional, more regular training so they can support others on Prevent matters and update them on relevant issues.

The Home Office offers free [GOV.UK Prevent duty training](#) to support those under the duty. Other support, including face-to-face training, may be available. We expect all frontline staff working for specified authorities to have reasonable and appropriate understanding of extremist and terrorist ideologies, and training should be provided on this.

## Managing risk

### Risk assessment



As well as ensuring that staff are appropriately trained, specified authorities should understand their risks regarding radicalisation. Conducting a risk assessment will help to build understanding of national, regional and local risks, and will help to tailor approaches and manage risk accordingly. Engaging with partners will help to build understanding of the threats and risks. It may be appropriate to include risks around radicalisation as part of broader organisation risk assessments.

Specified authorities should have proportionate and appropriate capabilities to manage risk. This should include having a clear approach to deal with radicalisation concerns, which is outlined either within existing policies or a separate Prevent-specific policy. It should also include processes to advise how concerns should be handled, including who should be contacted within an organisation. The Prevent [national referral form](#) should be used when making referrals.

## Sharing information

Specified authorities may need to share information about people to ensure, for example, that a person at risk of radicalisation is given appropriate support, such as on the Channel programme. When sharing personal data, specified authorities must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation as it applies to them.

It is important to remember that data protection legislation is not intended to prevent the sharing of personal data, but to ensure that it is done lawfully and with appropriate safeguards in place. While information-sharing should be considered on a case-by-case basis, it may be good practice in some circumstances – for example, where there is routine sharing – to have an information-sharing agreement in place.

The Information Commissioner's Office [provides advice on the requirements of the data protection legislation for organisations](#). There may be some circumstances where specified authorities, in the course of Prevent-related work, identify someone who may already be engaged in illegal terrorist-related activity. If someone is suspected of being involved in such activity, the police should be informed immediately.

[Further advice on information sharing can be found on GOV.UK](#)

## Reducing permissive environments

One way that Prevent seeks to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism is by limiting exposure to radicalising narratives, both online and offline, and to create an



environment where radicalising ideologies are challenged and are not permitted to flourish.

Radicalisers create and take advantage of permissive environments to promote or condone violence and to spread poisonous ideologies that undermine our values and society. When considering how to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism, it is also important to consider how radicalisers use extremist ideas and narratives to encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism. This includes in instances where the exact ideology is unclear. Established terrorist narratives exhibit common themes such as antisemitism, misogyny, anti-establishment, anti-LGBT grievances and religious or ethnic superiority. [GOV.UK Prevent duty training](#) provides further information on extremist narratives.

Limiting the potential harm and influence of radicalisers, as well as extremist narratives and content reasonably linked to terrorism, can help to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. This includes limiting the use of permissive online environments or other platforms, which can contribute to radicalisation by facilitating exposure to terrorist and extremist content, and enabling networking with like-minded people.

Encouragement of terrorism, including glorifying the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism, fundraising for the purposes of terrorism, and inviting support for a proscribed terrorist organisation, are all criminal offences. Specified authorities should not provide a platform for an offence to be committed, or facilitate this activity through provision of endorsement, funding or other forms of support.

It is important for specified authorities to identify and consider opportunities to disrupt those who seek to radicalise others into conducting terrorism-related activity or supporting terrorism, or who perpetuate extremist ideologies linked to terrorism. This may mean having policies in place that, where appropriate, limit radicalising influences (including online), or ensure that facilities are not used inappropriately. It could mean challenging extremist ideas often linked to terrorism or a terrorist ideology, some of which may encompass more broadly harmful ideas, such as misogyny and antisemitism, or the concept of blasphemy to justify or condone violence.

It is also important that Prevent funding does not go to organisations or people whose views create an environment in which terrorism is encouraged or supported. Specified authorities should consider whether there are risks involved in their work with particular groups or individuals, such as providing legitimacy to terrorist-linked organisations or potentially damaging their reputation for making Prevent referrals. Specified authorities should carefully consider who they award Prevent funding or contracts to and should ensure that appropriate due diligence is undertaken. Additionally, when seeking advice on the Prevent duty from external parties, specified authorities should be aware that some people or organisations might

actively promote non-compliance with the Prevent duty and so specified authorities should take appropriate steps.

Any actions taken to reduce the permissive space for radicalisation should be proportionate, lawful and appropriate. Specified authorities should consider any relevant guidance issued to their sector, as well as their corresponding section of this guidance, to help understand sector-specific considerations.

## **Section 4: Monitoring and assurance**

All specified authorities must comply with the duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015). To ensure consistency and proportionate delivery, each authority should maintain appropriate records to show compliance with the Prevent duty. This should include keeping track of any Prevent training being undertaken by staff. Specified authorities should consider their record-keeping arrangements for Prevent referrals to ensure they are proportionate and appropriate, while also being mindful of requirements under data protection legislation (for example, the principle of storage limitation).

Monitoring and assurance will be supported by existing assurance processes in specific sectors. These are detailed under each sector-specific section.

Implementation of the Prevent duty is subject to cross-government ministerial oversight. The Home Office works closely with other government departments, devolved governments and Counter Terrorism Policing to maintain oversight of Prevent delivery. Counter Terrorism Policing handle all Prevent referrals, assessing them for risk and appropriateness for Prevent support.

Where Prevent activity has fallen short of the standards set out in this guidance, practitioners and the public may raise concerns through an independent complaints function.<sup>[\[footnote 5\]](#)</sup> Ministers also have the power to instruct investigations through this function, including in the event of a reported failure of statutory partners to uphold the Prevent duty. This function is complementary to existing sector-specific assurance and complaints processes (as detailed in each sector-specific section). The findings will be anonymised and published on GOV.UK

Where a specified body is not complying with the duty, the Secretary of State may use the power of direction under Section 30 of the CTSA 2015 to give directions. These directions may be enforced by court order.

## Central support and monitoring

The Home Office oversees Prevent activity in all local areas and may award funding to support delivery.

The Home Office will:

- draw together data about implementation of Prevent from local and regional Prevent leads (including those in safeguarding roles with Prevent duties in health and education), the police, intelligence agencies, and other departments and inspection bodies where appropriate
- monitor and assess Prevent delivery in all local areas
- set the overall direction for Prevent policy and delivery across relevant government departments and specified partners
- uphold governance mechanisms overseeing the implementation of Prevent
- guide strategic decision making by conducting a [Security Threat Check](#)

## Section 5: Sector-specific guidance

### Education

Children and young people continue to make up a significant proportion of Channel cases, and in recent years there have been concerns regarding increased numbers of learners being arrested for terrorism-related offences. Educators are often in a unique position, through interacting with learners on a regular basis, to be able to identify concerning behaviour changes that may indicate they are susceptible to radicalisation. Settings should not only be alert to violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, including certain divisive or intolerant narratives which can reasonably be linked to terrorism. [Educate Against Hate](#) and [GOV.UK Prevent duty training](#) provide further information on extremist narratives.

Education settings that are subject to the Prevent duty (as outlined in the specified authorities section) should understand these requirements as part of their wider safeguarding and welfare responsibilities. For schools and colleges, this guidance should be read alongside relevant safeguarding guidance. In England, this includes [‘Working together to safeguard children’](#) and [‘Keeping children safe in education’](#). In Wales, it should be read alongside [‘Keeping learners safe’](#).

The Department for Education has also published supporting advice for schools and further education settings on [managing the risk of radicalisation](#) in their education setting.

Compliance with the Prevent duty will reflect existing good practice on safeguarding. For example, it will ensure susceptibility to radicalisation is incorporated into safeguarding training, policies and risk assessments. It is not anticipated that compliance will result in additional burdens on settings.

This guidance uses the term ‘setting’ to refer to all education providers who are specified authorities subject to the Prevent duty, and the term ‘learner’ to refer to pupils and students across all phases of education provision.

## Specified authorities

The schools and registered childcare settings specified in [Schedule 6 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 \(CTSA 2015\)](#) are as follows:

- the proprietors of maintained schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained nursery schools, independent schools (including academies and free schools) and alternative provision academies
- 16 to 19 academies
- the management committees of Pupil Referral Units
- registered early years childcare settings
- registered later years childcare settings
- providers of holiday schemes for disabled children
- persons exercising local authority functions under a direction of the Secretary of State when the local authority is performing inadequately
- persons authorised by virtue of an order made under Section 70 of the Deregulation and Contracting Out Act 1994 to exercise a function specified in Schedule 36A to the Education Act 1996

The further education institutions specified in Schedule 6 to the CTSA 2015 fall into the following categories:

- further education providers which are subject to the Ofsted inspection regime in Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and which receive funding from the Secretary of State or a combined authority established under [Section 103 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009](#) – further education institutions in Wales are funded by the Welsh Government
- commissioned contract holders funded by the Welsh Government to deliver apprenticeships and employability programmes

- the governing body or proprietor of a further education provider at which more than 250 students, excluding students undertaking distance learning courses, are undertaking courses in preparation for examinations related to qualifications regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations (Ofqual) or are regulated by Qualifications Wales or the Welsh Government

The higher education institutions specified in Schedule 6 of the CTSA 2015 are as follows:

- the governing body of qualifying institutions within the meaning given by Section 11 of the Higher Education Act 2004 ('Relevant Higher Education Bodies', or 'RHEBs'), and the Higher Education Act 2015 (Wales)
- the governing body or proprietor of institutions (not otherwise listed) at which more than 250 students, excluding students undertaking distance learning courses, are undertaking higher education courses mentioned in Schedule 6 to the Education Reform Act 1988

These include in particular:

- providers that are registered with the Office for Students (OfS) in England or regulated by Higher Education Funding Council Wales (HEFCW) in Wales
- providers that are not registered with the OfS in England or regulated by HEFCW in Wales but have more than 250 higher education students (excluding students on distance learning courses)
- institutions delivering courses that are designated for student support by the Secretary of State or by Welsh ministers
- the autonomous constituent colleges, schools and halls of the Universities of Cambridge, Durham and Oxford

## **Leadership and partnership**

This section should be read alongside Section 3: Compliance with the Prevent duty, [Leadership and partnership](#).

All education providers should have a designated lead in a senior management role who is responsible for the delivery of Prevent. They should ensure that there are appropriate capabilities (to understand and manage risk) and that the role and importance of Prevent is made clear to relevant staff.

Particularly for large and multi-site organisations and institutions, management and co-ordination should consider the size and organisational arrangements, so information is shared appropriately, with a clear point of contact for operational delivery of Prevent activity.

Where a Prevent referral is adopted, education providers must co-operate as reasonably practicable with local authority-led Channel panels, in accordance with Section 38 of the CTSA 2015, with details of what co-operation includes outlined in the Channel duty guidance. Multi-agency involvement in Channel is essential to ensure the full range of information is accessible to the panel, so that susceptibility, vulnerabilities, risk and support needs can be fully assessed.

Effective partnership can also be demonstrated by engaging appropriately where required with other partners, such as the police and Prevent leads in local authorities. This allows for an up-to-date awareness of risk and threat posed, and latest developments in best practice.

More information on the role of Channel panels and the requirements of panel members can be found by consulting the [Channel duty guidance](#).

Training is also available for those who may be asked to contribute to, or sit on, a Channel panel.

## Capabilities

This section should be read alongside Section 3: Compliance with the Prevent duty, [Capabilities](#).

## Understanding risk

### Training and induction

Education settings should make sure that relevant staff have training that could help them prevent learners from being radicalised into terrorism. This training should be delivered at the earliest opportunity to ensure staff are adequately equipped for their role.

We would expect appropriate members of staff to understand the factors that lead people to support terrorist ideologies or engage in terrorist-related activity. Such staff should have sufficient training to be able to recognise susceptibility to terrorism and be aware of what action to take in response, including the setting's internal Prevent referral arrangements.

It is for each setting to determine who the appropriate members of staff are and how frequently training should occur, being proportionate to the risk of terrorism and



extremism in their local area and their phase of education or type of setting. Planning for staff training should include considering what level of knowledge is proportionate for different roles. This will include staff who interact most frequently with learners, but also those who are responsible for overseeing adherence with the Prevent duty or those with specific functions to undertake, such as those who manage external speakers and events, and external agencies and partners with relevant responsibilities.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) or Prevent lead in the setting should receive more in-depth training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make referrals and how to work with Channel panels. It is recommended that this training is updated at least every two years, enabling the lead to support other staff on Prevent matters and update them on relevant issues. This could include the trends in the annually published [Prevent referral statistics](#), relevant local or regional incidents, or new resources and training materials. For the settings where it applies, these requirements are consistent with those set out in '[Keeping children safe in education](#)'.

Consideration should be given to the appropriateness and reliability of training resources. Settings should consider carefully whether the material they use is suitable for their context and from an authoritative source and not – for example, material that includes advice which undermines or frustrates the purposes of Prevent, such as promoting non-compliance. It is recommended that providers undertake their own due diligence before taking advice or using training resources from external organisations. Further advice on training may be provided by your local authority safeguarding team and government quality assured resources are available on [Educate Against Hate](#). [Guidance on using appropriate external agencies for schools in England](#), particularly with regard to political impartiality requirements, is available on GOV.UK.

### Government training sources

The [GOV.UK Prevent duty training](#) service is free to access and provides courses covering Prevent awareness, the referral process, Channel and a refresher awareness course.

Schools and further education providers can get additional training materials, resources and practical guidance covering extremism and radicalisation from the Department for Education's [Educate Against Hate](#) website.

Higher education providers can access additional [training materials on GOV.UK](#)

## Managing risk



## Risk assessment

Education settings should have robust safeguarding policies in place to ensure that those at risk of radicalisation are identified and appropriate support is provided. Settings should consider the process for how learners or staff raise concerns regarding radicalisation internally and the approach for submitting a Prevent referral, including use of the Prevent [national referral form](#). These policies and procedures will help an institution satisfy itself and government that it is able to identify and support people.

Policies should be proportionate and based on an understanding, shared with partners, of the threat and risk in the local area, the phase of education, and the size and type of setting. Each setting should perform a risk assessment which assesses how their learners or staff may be at risk of being radicalised into terrorism, including online. Where specific risks are identified, settings should develop an action plan to set out the steps they will take to mitigate the risk. This guidance does not prescribe what appropriate decisions would be as this will be up to settings to determine, having considered all the factors.

This does not mean that settings are required to have a separate policy on the Prevent duty. The Prevent duty should be seen as part of the setting's wider safeguarding approach, and therefore these considerations should be incorporated into existing policies and risk assessments, where appropriate to do so. As part of this, settings should include the process for how learners or staff should raise concerns regarding radicalisation internally, and how these are then assessed.

When devising policies and conducting risk assessments, settings should consider other relevant responsibilities and requirements. This includes the Equality Act 2010 and the requirements of data protection legislation. In schools, settings should also consider political impartiality requirements, and further education and higher education settings should be especially mindful of duties to protect freedom of speech and academic freedom (including under Section 31 of the CTSA 2015). Where a setting has sub-contracted the delivery of courses to other settings, we expect procedures to be in place to ensure that the sub-contractor is aware of the Prevent duty.

There are non-statutory self-assessment tools available to assist [schools](#) and [further education providers](#) in understanding how well embedded their existing policies and practices are. Advice on [understanding and identifying radicalisation risk in your education setting](#) is also available.

For schools and further education providers, additional [non-statutory advice on managing the risk of radicalisation](#), including considerations regarding making a Prevent referral, is available on GOV.UK. They should consider this alongside wider relevant safeguarding guidance, including '[Keeping children safe in education](#)'.

For higher education, there are [training materials on risk assessments and action plans](#) available on GOV.UK. The Office for Students has also published a webinar for higher education settings on [conducting risk assessments](#).

Where relevant, settings should consider other additional guidance, including:

- Chapter 1 of '[Working together to safeguard children](#)', which includes a myth-busting guide to information sharing
- '[Keeping children safe in education](#)'
- '[Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#)'
- '[Keeping learners safe](#)' (Wales)

### **Student unions and societies**

Where relevant, policies should set out what is expected from students' unions and student societies in relation to Prevent. We would expect settings to engage and consult students on their plans for implementing the duty and for students' unions and student societies to work closely with their setting and co-operate with their policies.

Student unions which are charitable bodies and registered with the Charity Commission are subject to charity laws and regulations, including those that relate to preventing terrorism. Charitable bodies should make clear in their policies how they will protect people from harm. They should follow the guidance in '[Protecting charities from abuse for extremist purposes](#)'. This advises that trustees should actively manage the risk of speakers or literature breaking the law, for example by:

- encouraging or glorifying terrorism
- inciting hatred on the grounds of race, religion or sexual orientation
- inciting criminal acts or public order offences

Higher and further education providers should also consider whether student union staff and elected officers would benefit from online Prevent awareness training, including the Home Office e-learning offer, or other relevant training provided by the Charity Commission, regional Prevent co-ordinators or others.

### **Sharing information**

As part of their existing approach to safeguarding, settings should already have robust procedures for sharing information, both internally and externally. Information sharing is vital in promoting the welfare of learners and staff. Failure to share relevant information can affect the safety, welfare and educational outcomes of learners. As

part of this, the setting should have a clear policy on their approach for submitting a Prevent referral, including use of the Prevent [national referral form](#).

When seeking to share personal data regarding people susceptible to radicalisation, practitioners should consider whether it is appropriate to rely on the person's consent and must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. Where it is not possible to rely on consent, it is still possible to share information if there is a [lawful basis](#) for doing so.

In schools and colleges, it is important to refer to requirements set out in '[Keeping children safe in education](#)' in England, or '[Keeping learners safe](#)' in Wales. This includes ensuring that when a child leaves a school or college, relevant information about engagement with Channel and the outcome of this should be securely transferred within the appropriate child protection file. This enables the new setting to have support in place in advance of a child joining.

Settings can find information on their obligations and how to comply at the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).

## **Reducing permissive environments**

This section should be read alongside Section 3: Compliance with the Prevent duty, [Reducing permissive environments](#).

Taking action to limit the potential harm and influence of radicalisers, as well as extremist narratives and content which can reasonably be linked to terrorism, can help reduce the risk of people from becoming terrorists or from supporting terrorism. [GOV.UK Prevent duty training](#) provides further information on extremist narratives.

Settings should have measures in place to prevent their facilities being exploited by radicalisers. This includes seeking to ensure that any event spaces or IT equipment are not being used to facilitate the spread of extremist narratives which encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism. Such measures will help to limit access to platforms that can be used to radicalise others.

This does not mean that the Prevent duty should limit discussion of these issues. Instead, education settings should be spaces in which people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including, where appropriate, terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas.

When doing so, settings should encourage learners to respect other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Further and higher education institutions must have particular regard to a need or relevant duty to ensure freedom of speech, and to the importance of academic freedom.

Specified authorities should carefully consider who they award Prevent funding or contracts to and ensure that appropriate due diligence is undertaken. Additionally, when seeking advice on the Prevent duty, specified authorities should be aware that some people, groups or organisations purporting to give such advice might encourage them not to comply with the Prevent duty.

### Building resilience through the curriculum (schools and further education)

Schools and further education settings support learners to have the knowledge, skills and values that will prepare them to be citizens in modern Britain. As part of this, in England, they are required to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

In addition to preparing learners for life in modern Britain, by promoting these shared values, settings can help build resilience to radicalisation and extremism. For example, they can provide a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping learners to understand how they can influence and participate in decision making.

For schools, there are opportunities in the curriculum to explore relevant topics, such as in Citizenship and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). This includes learning around building positive relationships and the importance of respecting difference, and, for example, taking part in the United Nations Rights Respecting Schools Programme. Schools can also build resilience through their ethos and the ways in which they organise themselves, including by promoting democracy through school elections.

When considering how to build learners resilience to radicalisation, schools and further education settings should take a proportionate approach, accounting for the age of the learners and type of education being offered.

In doing so, schools in England must also be mindful of their existing duties on political impartiality and to ensure the balanced presentation of political issues. [Guidance on political impartiality is available on GOV.UK](#)

In Wales, independent schools set their own curriculum, but must comply with Independent Schools Standards made by the Welsh ministers. These standards also include a requirement to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners.

The Department for Education publishes learning materials and resources for schools and further education providers on how to challenge radical views on [Educate Against Hate](#).

This includes specific resources on how to have conversations related to different forms of extremism, including [Islamist extremism](#) and [Extreme Right-Wing ideology](#). [There is also a specific resource on online extremism](#).

[Guidance on promoting fundamental British values is also available on GOV.UK](#)

For early years, the [foundation stage statutory framework](#) supports providers to do this in an age-appropriate way, through ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children, and value other views.

### **IT policies**

Settings will likely already have policies relating to the appropriate use of their IT equipment and networks, which should contain specific reference to the Prevent duty. Many settings already use filtering as a means of restricting access to harmful content and should consider the use of filters as part of their overall strategy to prevent people from becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism.

The content and proportionality of these policies are a matter for providers and will be informed, in part, by the Prevent risk assessment.

For further and higher education providers, there should be clear policies in place for students and staff using IT equipment and networks to research terrorism and counter-terrorism in the course of their learning. [Universities UK has published advice](#) on this.

For schools and colleges in England, [‘Keeping children safe in education’](#) and [‘Meeting digital and technology standards’](#) provides advice on appropriate filtering and monitoring systems. In Wales [‘Keeping learners safe’](#) should be followed.

The [UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance](#) on what appropriate filtering and monitoring might look like.

For higher education settings, the [Office for Students has published guidance on web filtering and monitoring](#), including effective practice.

[Jisc](#), an education charity focused on technology, can provide specialist advice and support to the further and higher education sectors to help providers ensure students are safe online and appropriate safeguards are in place.

### **External speakers and events**

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Settings should consider the extent to which any external speakers and events held on their premises pose a risk of radicalising learners into terrorism.

Encouragement of terrorism, including glorifying the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism, fundraising for the purposes of terrorism, and inviting support for a proscribed terrorist organisation, are all criminal offences. Settings should not provide a platform for these offences to be committed.

When deciding whether to host a particular speaker, settings should consider carefully whether the views being expressed, or likely to be expressed, constitute views that are used to encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism, or are shared by terrorist groups. It is recommended for settings to undertake their own due diligence to understand any risks around a particular speaker.

## **Schools**

As part of managing the risk of radicalisation, schools' safeguarding policies should set out clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by children themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised. In England, the Prevent duty complements schools' other responsibilities for ensuring that speakers do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

When using external agencies, schools in England must be mindful of their existing duties regarding political impartiality and ensure the balanced presentation of political issues. [Guidance on political impartiality is available on GOV.UK](#)

As part of the response to the Independent Review of Prevent, the Department for Education has committed to ensuring effective support is in place for those assessing the risk from external speakers in higher education, including on conducting effective due diligence. This will be made available on GOV.UK.

## **Monitoring and assurance**

This section should be read alongside Section 4: [Monitoring and assurance](#).

### **Schools and registered childcare settings**

Ofsted inspects the relevant specified authorities (as listed at the beginning of this section) in England. This includes ensuring that those with governance or oversight responsibilities for settings are fulfilling their statutory duties under the Prevent duty.



Privately funded independent schools in England are inspected either by Ofsted or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). Ofsted and ISI inspect against the Independent Schools Standards, which include that arrangements have been made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and that the setting has had regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

In Wales, all publicly-funded and independent schools are inspected by Estyn.

The Education Inspection Framework sets out how Ofsted inspects maintained schools, academies, non-association independent schools, further education and skills provision, and registered early years settings in England. Ofsted's current inspection framework for early years provision reflects the requirements in the early years foundation stage statutory framework. ISI's inspection framework sets out how it inspects independent schools in England, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings.

Inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the setting has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to identify learners who may need early help or who are at risk of harm or exploitation, including radicalisation. For Ofsted and ISI, this forms part of the leadership and management judgement. Governors in particular, must ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.