



→ [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) | Rules, guidance and support

→ [Brexit](#) | Check what you need to do

[Home](#) > [Education, training and skills](#) > [Further and higher education, skills and vocational training](#)
 > [Role-specific guidance for higher education \(HE\) providers on implementing the Prevent duty](#)



Department for Education

Guidance

Implementing the Prevent duty in higher education (HE): student support services

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Contents

- 1. [The role of student support services](#)
- 2. [Resources](#)

[Print this page](#)

1. The role of student support services

Student support services play a crucial role in the support of vulnerable students within higher education providers. Their role with respect to the Prevent duty varies considerably across different higher education providers, ranging from Directors of Student Support Services being the main Prevent contact to relatively minimal involvement on Prevent-specific intervention.

The [Prevent Guidance for higher education](#) places a requirement on higher education providers to provide appropriate staff training and student welfare programmes to enable staff to recognise changes in students' outlook and behaviour and respond appropriately. Similarly, appropriate staff are expected to have an understanding of the factors that make people support terrorist ideologies or engage in terrorist-related activity, to recognise vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and how to respond such as through an institutions' safeguarding procedures or the institution's process of referral to the [Channel programme](#).

Student support services within higher education providers may wish to consider which of their staff may encounter vulnerable students on a regular basis such as disability advisers, councillors, mentors and other frontline staff members that may benefit from additional training.

The Prevent guidance also requires the institution to have procedures in place, internally and externally, for sharing information about vulnerable individuals. This should include internal mechanisms and external information sharing agreements where possible. More widely, the guidance expects there to be sufficient chaplaincy and pastoral support available for all students, including clear and widely available policies for the use of prayer rooms and other faith-related activities. More guidance on chaplaincy is available on our [role-specific guidance for Chaplains](#).

2. Resources

Due to the long-established principle of providers having a duty of care to their students, many providers may already have policies and processes in place which align with the requirements of the Prevent duty.

The student services organisation [AMOSHE](#) is a useful forum through which to develop and share good practice on both Prevent and many other areas.

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[There is something wrong with this page](#)

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support](#)

Brexit

[Check what you need to do](#)

Services and information

[Benefits](#)

[Births, deaths, marriages and care](#)

[Business and self-employed](#)

[Childcare and parenting](#)

[Citizenship and living in the UK](#)

[Crime, justice and the law](#)

[Disabled people](#)

[Driving and transport](#)

[Education and learning](#)

[Employing people](#)

[Environment and countryside](#)

[Housing and local services](#)

[Money and tax](#)

[Passports, travel and living abroad](#)

[Visas and immigration](#)

[Working, jobs and pensions](#)

Departments and policy

[How government works](#)

[Departments](#)

[Worldwide](#)

[Services](#)

[Guidance and regulation](#)

[News and communications](#)

[Research and statistics](#)

[Policy papers and consultations](#)

[Transparency and freedom of information releases](#)

