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Student Search Policy		LS029	5
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LEAD PERSON	Director of Student Experience and Safeguarding		
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## STUDENT SEARCH POLICY

### Policy Statement

Activate Learning is dedicated to promoting the safety and wellbeing of all its students and protecting them from harm. The appropriate use of searching, screening, and confiscation powers plays a key role in ensuring the welfare of students, staff, and our wider community, contributing to safe and secure learning environments for all.

While we acknowledge that the majority of our students are trustworthy and adhere to our Code of Conduct, there may be instances where concerns arise regarding prohibited items that could pose a risk to individuals. In such situations, searching or screening students is a necessary and proportionate step to uphold the safety of all those who come into contact with Activate Learning.

We utilise the Department for Education (DfE) guidance on searching, screening, and confiscation. As part of our commitment to creating a safe learning environment and educating students about personal safety, we work alongside local services, such as the police, to implement screening methods aimed at detecting prohibited items. These measures form part of a broader programme of preventative education and enrichment activities, reinforcing the message that educational settings are safe spaces. All actions are carried out with sensitivity and respect for students' dignity, prioritising their safety while encouraging positive decision-making and supporting the safety of our wider community.

The policy fully acknowledges our legal obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 8 grants students the right to a reasonable expectation of personal privacy, though this right is not absolute - any interference must be justified and proportionate. Activate Learning exercises its search powers lawfully, as set out in the Education Act 1996, ensuring compliance with Article 8 while prioritising safety and security.

### Purpose

This policy outlines Activate Learning's approach to the screening, searching and confiscation of students, their property and halls of residence, when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student may be in possession of a prohibited or banned item. It applies to situations where a search is necessary to protect the safety and wellbeing of the college community.

The aim is to meet our legal and moral responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students, staff, volunteers, visitors, as well as our wider communities.

### Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Activate Learning, including further education, higher education, apprentices, and those residing in Activate Learning halls of residence.

### Responsibilities

All staff will:

- Be positive role models and enact the Learning Philosophy, utilising the principles of the Positive Behaviour Management Framework, Trauma Informed and Restorative Practice in the approaches they adopt.
- Promptly report any concerns about prohibited items to an authorised member of staff, such as the

Behaviour and Welfare Officer, Regional Head of Student Experience, Student Experience Team Leader (Bracknell & Wokingham and Farnham College's only), Accommodation Manager or a member of the Safeguarding Team.

- Immediately report safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Team, adhering to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Authorised members of staff will:

- Conduct all searches in strict accordance with the Student Search Policy and Procedure, ensuring consistency, fairness, and respect throughout the process. This includes notifying guardians of students under 18 or 25 with an EHCP.
- Prioritise the welfare and wellbeing of students during searches by considering their individual needs, including any protected characteristics, and using a trauma-informed approach combined with positive behaviour management techniques.
- Clearly communicate the reasons for the search to the student, explaining the process in a manner that reduces anxiety and ensures understanding.
- Record details of any search conducted, including the rationale, outcomes, and actions taken, to maintain transparency and accountability.
- Immediately escalate any safeguarding concerns identified during or after a search to the Safeguarding Team, following the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Work collaboratively with Faculty staff to ensure they are informed where appropriate and to coordinate any necessary follow-up meetings, disciplinary actions, or interventions, utilizing the Student Positive Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures.
- Receive regular updates on search protocols, safeguarding, trauma-informed practices, and diversity and inclusion to uphold high standards of practice.

All students will:

- Familiarise themselves with and adhere to the Student Code of Conduct (and Student Conduct and Behaviour in Accommodation, where appropriate) throughout their time with Activate Learning, understanding their responsibilities to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment.
- Promptly report concerns about prohibited or banned items to a member of Activate Learning staff to support the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others.
- Cooperate with staff during any search process, ensuring respectful and constructive engagement to facilitate a positive resolution.

## Commitment Statement

To fulfil our mission of transforming lives through learning, Activate Learning is dedicated to creating a safe and secure environment where students can thrive. We are committed to upholding our safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that searches and screening are conducted safely, proportionately, and appropriately, in line with our core values, trauma-informed approach and learning philosophy.

## References

Student Search Procedure  
Student Code of Conduct  
Student Conduct and Behaviour in Accommodation  
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy  
Safeguarding – Reporting a Concern Procedure  
Equality and Diversity Policy  
Student Positive Behaviour Management Policy  
Student Positive Behaviour Management Procedure  
Education Act 1996  
Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights  
Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006  
HM Government Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023  
DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools 2022  
DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education  
DfE Use of Reasonable Force in Schools  
Department for Science, Innovation & Technology Guidance: Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for

