

# Prevent monitoring accountability and data returns 2017-18

## Frequently asked questions

### **Which are the higher-risk providers?**

We are not actively publishing which providers we have assessed as higher-risk. We believe that doing so could increase the risk of radicalisation, as terrorist groups or their supporters may choose to target these providers and therefore undermine the Prevent programme.

### **Which provider did not demonstrate due regard? Will students be made aware of this?**

We don't comment on individual cases of non-compliance. We believe that doing so could increase the risk of radicalisation, as terrorist groups or their supporters may choose to target these providers and therefore undermine the Prevent programme. With regard to the provider in question, we have followed our published non-compliance procedure.

### **On what basis are they assessed as at higher risk?**

We assess providers on a number of factors, including their compliance track record, information and conclusions drawn from our core monitoring activities, wider regulatory information where appropriate, and information from our Prevent partners around wider risk and threat of radicalisation in a provider's locality. This helps us to have a broad overview at any provider of the risk of future non-compliance with the duty.

### **Why are the Channel referrals dropping? Surely this suggests providers are not investigating cases thoroughly?**

Providers have showed us evidence that they have welfare processes that can pick up Prevent concerns and that they are actively using them. This often means that they are identifying concerns, concluding that cases are not Prevent-related, and providing students with the appropriate support. However, we understand that Channel referrals don't happen often and therefore we are undertaking a thematic review to explore why this is the case. This is to reassure the OfS that providers are acting appropriately when handling any initial Prevent-related welfare cases, and to identify good practice or areas where further information advice and guidance may be needed.

### **Prevent guidance to universities has been found to be unlawful – will it be scrapped?**

Only one specific paragraph of the guidance for the higher education sector has been found to be unlawful. The remainder of the statutory guidance remains valid and we're continuing to monitor providers on that basis. The government has commissioned an independent review of the Prevent duty which will report back to Parliament in the next 18 months.

### **How do you ensure training for staff is consistent?**

We need to take account of the sector's diversity, and therefore training approaches need to be tailored to what will work in any provider's context. We take assurance from providers that they have correctly identified key staff like safeguarding leads, staff who facilitate external speakers and others, to make sure they are able to identify Prevent-related issues. We ask providers to ensure that the training resources used are appropriate for the staff role and test this through our Prevent review meeting programme and through our engagement with providers. We monitor staff training numbers annually to make sure that providers are training their staff to help safeguard people from radicalisation.

### **What data is being collected on students?**

We collect data on the numbers of student welfare cases, both those that are Prevent-related and those that are not. For the latter, we are looking for cases where a provider has needed to put in measures place to support an individual, usually under a safeguarding policy. We ask for this information because a provider may not have a Prevent-related case in a particular year, but we still need assurance that safeguarding, or welfare policies continue to be used in practice, as this helps assure us that a Prevent case could be picked up and dealt with if presented in the future. We are not asking for data on specific types of cases (for example, mental health), or anything that would identify an individual from the data. We are also not drawing any broader conclusions on numbers of welfare cases reported across the sector.

### **For events or external speakers that were not approved, was Prevent monitoring cited as the reason?**

We have not found evidence of providers systematically not allowing events to proceed because of Prevent. We do not comment on individual events, but we have not seen any evidence that has caused us concern that providers are not appropriately balancing their free speech obligations with the Prevent duty. We remain mindful of the need to monitor this carefully, however, as we do not want providers over-interpreting their requirements under the duty and harming other legal responsibilities like free speech.