

Core Issues Trust
IFTCC and XOL
Safeguarding – Protection of People at Risk

Arrangements for protection of children and of adults at risk of harm.



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals – especially children, and adults at risk of harm – to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

If you are concerned about an immediate risk of harm to someone, report this immediately to the police in the country and region where that person is.

If the risk is not immediate or if you have any complaints, concerns, questions or observations relating to the protection of people, or the implementation of these arrangements, contact either:

Designated
Safeguarding Lead

Simon Wyatt
(UK)

Simon.Wyatt@
core-issues.org

Deputy
Safeguarding Lead

To be appointed

Introduction

Core Issues Trust (CIT), encompassing the work of the International Foundation for Therapeutic Choice in Counselling (IFTCC) and X-Out-Loud (XOL), operates transnationally, in many nations, different cultures, and across borders, but it is registered and organisationally based in the United Kingdom. These arrangements are for CIT, IFTCC and XOL.

‘Safeguarding’ is a term used primarily in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Australia to denote measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, which allow people (especially children, young people and adults at risk of harm) to live free from abuse, harm and neglect¹.

The principles behind this are universal and international but are applied differently across nations in a culturally and legally appropriate manner. This document uses the UK term ‘Safeguarding’ but applies the principles internationally.

Safeguarding is a universal responsibility, but its practical application becomes significantly more complex when working across international boundaries. Safeguarding in the UK is largely compliance-driven, with clear statutory frameworks and expectations. However, these frameworks do not always translate effectively into other cultural or legal contexts. In many countries, non-formal mechanisms – such as community-based approaches – are often more effective than simply importing UK standards. Those operating in countries other than the UK may appear to comply with external requirements, but unless safeguarding principles are made relevant to their context, true implementation is unlikely.

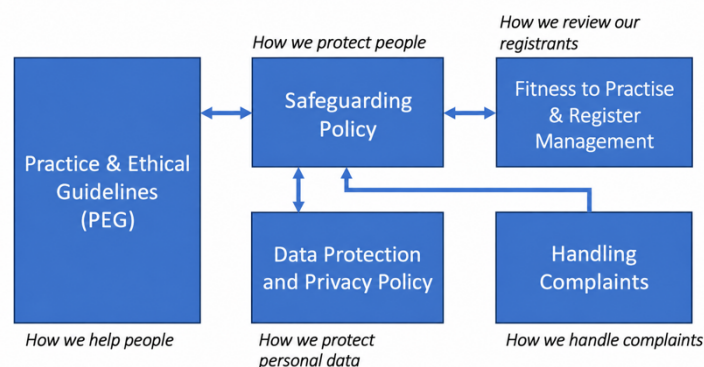
People’s ingrained ways of thinking and acting can prevent meaningful change if standards feel alien or irrelevant.²

The most effective safeguarding approach happens in partnership. Rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all, UK-based model, CIT works collaboratively with its overseas leaders and team members, particularly country representatives, project or event leaders and local partners. This means identifying key risks together, understanding who is particularly at risk and co-creating protective measures that are culturally and legally appropriate.³

This document sets out our safeguarding arrangements for activities, based on UK legislation and recognised good practice. It is to be applied fully for activities in the UK, including those conducted online where one or more participant is in the UK. For activities entirely outside the UK, the principles are still to be applied, as described above.

Governance and Responsibilities

The CIT Board has ultimate responsibility for these arrangements and will review their implementation and any issues arising, at least annually. The governance process is illustrated in the diagram below:



¹ <https://www.recoop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Module-5.1-Safeguarding-Term.pdf> slightly amended.

² Adapted from Thirtyone: eight ‘safeguarding in an international context.

³ Ibid, adapted.

The Board has appointed the following people to lead on ensuring their implementation:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Simon Wyatt
- Deputy Safeguarding Lead – *being appointed*

Principles of Protection

For all activities undertaken by or associated with CIT, IFTCC or XOL, the following principles apply.

Children (any person who has not reached their 18th Birthday) are always to be accompanied by a responsible adult who is responsible for their protection.

Adults with appropriate mental capacity have the opportunity to choose whether to attend CIT events or view CIT material (on line or otherwise). For any therapy, pastoral conversations or accompaniment activities, conducted in association with CIT, IFTCC or XOL, the individual must provide **informed recorded consent** to the activity.

If there is a concern that an adult may lack appropriate mental capacity, this must be assessed carefully; it may be necessary to seek support from someone who knows the individual well.

All activities are undertaken in line with the IFTCC Practice and Ethical Guidelines (PEG), described below.

Activities

CIT supports those leaving LGBT identities, behaviours, attractions and life choices⁴.

IFTCC supports providers of services to individuals seeking change of unwanted relational and sexual behaviours, attractions and patterns⁵.

XOL is a community celebrating the transformation and freedom men and women find when they voluntarily choose to leave unwanted same-sex or gender identities⁶.

This is achieved through the following activities:

- **Educating and training** the following groups of people, primarily through a structured online programme of learning⁷:
 - Counsellors and psychotherapists, who are already qualified in general psychotherapeutic practice, seeking to upskill their knowledge in this field.
 - Christian pastors and pastoral care workers, providing a structured approach to pastoral care, including the knowledge of when to refer persons to mental health professional services.
 - Those commissioning, conducting or managing research in this field.
- **Certifying** that these people have completed a comprehensive course of learning at basic, intermediate or advanced levels⁸.
- Preparing to **register** those who have completed an appropriate level of certification as accredited members of IFTCC, developing arrangements to manage this register.
- Providing the opportunity for people to attend an annual IFTCC **conference**. While open to all with an interest in this field, attendance is primarily intended for professionals seeking to provide services. It is not primarily intended for those seeking personal help, though some such people may attend.

⁴ [About Us | Core Issues Trust](#)

⁵ [Our Beliefs | IFTCC.ORG](#)

⁶ [Vision & Values | X-OUT-LOUD](#)

⁷ [IFTCC Learning](#)

⁸ The basic level will be launched imminently; the intermediate and advanced levels will follow.

- Providing the opportunity for people to attend **regional IFTCC events**, in different continents; and to respond to invitations to participate and present at events organised by partner organisations.
- Providing **occasional events** for members of the XOL community from different nations to come together, to support and learn from one another.
- Responding to **invitations** from partner organisations for XOL to support or run events in specific countries or regions.
- Delivering regular **podcasts** for the XOL community (notably **Disentangled**).
- Delivering occasional **other podcasts**.
- Responding to invitations from **Christian churches and other organisations** to explain the work of CIT, IFTCC and XOL, to describe the challenges facing individuals seeking change of unwanted relational and sexual behaviours, attractions and patterns, and to educate churches wanting to help such people.

CIT, IFTCC and XOL do not, themselves organisationally, provide **clinical counselling or therapy**, **pastoral care** or **accompaniment** to individuals seeking help. But:

- Some qualified leaders or team members in CIT, IFTCC or XOL may provide such support in a **personal capacity**;
- Those trained, certified and **registered** by IFTCC provide such support;
- Requests are sometimes received for such support from individuals, which are **referred** on to an appropriate provider.
The provider is responsible for safeguarding in these circumstances. But if the service references CIT, IFTCC⁹ or XOL, the provider must nonetheless comply with the principles of these arrangements and any complaint or concern received by CIT, IFTCC or XOL is to be investigated thoroughly, as described later.

Practice and Ethical Guidelines

All activities (as described above), including support provided to individuals where reference is made to CIT, IFTCC or XOL, are to be consistent with the IFTCC Practice and Ethical Guidelines (PEG). IFTCC registrants are required to commit to practising in line with the PEG. This foundational document is published separately and must be read in conjunction with these safeguarding arrangements, as illustrated earlier. Among other matters, the PEG contains:

- Principles for service provision
- Core guidelines for clinical practitioners
- Principles for approaches to transgender treatments
- Our pastoral care protocol
- A description of sexual attraction fluidity exploration in therapy (SAFE-T) protocol
- A description of the RADAR structured clinical decision-making framework.

Consent

Although CIT, IFTCC and X-Out-Loud are not healthcare providers, the principles of informed consent are fundamental to all activities involving education, pastoral engagement, professional training and any support offered in association with these organisations.

For many activities consent should be managed in a dynamic and informal manner. For example, there are many informal discussions at or in the margins of events and video or audio calls. For much of this

⁹ The IFTCC Policy on Training, Branding and Organisational Identity specifies the conditions under which the IFTCC name and branding can be used, and associated constraints.

consent is not needed, but with the nature of the activities, sometimes it becomes apparent that the conversation is with someone who is (perhaps inadvertently) seeking help. Care should be taken to identify when consent is appropriate, or whether a person is emotionally stressed by a conversation.

Initially it may be appropriate to seek oral consent to continue with the conversation, but care should be taken to see when to end an informal conversation and to seek recorded consent to a private discussion. When practitioners are providing support to individuals, whether that is clinical therapy, pastoral counselling or accompaniment, informed consent should be sought, given and recorded by the practitioner, using the following principles¹⁰:

1. Practitioners must establish what matters to the client and the outcome that they are seeking.
2. Clients have the right to be involved in decisions about the nature of their counselling / therapy and must be supported to make informed decisions.
3. Decision making is an ongoing process based on meaningful dialogue.
4. Clients must be listened to and given the information that they need to make a decision about the nature of their counselling / therapy.
5. Practitioners should start with the presumption that clients have capacity to make decisions. A client should only be judged to lack capacity to make a specific decision at a specific time. Where appropriate there should be consultation with those who are close to them or supporting them. Any therapy or counselling under these circumstances must be of overall benefit to them.

Children

For the purposes of these arrangements, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th Birthday. CIT, XOL and IFTCC does not intentionally support children directly. But children are not barred from attending events and thus children may engage in informal discussion leading to an implicit request for support or help. IFTCC registrants may also provide clinical or pastoral support to children.

The safety and welfare of children must always be considered, even when they are not being supported directly. When supporting adults, care must be taken to consider whether they pose a risk to children, and if so to report it appropriately.

For any discussion with children, they must be accompanied by a responsible adult who knows the child, and whom the child respects.

Confidentiality is important, but if a child is involved in abusive or seriously harmful sexual activity, this should be disclosed to appropriate authorities when it is in the public interest to do so. Any such situation should also be reported, confidentially, to the CIT Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any support provided to a child (or a decision to not offer support) must be in the best interests of the child. Children below the age of 13 do not have capacity to consent, but their wishes should be considered. Children above the age of 16 generally have the capacity to consent. Between these ages they *may* have the capacity to consent, depending on their maturity and ability to understand what is involved.

Fitness to Practise and Management of the IFTCC Register

Arrangements for this will be developed soon and before the register is opened for membership. The IFTCC must assess and investigate any safeguarding concerns that could arise from membership, that might put their client or any member of the public at risk of harm. These arrangements will include:

- Assessing an applicant for registered membership
- Reviewing a complaint about a registered member, considering suspension
- Considering restoration of a member to the register, following review of a complaint.

¹⁰ Adapted from the 7 principles in the UK GMC guidance on consent

Recruitment

CIT, IFTCC and XOL have no employees. They have unpaid leaders, people who provide a paid service under contract and volunteers, all from several different countries, mainly outside the UK. In their recruitment, great care must be taken to assess any risk that they pose to the protection of people at risk. They must be interviewed with the interviewer seeking information on any historical issues (including convictions) or risk factors. They must complete a written and signed declaration. References should be taken from two respected individuals. Additionally, for those resident in the UK, a disclosure and barring service (DBS) certificate should be obtained.

Training

All of the CIT, IFTCC and XOL team (leaders, consultants and volunteers) must conduct annual training in these arrangements which must be recorded. The training should ensure that everyone is aware of these arrangements (understanding the principles behind them) and is committed to their implementation, with any concerns arising from this investigated.

Data Protection and Privacy

Arrangements for the protection of personal data, including the privacy policy, data retention policy and arrangements for cyber-security are addressed in a separate Data Protection Policy.

Complaints and Concerns

If anyone becomes aware of an immediate risk of harm to an individual, they should report this to the relevant police force in the location of that individual.

For any other complaints, concerns, questions or observations relating to the protection of people or the implementation of these arrangements, contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

If the issue involves the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Board corporately, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead will review this confidentially and independently.

There is a separate complaints policy which describes how all complaints are handled.

Concerns can also be expressed to, and advice sought from, other local child or adult protection authorities in the nation and locality of the person at risk of harm.

Draft prepared by Andrew McFarlane, updating and revising previous issues.

Approved by the Core Issues Trust Board on 15th September 2026.

To be reviewed by 30th September 2027.