

Realising Opportunities

VIRTUAL EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT

Title of project or activity	Realising Opportunities (RO) Virtual National Student Conference (NSC) 2023, Saturday 11 March 2023, 10.00 – 15.00
Manager / Responsible person	Charlotte Crossley, RO Project Manager Email: charlotte.crossley@newcastle.ac.uk
School	Realising Opportunities External Relations Newcastle University
Date of assessment	13 December 2022
Location of work	The activities, for the purpose of this risk assessment, will all take place on University approved, GDPR compliant software, equipment and servers to ensure the safekeeping and protection of participant's personal information.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Dawn Dowling, Recruitment Manager Email: dawn.dowling@newcastle.ac.uk

1.1: Brief description of project or activity

This risk assessment covers work conducted online by Realising Opportunities (RO) and its close associates to ensure the protection of staff, Student Ambassadors and programme participants.

Students taking part in RO are in Year 12/first year college meaning the vast majority will be 16-18 years of age.

The National Student Conference (NSC) forms an integral part of the Realising Opportunities programme with students attending informative and interactive sessions, and engaging with staff and Student Ambassadors from the 14 Partner universities who make up the RO Partnership.

The NSC will take place on [iVent, a virtual events platform provider](#).

The event will take place on **Saturday 11 March 2023** from 10.00 – 15.00.

Below is the event schedule:

Time	Session		
09:30	Platform open to students and welcome video available to watch		
10.00 – 10.10	Students should join event by 10am to have time to watch welcome video		
10.10 - 10.55	1. My Research live session. Subject areas: a. Life and Health Sciences b. or Creative Arts and Humanities		
11.00 – 11.45	2. My Research live session. Subject areas: a. Engineering and Physical Sciences b. or Social Sciences		
11.45 – 12.00	Short refreshment break		
12.00 – 13.00	University Exhibition & Career Exhibition		

Social Space open

- ask current uni students about student life

Help Desk open all day

13.00 - 14.00	3. Afternoon live sessions		
	a. Student life at RIUs		
	b. <i>or</i> Student finance		
c. <i>or</i> Applying to university			
14.00 – 15.00	University Exhibition & Career Exhibition	Social Space open	

Students will have pre-access to the platform on a read-only basis from Wednesday 8 March. All students taking part in the conference have been asked to adhere to a [Code of Conduct](#). All staff will have training (including use of the platform and online safeguarding) before working the event.

Please note, for the purposes of this risk assessment, 'staff', unless otherwise specified, includes Student Ambassadors who will also be supporting with delivery of the conference and 'attendees' refers to the students attending the conference. Conference organisers are the RO Central Team and platform provider is iVent.

The vast majority of attendees will be under 18 years old. Attendees will not be able to communicate with each other at any point without a member of staff present. Staff and the RO Central Team will monitor any interactions that attendees have online, including via the Social Space, to protect student and staff safety while taking part in sessions. All live sessions will have at least two staff members present.

Live sessions will be recorded, and a log of the chat will be saved. The chat facility in the live session is to allow students to ask questions of session presenters about the session content. In the event of a breach of the student Code of Conduct, the recording and chat log will be utilised as evidence as part of any ensuing investigation.

No one-to-one live sessions between a single member of staff and a single attendee will take place. Video calls may be booked by attendees during the University Exhibition to allow students who prefer to ask questions and receive answers verbally (to the benefit of, for example, students with dyslexia). Two members of staff will be present during these appointments.

To mitigate the risk of inappropriate content being shared during the live sessions, attendee screen and audio sharing will be disabled for attendees in all sessions apart from during video calls with Partner university staff. There are open chat functions alongside each presentation area, the exhibitions and Social Space, however attendees will be unable to chat privately to one another.

2.1: Details of hazards, risks and implemented controls	
Hazard 1	Selection and procurement of online platforms
Risks	Platform unable to adequately monitor live (or private) chats, unable to record content, no reporting functionality or being unsuitable for GDPR compliance
Controls	- Ensure that the platform is rigorously re-tested in advance and that it is suitable for the age ranges -Conference organisers and iVent will update conferencing areas on the chosen platforms in advance, following a testing period with staff and guest speakers. - List events, age ranges and types of delivery functionality that the platform is capable of to safeguard against it being used incorrectly -The RO Central Team has commissioned a platform (iVent) which is sector approved and deemed safe for attendees of all ages. RO and iVent staff will be able to moderate the overall event space, as well as individual areas throughout the event to ensure attendees adhere to the behavioural expectations during the event. - The iVent platform has been assessed for GDPR compliance at procurement stage (November 2022) via the lead institution, Newcastle University -All staff will receive training on how to use the platform so they understand its functionality and how to monitor interactions and safeguard attendees.
Hazard 2	Selecting appropriate staff to work on the event
Risks	- Attendees having one to one communication in the chat (typed) function of a booth in the Careers Exhibition with one member of staff from an employer organisation - Staff/Student Ambassadors having had no previous training in online safeguarding.
Controls	The chat (typed) in all booths is recorded and logged. All staff, including those from employer organisations, will receive child protection and safeguarding training which will include the procedure for reporting a safeguarding concern. A member of the RO Central Team (all team

	members are trained on Newcastle University's Safeguarding framework and reporting procedure, and are DBS checked) will be on hand in the Career Exhibition to go between booths and monitor the chats. - Staffing is carefully considered and recruitment practises are rigorous -Staff recruit Student Ambassadors who are experienced in delivering online events and have a solid understanding of child safeguarding during online events. - Relevant training is delivered by the conference organiser. -Comprehensive training, including child safeguarding in virtual events, will be given to all staff to ensure consistency across all online work with attendees. -All staff will receive event briefs in advance of the event, outlining expectations from hosts and attendees when running and attending sessions. -All staff will receive training on how to use the platform and expectations on conduct will be reemphasised. Any staff unable to fulfil the requirements, will be unable to take part in the event.
Hazard 3	Ensuring event, platform & content is appropriate for the age group
Risks	- Inappropriate/unwanted content shared during the session – visual, audio or written messages - Unapproved users access the platform/live sessions.
Controls	- Forward planning to ensure that all content is tailored to guard against inappropriate/unwanted content being shared. -Staff presenting live will be the only staff who receive 'presenter' access and can share prepared content, i.e. presentation slides, answers to Q&A. RO Central Team will review content ahead of the event and be present to ensure content is and remains appropriate. -All attendees and speakers will receive guidance regarding expectations of conduct within public events and to treat all attendees with respect and dignity throughout the event as outlined in Newcastle University's External Speaker Code of Conduct. Attendees and speakers will be provided with RO Central Team contact details to report any inappropriate conduct or concerns throughout the day. -RO Central Team will monitor the platform to monitor and manage any risks throughout the event. - Within all areas of the events there are to be a minimum of 2 staff members to monitor each area, including exhibition spaces. Staff will be responsible for moderating chat functions for inappropriate content, as well as ensuring that functionality is working correctly and they can answer any queries from attendees. - Clearly directing students to tried and tested places in which to ask questions -No attendees will have access to share audio and visual content via the conferencing software apart from via video calls with staff in University Exhibition booths. Staff in video calls can mute and turn off attendees' videos if required. There is an open chat function alongside each presentation area, the Exhibitions and Social Space which will be monitored. Attendees will be unable to chat privately to one another. - Attendees and staff accounts are created by the RO Central Team. Users cannot create their own accounts.
Hazard 4	Inadequate training for staff and Student Ambassadors
Risks	- Staff/Student Ambassadors being unaware of reporting procedures - Staff/Student Ambassadors failing to spot a safeguarding concern
Controls	- Comprehensive training, including child safeguarding in virtual events and how to report concerns and issues, will be given to staff/Student Ambassadors to ensure consistency across all online work with attendees - The above training for Student Ambassadors will also follow up with a Code of Conduct, to sign and return, to demonstrate understanding and agreement -All RO Central Team and HEI staff working the event will have received Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau/Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and pre-event training will include event processes for ensuring safeguarding. -If staff have a safeguarding concern, they will write their account, (verbatim, including the first name and surname initial of the vulnerable attendee(s)) on Microsoft Word and password protect the document. -The encrypted document must then be emailed to a RO Central Team DSO, with the password sent in a follow up email. The DSO is to review the disclosure and follow the instructions within Newcastle University's Child Protection policy and process. -All staff will be informed of the updated safeguarding procedures for the day and will be signposted to RO Central Team DSO staff with any safeguarding concerns. - The named DSO will be on call for the duration of event to provide advice and guidance to conference organisers if required.

Hazard 5	Personal information & location of work
Risks	- Attendees being able to identify the personal details of a member of staff/student ambassador from items seen whilst on a video call - Inappropriate items visible in the background when on a video call - Inappropriate work wear and maintaining a professional working environment when interacting with attendees
Controls	- Comprehensive training, including child safeguarding in virtual events, will be given to all staff to ensure consistency across all online work with attendees. - All staff will receive event briefs in advance of the event, outlining expectations from hosts and attendees when running and attending sessions. - All staff will receive training on how to use the platform and expectations on conduct will be reemphasised. Any staff unable to fulfil the requirements, will be unable to take part in the event. - Where staff will be presenting via camera, they will be advised to use a blank, non-identifiable backgrounds to disable the opportunity for attendees to see within their personal environments. - Appropriate advice and guidance will be communicated for the best working practises when engaging with attendees on an online platform such as the Code of Conduct for students participating in events - RO Central Team will monitor the platform to monitor and manage risks throughout the event. - Within all areas of the events there are to be a minimum of 2 staff members to lead and monitor each area, including the Exhibitions
Hazard 6	Inadequate Code of Conduct for participants
Risks	- Attendees unaware of rules and regulations for partaking in the online event - Student Ambassadors not adhering to Code of Conduct - Attendees accessing harmful content when participating in online event
Controls	- Ensure Code of Conduct is developed in line with the Newcastle University's Child Protection policy and framework, platform providers and is tailored to the purpose of the event. - Ensure Code of Conduct is appropriate for Student Ambassadors. If Student Ambassadors observed not adhering to Code of Conduct they will be removed from the event and their platform account disabled. Attendee Code of Conduct makes clear attendees should only access websites as recommended by event organisers
Hazard 7	Security breach
Risks	- Exposure to harmful content, including but not limited to; - Hate fuelled language - Biased content and extreme opinion, including radicalisation - Sexual/pornographic content - Violent/discriminatory behaviour
Controls	- Ensure the event is adequately staffed - RO Central Team will monitor the platform to monitor and manage risks throughout the event. Within all areas of the events there are to be a minimum of 2 staff members to lead and monitor each area, including the Exhibitions. - Provide advice and guidance for students to use reputable websites for conducting research - Ensure that if students are directed to conduct own research, that websites are recommended. - No attendees will have access to share audio and visual content via the conferencing software, however, there is an open chat function alongside each presentation area, the Exhibitions and Social Space which will be monitored. Attendees will be unable to chat privately to one another. Inappropriate posts can be removed from attendee view or deleted,
Hazard 8	Data Breach
Risks	Staff, student ambassador or attendees' personal information being compromised.
Controls	- The Newcastle University's policy for data breaches will be implemented, including logging the breach and subsequent actions from thereon in - Informing and keeping Newcastle University's Information Security team informed -For any data breaches which may occur, RO Central Team administer a data breach log. The log will be shared with the Information Security team and appropriate action taken. - Assurance and approval of security in place by system provider -The conference platform, upon previous procurement, undertook and passed a rigorous data assessment as per NUIT requirements. - Requesting and providing comprehensive training on any platform used (in particular relation to the lead of the online event along with a Deputy for the purposes on monitoring and regulation). -In addition to the written guidance provided, all speakers and staff in attendance will also attend a virtual rehearsal on the platform, where they will receive demonstrations on how to use the platform and expectations on conduct will be reemphasised. - Password protected logins and 2 Factor Authentication when Accessing the Admin Area.

	• Staff should use their institutional email address at all times	
2.2: Additional controls to be implemented		
Controls	This Risk Assessment should be used in conjunction with the iVent Platform Risk Assessment. Partner university staff are requested to consider at least two staff members (not including Student Ambassadors) to attend their Exhibition booth.	

3.1: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for event		
Name: Dawn Dowling	Signature: D Dowling	Date: 10/01/2023
3.2: Manager / Responsible person		
Name: Charlotte Crossley	Signature: C Crossley	Date: 13 December 2022