

ABRSM Online Safeguarding Policy Statement

ABRSM's Online safeguarding policy statement reflects the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all candidates who take our exams. Underpinning this commitment is a robust system of governance, checks and controls and a culture of vigilance and professionalism; qualities we expect from all our staff, examiners and volunteers. This policy statement aligns with our [Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Code of Practice](#) as well as other key [organisational policies](#), procedures and standards.

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people when using the internet or mobile devices as part of the assessment process.
- Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety.
- Ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law, relating to the use of video uploads within the assessment process.

The policy statement applies to all ABRSM's workforce, children and young people and anyone involved in ABRSM's activities.

The following principles underpin ABRSM's approach to safeguarding and child protection:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children regardless of age, disability, sex, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare.

It is ABRSM's policy that:

- Everyone working on behalf of ABRSM accepts that the welfare of children who come into contact with ABRSM's assessment process is paramount, and that they will report any concerns about a child or somebody else's behaviour using the procedures set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

We recognise that:

- The online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however it can also present risks and challenges.
- We have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults who come into contact with ABRSM are protected from potential harm online.
- All candidates have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.

In addition to our safeguarding policy we will:

- Provide clear and specific directions to staff, examiners and volunteers on how to behave online through guidance and safeguarding training.

- Have clear and robust procedures in place to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child/young person.
- Review and update the security of our IT systems regularly.
- Ensure personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our assessments is held securely and shared only as appropriate, in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).
- Make sure that we use the assessment videos of children and young people only after obtaining permission from an appropriate adult.
- Make sure that these videos are only used for the purpose for which permission has been given.
- Examine and risk-assess any uploading platforms and new technologies before we use them within the organisation.

Responding to safeguarding concerns about a child:

- We have clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse), as set out in our Safeguarding Policy.
- We will ensure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and our organisation as a whole into account.
- We will review the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.

ABRSM is committed to reviewing our safeguarding policies annually. This policy statement was approved on 6 December 2021.

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Online Theory

1. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to inform the parent/carer that the assessment is video recorded and to obtain parental/carer consent before making the entry (See Exam Regulation 5.g). The [NSPCC](#) offer an example of a [consent form](#) if required.
2. ABRSM's Online Theory exam is delivered through PSI's Atlas Cloud test delivery platform using their RPNOW secure browser. Every exam will be recorded using this platform.
3. The proctoring service provided by PSI is one that records and reviews videos for potential issues of malpractice or safeguarding. There is no live monitoring, nor does a proctor have access to the candidate's computer. PSI proctors review the videos for behaviour that could call into question the security of the exam, and provide a report to ABRSM for further investigation. PSI proctors must use corporate computers with a corporate VPN in order to access the videos so their online activities are monitored.
4. The RPNOW platform will record the following:
 - a. Desktop (including any applications you open)
 - b. Webcam (any activity in the exam room)
 - c. Microphone (any sounds in the room)
5. Only authorised PSI and ABRSM employees will have access to the video recordings for the purposes of assessment, safeguarding, quality assurance, compliance and administration.
6. Authorised PSI and ABRSM employees will access video recordings via the RPNOW secure browser and will not have the ability to download recordings.
7. PSI will store the exam recording on the RPNOW secure browser for a period of up to 90 days, before it is securely destroyed.
8. ABRSM employees and PSI Proctors who access video recordings acknowledge ABRSM's safeguarding policy and are subject to safeguarding checks as required by legislation and guidance by way of DBS check or local equivalent.
9. It is the responsibility of the Responsible Adult to ensure that the candidate is appropriately dressed in clothing that they would normally wear to take an ABRSM exam. Anyone not meeting this expectation will be reported to ABRSM's Designated Safeguarding Person.
10. It is the responsibility of the Responsible Adult to ensure that the exam takes place in a suitable location, as backgrounds and personal items may be visible on the recording.
11. It is the responsibility of the Responsible Adult to inform the candidate that the assessment is video recorded and that anything they say or do once the recording begins will be sent to ABRSM and may be viewed by others as part of the assessment process.
12. Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Person in accordance with ABRSM's Safeguarding Policy.

Performance Grades

1. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to inform the parent/carer that the assessment is video recorded and to obtain parental/carer consent before making the entry (See Exam Regulation 5.g). The [NSPCC](#) offer an example of a [consent form](#) if required.
2. It is the responsibility of the Responsible Adult to ensure that the exam takes place in a suitable location, as backgrounds and personal items may be visible on the video recording.
3. It is the responsibility of the Responsible Adult ensure that the candidate is appropriately dressed in clothing that they would normally wear to take an ABRSM exam. Anyone not meeting this expectation will be reported to ABRSM's Designated Safeguarding Person.
4. It is the responsibility of the Responsible Adult to inform the candidate that the assessment is video recorded and that anything they say or do once the recording begins will be sent to ABRSM and may be viewed by others as part of the assessment process.
5. Only authorised ABRSM employees will have access to video recordings for the purposes of assessment, safeguarding, quality assurance, compliance and administration.
6. ABRSM employees who access video recordings acknowledge ABRSM's safeguarding policies, undergo safeguarding training and are subject to safeguarding checks as required by legislation and guidance. This takes the form of a DBS check or local equivalent.
7. ABRSM's internal employee procedures for Performance Grades requires authorisation for access to individual video recordings.
8. Authorised ABRSM employees will access video recordings via Microsoft Azure Media services.
9. ABRSM's IT team and the Designated Safeguarding Person will routinely check employee access requirements to ensure these comply with ABRSM's safeguarding procedures.
10. ABRSM Examiners will view the assessment using Microsoft Azure Media Services and will not be able to download the video recording. Assessment video recordings will be available for marking for a duration of 120 hours.
11. ABRSM will store the video recording on Microsoft Azure Blob Storage in the UK for a period of up to 130 days, before being auto-deleted.
12. Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Person in accordance with ABRSM's Safeguarding Policy.

Social Media

1. When using social media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), ABRSM will ensure that it will adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines.
2. All ABRSM owned social media accounts will be password-protected, and at least 3 members of staff will have access to each account and password.
3. ABRSM's social media accounts will be monitored by ABRSM's Social Media Executive, who will have been appointed by the organisation.
4. The Social Media Executive will seek advice from our Designated Safeguarding Person or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person to advise on safeguarding requirements.
5. All content posted on ABRSM's social media channels will be accurate and appropriate, as young people may 'follow' the organisation on social media.
6. The Social Media Executive will remove inappropriate posts or comments on our social media channels, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected (as well as the parents of any children involved).
7. Parents will need to give permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on ABRSM's social media channels.
8. Identifying details such as a child's name, home address or school name will not be posted on ABRSM's social media platforms.