



What do governors and board members need to know about the Prevent duty?

All FE providers have a duty to safeguard their students: Prevent is about safeguarding students to keep them safe from being exploited by extremists. The Prevent Duty is not about discouraging students from having political and religious views and concerns but rather it is about supporting them to use those concerns or act on them in non-extremist ways. Governors and Board members from across the sector will find information to support them in adopting the Prevent Duty in this guidance document.

The Prevent duty responsibility for governors and board members is very substantial and is highlighted in the [Home Office Prevent duty guidance document](#)¹:

“In complying with this duty we would expect active engagement from governors, boards, principals, managers and leaders with other partners including police and BIS regional higher and further education Prevent co-ordinators.

We would expect institutions to demonstrate that it undertakes appropriate training and development for principals, governors, leaders and staff.

Where Ofsted finds a publicly-funded further education institution or independent training provider inadequate intervention action would be taken. In the case of independent providers this is likely to result in their contract being terminated by the Skills Funding Agency. In the case of further education institutions and local authority providers, this would result in the Further Education or Sixth Form College Commissioner making an immediate assessment. This could lead to governance and leadership change, restructuring or even dissolution under the Secretary of State’s reserve powers. Under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 Act, and following intervention action, it would also be possible for the Secretary of State to issue a direction as the ultimate sanction.”

The implementation of the Prevent duty can be a sensitive issue for students, staff and families. It needs to be emphasised that this is part of the safeguarding duty. This is not about spying on students or staff and it is not about stopping conversations about controversial issues. The Prevent duty is intended to safeguard provider communities from exploitation and to support students in discussing and understanding complex and in some cases controversial issues.

What are governor and board member responsibilities under the Prevent duty?

Governors and board members must:

- adopt the Prevent duty;
- actively engage with other partners including police and BIS regional Higher and Further Education Prevent Co-ordinators to carry out the Prevent duty;
- undertake appropriate training and development in the Prevent duty;

¹ [Prevent Duty Guidance, Home office, March 2015](#)

- nominate a Prevent governor or board member who will usually already oversee safeguarding;
- exemplify British values of “ democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs” in their conduct and
- be aware that inspection of the Prevent duty by Ofsted will be judged as part of safeguarding which is included in the leadership and management grade. Implementation and practice of the Prevent duty will be a limiting grade for a provider.

A strategic role in implementing the Prevent duty

Governors and board members:

- should set the provider’s strategy for the Prevent duty as in all other areas. They should develop a short and medium term vision that is explicitly communicated to all parties
- must ensure that there is active engagement between sectors and partners
- must ensure that robust procedures are in place to ensure that any sub-contractors are aware of the Prevent duty and the sub-contractor is not inadvertently funding extremist organisations
- must comply with the requirements of the [Equalities Act 2010](#) in ensuring that their institution challenges discrimination and expects students to comply with this legislation
- must ensure that providers challenge racism, Islamophobia, tackling hate and prejudice based bullying, harassment and intimidation as part of the provider’s commitment to and exemplification of British values including “democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs”
- need to appreciate the sensitivity of the subject and the need to approach the issues carefully in all communities
- are responsible for ensuring that the Duty and its requirements are communicated all levels i.e. to management, teaching staff, support staff, volunteers and students

Role in ongoing scrutiny

Governors and board members should:

- ensure that a risk assessment is carried out initially, then on a regular basis and that action plans are formulated and acted upon
- ensure that policies and procedures are in place with reference as appropriate to the Prevent duty and are used to implement the Prevent duty. These should include policies covering:
 - the campus or premises and student welfare;
 - equality and diversity;
 - human resources;
 - the safety and welfare of students and staff;
 - the physical management of the institution’s estate;
 - events held by staff, students or visitors;
 - relationships with external bodies and community groups which may use premises or work in partnership with the institution;
 - prayer room and or chaplaincy;
 - societies;
 - external speakers and
 - IT and cybersecurity.
- continue to scrutinise the implementation and maintenance of the Prevent duty as they hold ultimate responsibility within the institution.

Cultural/Community Awareness

- Governors and board members should be aware that the Prevent duty covers all forms of extremism including far right, animal rights and religious extremism.
- Because of the sensitivity of the preventing extremism duty in all communities this needs to be dealt with carefully.
- Most providers will deal with the preventing extremism duty as part of their safeguarding duty and will be explicit about this to both internal and external communities.
- To support the Prevent duty providers should review how they can further strengthen community engagement and actively engage with local partners i.e. community organisations in addition to [FE Prevent Coordinators](#). This will help providers to understand, monitor and respond to local issues and tensions.

Key strategic questions for governors and board members to ask of the provider's executive

- What is the training strategy for the staff, students and volunteers?
- When and how will governors and board members be trained?
- Has a Prevent duty risk assessment taken place?
- When will the next Prevent duty risk assessment take place?
- What actions have been identified and how will they be addressed?
- Have policies been reviewed in relation to the Prevent duty?
- How far have British values been implemented into subjects and pastoral provision?
- What are the barriers, if any, in the implementation of the Prevent duty? How will they be overcome?
- How effective are relationships with external bodies such as the FE Prevent Coordinators, Local authority coordinators or police coordinators?

Further Support:

The Governor and board member section of the Education and Training Foundation [Prevent in Further Education and Training](#) website.