

WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS VULNERABLE TO EXTREMISM



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Working with Individuals Vulnerable to Extremism

1. Aims of this Practice Guidance

This practice guidance sets out the approach to preventing radicalisation in Oxfordshire. It includes national guidance and strategies, the risk of radicalisation in Oxfordshire, governance arrangements for overseeing Prevent in Oxfordshire, recognising the risks and vulnerabilities, the Channel process, as well as links to further information and advice.

There are 5 key aims of this guidance.

- 1) To signpost the reader to the most relevant **national guidance and strategies**
- 2) To provide advice on **understanding and recognising risks and vulnerabilities of radicalisation** and appropriate, proportionate response and interventions
- 3) To support delivery of the **Home Office online training packages**
- 4) To provide information on the **local arrangements** in place to support the multi-agency workforce.

The guidance in this document recognises that effective implementation will require multi-agency and partnership arrangements. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership provides scrutiny and oversight of multi-agency arrangements for delivery against the Prevent duty.

Agencies need to ensure that the processes supporting the prevention of radicalisation are embedded within their organisations and the day to day practices of their workforce. In exercising their functions, agencies must have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Appendix 1 contains a self-assessment tool, which can assist partners with this requirement.

Early intervention is vital and staff must be aware of the established processes for front line professionals to refer concerns about individuals and/or groups. Professionals must have the confidence to challenge and intervene, and to ensure that strong safeguarding practices based on the most up-to-date guidance and best practice is followed.

2. National Guidance and Strategies

The UK faces a severe and continuing threat from both domestic and international terrorism. The aim of CONTEST is to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism. CONTEST as a counter-terrorism strategy is organised around four work streams, each comprising a number of key objectives:

- **PURSUE:** To stop terrorist attacks;
- **PREVENT:** To stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
- **PROTECT:** To strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; and
- **PREPARE:** To mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

The Prevent aspect of this strategy aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism through preventing radicalisation. It contains three key objectives:

- **Ideology:** challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it;
- **Individuals:** protecting people from being drawn into terrorism and ensuring that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- **Institutions:** supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

Prevent is one of the threats posed by both domestic and international terrorism. But it is also concerned with reducing threats, risks and vulnerabilities posed by domestic extremists such as those from the extreme far right, extreme far left and extreme animal rights activists.

The latest government policies on Counter Terrorism can be found on the following link:

[counter terrorism - Search - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/search/topic/counter-terrorism)

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this practice guidance:

- **Extremism.** The Government has defined extremism in the *Prevent* strategy as: “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces”.
- **Radicalisation** is a process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremism ideologies associated with terror groups

In June 2015, Lord Justine Hayden commented that “If child exploitation is about the body then radicalisation is about the mind”

Radicalisation can be both violent and nonviolent. Violent extremism is caused by a combination of interlocking factors:

- An ideology which justifies terrorism by manipulating theology as well as history and politics;
- Radicalisers and their networks which promote violent extremism through a variety of places, institutions and media;
- Individuals who are vulnerable to the messages of violent extremists;
- Communities, which are sometimes poorly equipped to challenge and resist violent extremism; and
- Grievances, some genuine and some perceived, and some of course directed very specifically against government.

There are multiple pathways that constitute the process of radicalisation, which can be independent but are usually mutually reinforcing.

4. The risk of radicalisation and extremism in Oxfordshire

Key headlines in 2021/22

Key Headlines

Islamist

(IT)

- Islamist Terrorist groups ISIL and Al-Q'aidahave used the pandemic to further motivate followers, reinforce the groups narratives, and encourage attacks on Western nations.

Right Wing

Terrorism

(RWT)

- Three Neo-Nazi groups have been proscribedunder TACT as a terrorist group. These are:
 - SonnenKriegDivision (SKD)**:abranch of the AtomWaffenDivision;several UK members have been jailed for violent hate offences;
 - System Resistance Network (SRN)**:assessed to be the latest offshoot of the proscribed group National Action;and
 - FeuerkriegDivision (FKD)**:a white supremacist ideology and advocate 'accelerationism' –the use of violence and acts of terrorism to bring about a 'race war' and the fall of existing social and political systems.
- Manysocialmediacompanieshavestartedto 'deplatform' far-rightindividualsandgroupsinan efforttohaltthespreadofviolent/racistrhetoric. This hashowever led to manyfar-rightcommentators, groups, andsupporterstouse encryptedappsandplatforms.

Other

- Itislikelythattheriskofonlineradicalisationacrossallthematicsincreasedduring2020.
- TheriskofextremisttravelishighlylikelytoremainlowifbordersremainclosedduetoCOVID-19.
- CTPolicinglaunchedwww.actearly.ukandthemobileappiREPORTittosupportthepublic.

ThamesValley

Partner

Reporting

- ThamesValleyPolice had reports of graffiti and stickeringthat was likely to create community tension.
- It is unknown if low level CT activity is always being reported to Thames Valley Police. This is vital to ensure an accurate picture of threat, harm, and risk.

5. Prevent Duty

From the 1st July 2015 many public facing organisations providing services to children, young people and adults are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty and the Government’s guidance outline specifies authorities responsible for this duty. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>.):

It is essential that staff within agencies and organisations that provide services to children, young people and adults are able to identify individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified.

Protecting individuals from the risk of radicalisation is an integral part of safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children and adults from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

6. Governance arrangements for Prevent in Oxfordshire

The City/ District CSPs are accountable for delivering Prevent across their local area. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership is the countywide partnership responsible for supporting the co-ordination of Prevent at the county level as required.

A working protocol setting out the roles and responsibilities of partnerships as well as the principles of partnership working has been agreed between the district level CSPs, the countywide Safer Oxfordshire Partnership, the Safeguarding Adult and Children Boards, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Childrens Trust.

As the upper tier authority, the County Council is responsible for chairing the Channel Panel through the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. All other specified authorities have a duty to co-operate with the Channel Panel.

In response to the Prevent Strategy 2011 a multi-agency Prevent Implementation Group was formed. Representation on this group is Countywide and includes partners from the police, probation, county and district councils. Due to the connectivity with safeguarding there are clear links to and regularly reporting to the Local Safeguarding Boards (Children and Adults) and the Community Safety Partnership in Oxfordshire.

7. Ensuring Appropriate Arrangements are in Place

In ensuring that specified authorities are fulfilling their requirements as outlined under the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015, all agencies should ensure that they have in place adequate arrangements to safeguard individuals from radicalisation.

Agencies need in place:

- Clear leadership and accountable structures
- Appropriate training for both staff and management
- Processes to ensure that cases are referred and managed effectively
- Systems that help individuals against extremism and promote community systems that support individuals from being radicalised

Each organisation should have an established single point of contact (SPOC) identified as the strategic lead for Prevent although senior leadership also need to be aware of the Prevent duty and the organisation's strategy to address this.

The Prevent Duty and its associated practices need to be embedded within existing policies and procedures and everyday practice. These should be well communicated within the organisation and all staff within the organisation need to be aware of the role they play to safeguard individuals.

This is a link to self-assessment toolkit to assist organisations to carry out a self-assessment of their arrangements to safeguard individuals from extremism and radicalisation.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/736759/Prevent_Duty_Toolkit_for_Local_Authorities.pdf As best practice the key points within this tool have been incorporated into the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Safeguarding Audit for Schools. This tool can also provide suitable evidence, for both internal and external audits, and inspections, such as Ofsted.

8. Understanding and Recognising Risks and Vulnerabilities of Radicalisation

There is no obvious profile of an individual likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when an individual might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. Examples of extremist causes that have used violence to achieve their ends include, the extreme right, domestic terrorist and international terrorist organisations.

An individual can be drawn to radicalisation at any age. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame.

Individuals can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include the influence of:

- Family members
- Friends
- Direct contact with extremist groups and organisations, or
- Via the internet, TV and media

The vulnerability factors highlighted below may make some individuals vulnerable to radicalisation (but it cannot be assumed that they will apply to everyone). Key questions for practitioners to consider, when they have concerns, have also been included.

Area	Vulnerability	Key Questions for consideration
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of isolation • Adolescence • Low self-esteem • Driven by the desire for 'adventure' and excitement • Unmet Aspirations such as: • Perceptions of injustice • Feeling of failure • Rejection of civic life • Experience of poverty, disadvantage or social exclusion • Searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has there been a significant shift in the individuals behaviour or outward appearance that suggests a new social/political or religious influence • Does the individual vocally support terrorist attacks; either verbally or in their written work? • Does the individual have any marks, scars or tattoos which are linked to extremist groups?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Educational Need –difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others. 	
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family tensions • Conflict with family over religious beliefs, lifestyle choices or extreme political views • Rejection by family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the individual come into conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/ dress choices?
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent religious conversion • Identity confusion – e.g. Distance from cultural/ religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them • Rejection by faith groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the individual witnessed or been the perpetrator/ victim of racial or religious hate crime or sectarianism • Has the individual come into conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/ dress choices?
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A traumatic or series of traumatic events – both personal or national • Victim or witness to race or religious hate crime • Uncensored access to extremist propaganda • Influenced by world events and a sense of grievance resulting in a need to make a difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a personal impact on the individual resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour? • It is important to recognise that many people may be emotionally affected by the plight of what is happening in areas of conflict (i.e. images of children dying) it is important to differentiate them from those that sympathise with or support extremist activity • Is there a pattern of regular or extended travel within the UK, with other evidence to suggest this is for purposes of extremist training or activity?
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejection by social group • Drawn to a group or individual who can offer identity, social network and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the individual person frequent, or is there evidence to suggest that they are accessing the internet for the purpose of extremist activity? (e.g. Use of closed network groups, access

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure from peers associated with extremism • Disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends • Driven by a need to raise self-esteem and promote 'street cred' 	<p>to or distribution of extremist material, contact associates covertly via Skype/email etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the individual support groups with links to extremist activity but not illegal/illicit e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings? • Does the individual have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
Criminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences of imprisonment • Poor resettlement/reintegration • Previous involvement with criminal groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the individual joined an extremist organisation? • Is the individual known to have possessed or is actively seeking to possess and/ or distribute extremist literature/ other media material likely to incite racial/ religious hatred or acts of violence?

Current information on extremism symbols and logos are to be found on the following websites:

<https://www.adl.org/hate-symbols>

https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/CTPHQ-RWT-Groups-Signs-and-Symbols_NaCTSO-v2.0.pdf

It is key to note that the above is not an exhaustive list and further information and clarity may be needed. Some individuals with care and support needs may be at a higher risk and could be targeted by some groups. The care and support needs may include a physical disability; mental health needs; increased social isolation or vulnerability to coercion.

Professional judgement and proportionality is needed to ensure individual concerns are assessed, escalated and recorded appropriately. This may involve advice and support from your organisation's Single Point Of Contact, and other multi-agency colleagues.

9. Internal and External influences

An individual may be drawn to extremism either by single or multiple methods including:

Method	How
Online	<p>The internet provides entertainment, connectivity and interaction. Individuals may need to spend a lot of time on the internet while studying as well as use social media and messaging sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Vine or Whatsapp. There is also evidence of recruitment taking place in online gaming chat rooms</p> <p>The power and scope of the internet and social media must be recognised and networks use this media to reach out to people and can communicate extremist messages.</p>
Peer interaction	<p>Individuals at risk may display extrovert behaviour, children and young people start getting into trouble at school, college or on the streets and mixing with others who are already involved with anti social or criminal behaviour. However, this is not always the case.</p> <p>Sometimes those at risk may be encouraged, by the people they are in contact with, not to draw attention to themselves. As part of some forms of radicalisation family members, friends, parents and professionals may feel their child's/relative's behaviour seems to be improving. For example, children may become quieter and more serious about their studies; young people and adults may dress more modestly and mix with a group of people who seem to be better behaved than previous friends.</p>
TV and Media	<p>The media provides a view on world affairs. However, this is often a very simple version of events which are in reality very complex. Individual may not understand the situation fully or appreciate the dangers involved in the views of some groups.</p>

10. Reducing the risk of Radicalisation and Extremism

The Prevent Pyramid devised by Police leads explains the levels of interventions required.



Level 4 Actively breaking the law these remain relatively few in number when considered in relation to all those who may sympathise with their beliefs and feelings.

Level 3 Moving towards extremism these require specialist intervention. While not committing any violent acts themselves, they may provide support to those engaged in criminal activities and act to inspire or groom others.

Where there is an identified risk/potential risk that an individual may be involved/potentially involved in supporting or following extremism, further investigation by the police will be required, prior to other assessments and interventions.

Any professional who identifies such concerns, for example, as a result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest the individual supports terrorism and/or extremism, must follow the safeguarding referral process and discuss with their SPOC.

Professionals should exercise professional judgement and common sense to identify whether an emergency situation applies. Examples in relation to extremism are expected to be very rare but would apply when there is information that a violent act is imminent, or where weapons or other materials may be in the possession of an individual, another member of their family or within the community. **In this situation, a 999 call should be made.**

Level 2 Early help and intervention is a far larger group, that constitutes all those individuals that are considered 'vulnerable' to being influenced by these messages. Where there is a higher level of concern a multi-agency response is appropriate. Where concerns are identified in respect of potential signs of radicalisation this needs to be discussed with the SPOC and a decision should be made on the most effective cause of action, whether this be a referral to the Customer Resolution Centre or if services currently involved in the case can manage the concerns.

Level 1 Universal Needs is the 'wider community' and represents how universal services work to reduce the risk of radicalisation and extremist behaviour, for example schools building "pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views". Responses could include curriculum provision, additional tutoring or mentoring, additional activities within and out of school, Living Well support and family support.

Please find link to Community Handbook which has some useful information for community engagement



COMMUNITY
EVENTS HANDBOOK

11. Referral and Intervention Process

Safeguarding individuals with care and support needs from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm. In a few cases the concerns around the individual may go beyond being vulnerable to extremism.

Where a professional has identified the need to refer an individual, the relevant safeguarding procedures should be followed to ensure that an appropriate referral is made to Children's Social Care or Health and Adult Services in an effective and timely way. The referral pathway is provided in Appendix 1.

Individual organisations need to ensure that their safeguarding procedures are aligned with those for the Channel panel which supports those who are vulnerable to radicalisation.

Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) for referral pathway for Oxfordshire

For county council staff including Trading Standards, OFRS, Public Health, Youth Justice Exploitation Service this is a link to intranet pages [Prevent | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet](#)

Referral Forms and Referral Pathway are all detailed on the Safeguarding Board Websites

OSAB - <https://www.osab.co.uk/learning-zone/osab-core-adult-safeguarding-courses/training-hosted-by-osab/other-training/>

OSCB - <https://www.oscb.org.uk/learning-zone/training/prevent-training/> alis

12. Channel Process

'Channel' is the name for the multi-agency process of identifying and referring a person for early intervention and support for those at risk of radicalisation. It is a key element of the Prevent strategy. The Channel process uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory

partners (such as education and health organisations, social services and offender management services), the police and the local community to;

- Identify people at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
- Assess the nature and extent of that risk; and
- Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

For further information on Channel and police led panels

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance>

The Channel Panel has a standard multi-agency membership and meets on a monthly basis to collectively assess the risk and decide whether the person

- Is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and therefore appropriate for the Channel process,
- Should be referred to a different support mechanism; or
- Should exit the process.

For those adopted as 'Channel' the Panel will need to develop an appropriate support package based on assessment of their vulnerability of being drawn into radicalisation.

Channel assesses vulnerability using a consistently applied framework the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) based on three dimensions,

- **Engagement** with a group, cause or ideology;
- **Intent** to cause harm; and
- **Capability** to cause harm.

The Channel Panel must compliment other safeguarding processes that may be occurring for that individual such as Children and Adult safeguarding meetings, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

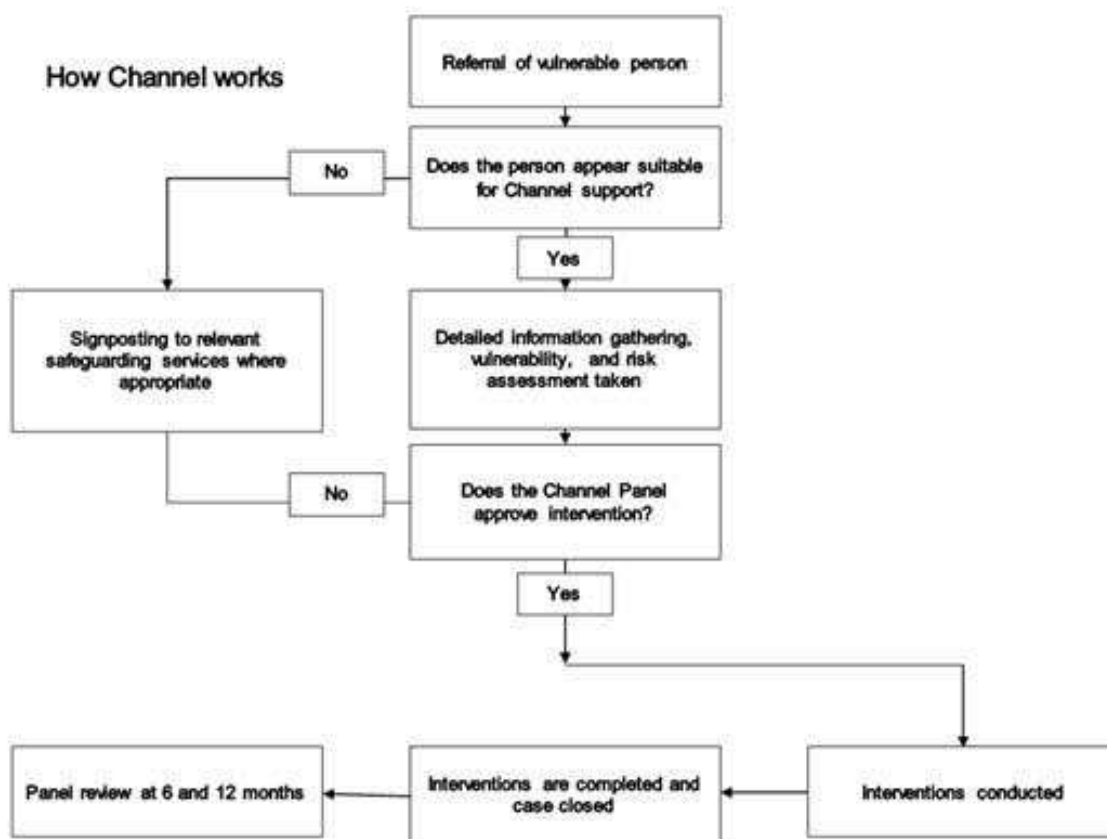
The type of activities included in a support package will depend on risk, vulnerability and local resources. A diversionary activity may be sufficient for someone who is in the early stages of radicalisation to violence, whereas a more focussed and structured one-on-one mentoring programme may be required for those who are already radicalised. Once an individual has been accepted on to Channel that individual must be made aware the intervention/action cannot take place without their consent. In the case of a child, there may be certain circumstances when a parent/guardian does not give consent for their child to be supported, particularly if some of the vulnerabilities present are in the home environment. If the child is thought to be at risk of significant harm (Children Action 1989) Children's Social Care must be involved in decisions about the child.

If consent is not given then the child will not be managed in the process and therefore may require a risk management plan.

If the panel is satisfied that the risk has been successfully reduced or managed they should recommend that the case exits the process. A closing report should be completed by the chair, setting out the evidence for the panel's recommendation.

All cases should be reviewed at 6 and 12 months, from the point at which they exit the process, all decision and actions must be fully recorded by all agencies involved.

One of the options for support through the Channel process would be a referral to a specialist intervention provider. A list of approved providers is maintained, and funded by the Home Office.



13. Training and Resources

Organisations should make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify individuals at risk of being drawn into radicalisation, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. They should know where and how to refer those vulnerable to extremism for further help. Prevent awareness training will be a key part of this.

A number of national resources are available:

Channel eLearning

The National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters (NCTPHQ), in conjunction with the College of Policing, has developed a general awareness e-learning package for Channel. The package includes information on how Channel links to the Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy

(CONTEST) through the Prevent strategy, guidance on how to identify people who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and how to refer them into the Channel process.

Case studies are included to increase understanding of Channel, which consist of identifying and referring vulnerable individuals to the process. Additionally, information is provided on how to identify appropriate support for the individual concerned.

PREVENT Training

The Channel General Awareness e-learning is no longer available. It has been replaced by Home Office Prevent eLearning, that can be undertaken to raise awareness about spotting the signs and making a referral to Channel. Three packages are currently available:

Prevent Awareness

This offers an introduction to the Prevent duty, and explains how it aims to safeguard vulnerable people from being radicalised to supporting terrorism or becoming terrorists themselves.

<http://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk>

Prevent Referrals

This package builds on the Prevent awareness eLearning training. It is designed to make sure that when we share a concern that a vulnerable individual may be being radicalised, that the referral is robust, informed and with good intention, and that the response to that concern is considered, and proportionate.

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/preventreferrals>

Channel Awareness

This training package is for anyone who may be asked to contribute to, sit on, or even run a Channel Panel. It is aimed at all levels, from a professional asked to input and attend for the first time, to a member of staff new to their role and organising a panel meeting.

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/channelawareness>

Once you have completed the courses you will be able to access certificates for proof of completion

There are separate Nhs Packages available:

- elearning (elearning for healthcare) Preventing Radicalisation Level 3: <https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Component/Details/511790>
- elearning Preventing Radicalisation (Mental Health) Level 3: <https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Component/Details/523782>. This is also available at <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/mentalhealth>

