

## **It's A Penalty and West Midlands Anti Slavery Network Launch Modern Slavery Prevention Hub**

LONDON, 18.10.2023 - In commemoration of Anti-Slavery Day, It's A Penalty in collaboration with the West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network (WMASN) are thrilled to announce the launch of the [West Midlands Modern Slavery Prevention Hub](#). This groundbreaking initiative is set to revolutionise the approach to combatting modern slavery within university campuses across the West Midlands.

### **About the WM Modern Slavery Prevention Hub:**

The Hub is a culmination of the joint efforts of WMASN and IAP, forming the West Midlands Slavery Free Campus Alliance (WMSFCA). Drawing inspiration from the Slavery Free Campus Blueprint by Nottingham Rights Lab, the alliance is dedicated to:

- Addressing the vulnerabilities of students to modern slavery.
- Raising awareness among students and staff about the risks and prevention of modern slavery.
- Advocating for modern slavery training for students pursuing frontline courses such as policing, healthcare, social work, and more.
- Offering key recommendations for universities to proactively tackle modern slavery.

Central to this network is the WM Modern Slavery Prevention Hub. Designed as an online portal, this Hub will serve as a comprehensive resource for students, staff, and universities. It aims to:

- Consolidate previous efforts in raising awareness about modern slavery.
- Provide training and direct users to a plethora of informative resources.
- Offer guidance on essential changes in university policies, activities, and processes.

The Hub is an ongoing project, with users encouraged to submit feedback and suggestions for resources to include via the site's [online form](#).

### **The Urgency of the Matter:**

Modern slavery is a pervasive issue, with an estimated 136,000 individuals trapped in the UK alone. The West Midlands region reports at least 4,200 victims. University students, particularly those grappling with financial challenges, are increasingly susceptible. International students, in particular, face heightened risks due to cultural unfamiliarity, visa-related issues, and potential exploitation in the job market post-study.

Furthermore, university staff, especially those in roles such as construction, catering, cleaning, security, and maintenance, may also be vulnerable to modern slavery. The need for comprehensive awareness, education, and actionable guidance has never been more pressing.

*"It's A Penalty are proud to announce the launch of the West Midlands Modern Slavery Prevention Hub. We are thrilled to be working with WMASN as part of the West Midlands Slavery Free Campus Alliance to help universities across the region be safe and free from modern slavery for students, staff and amongst procurement practices. The Hub's publication is just the first step in this exciting process, complementing*

*It's A Penalty's existing work to increase awareness about human trafficking and action amongst university students through our Student Ambassador Programme. We are so grateful to Health Education England and our collaborative partners for making this project possible." - Sarah de Carvalho MBE, CEO of It's a Penalty*

*"The West Midlands Anti Slavery Network is extremely pleased to be supporting this initiative. The hub is as a result of us identifying the need to support universities, staff and students whilst recognising that exploitation exists in universities in the West Midlands and beyond. Typologies of human trafficking include labour, sexual and criminal exploitation and knowing how to spot the signs and what to do if you suspect exploitation is essential to safeguarding our communities. The West Midlands now takes the public health approach to modern slavery, universities, colleges and other learning establishments are key members of our community which we aim to protect and prevent from becoming victims of exploitation." - Robin Brierley, Executive Director of WMASN*

### **Join the Movement:**

We are actively seeking partnerships with universities to refine the Hub, ensuring it meets the diverse needs of institutions across the region - with the potential for a future expansion for the project to be national.

### **About Us:**

WMASN and IAP have a shared vision of a world free from exploitation and abuse. Through education, awareness, and intervention, we aim to create safer environments for all. Our combined efforts in the past have led to impactful campaigns and initiatives, and with the West Midlands Modern Slavery Prevention Hub, we hope to further our mission.

[It's A Penalty](#) collaboratively combats human trafficking, exploitation, and abuse using sport's unifying power to drive local and global educational campaigns during significant sporting events. We customise these campaigns for each host location, achieving worldwide reach averaging 180 million people. Our multifaceted approach includes collaboration with sectors like sports, travel, tourism, law enforcement, and NGOs. To date, we've initiated 17 successful campaigns during events like the Olympic and Paralympic Games, NFL Super Bowls, and the Commonwealth Games. Parallel to our campaigns, It's a Penalty runs three core programmes: [CommonProtect](#) advocates for legal reform in Commonwealth countries, the [Student Ambassador Programme](#) empowers UK university students to combat exploitation, and [Safe to Compete](#), co-led with NCMEC, educates sports coaches and parents in the USA on abuse prevention. *For more information or to get involved, please contact [wmhub@itsapenalty.org](mailto:wmhub@itsapenalty.org)*

[The West Midlands Anti Slavery Network](#) unites and enables partner organisations to work in collaboration to end modern slavery, human trafficking and exploitation. We do this by identifying gaps, influencing change and facilitating solutions in order to protect and advocate for the vulnerable in society. *For more information on our work please contact [info@westmidlandsantislavery.org](mailto:info@westmidlandsantislavery.org)*