Universities across Scotland partner in first nation-wide initiative to boost student wellbeing, with SafeZone Alliance

Top institutions across Scotland collaborate to ensure rapid response to requests for help, 24/7

EDINBURGH, UNITED KINGDOM, 04 April 2024 – A ground-breaking nation-wide partnership between universities across Scotland will provide safety and wellbeing support to students and staff, at the touch-of-a-button, regardless of location and time.

Enhancing safety for students working remotely, travelling, or visiting other campuses, the SafeZone Alliance for Scotland, is launched this month. The partnership, between universities including Edinburgh Napier University, the University of Glasgow, Heriot-Watt University, the University of Dundee, and the University of Stirling is being established following the success of a similar scheme in Manchester, which is now in its second year.

With the SafeZone Alliance Scotland, students and staff from participating institutions will be able to access a range of services from whichever university is closest and best placed to respond – services including emergency assistance, mental wellbeing support, crime prevention help, and general advice and reassurance for anyone who has a particular safety concern or feels vulnerable in any situation. When an individual requests help or support, or if immediate assistance is needed, that will be sent to the appropriate Alliance members' safety and security team in closest proximity. So, for example, if a student from one campus is visiting another campus, they will benefit from the same level of rapid protection as they receive at their own institution.

The Scotland, Manchester and wider Alliance members will also collaborate, further extending the support and safety services available to more than a million individual users, says CriticalArc's Chief Operating Officer, Darren Chalmers-Stevens – opening the prospect of more partnerships to follow: "The Manchester SafeZone Alliance has proved to be a huge success, and now Scotland's leading universities have come together to create the first nation-wide safety and support umbrella for students

and staff. As the Alliance concept spreads further, students will increasingly benefit from rapid assistance not just at their own universities, but whenever they are travelling and working remotely."

Gary Stephen, Head of Security & Logistics, University of Glasgow, says that by joining the Alliance Scotland's universities are reinforcing their commitment to the welfare of students and staff no matter where they are in the world: "Our collective duty of care is not restricted to our individual campuses, and by being part of the alliance, working collaboratively we can provide significantly better safeguarding. It means that at the touch of a button we can support any student or staff member not only over the phone but by having a fully trained security professional on the scene in minutes to reassure and take control of any incident."

"The SafeZone Alliance concept takes our universities into a higher league in supporting our duty of care," said Les Allan, Director of SafeGuarding Services at Heriot-Watt University. "For universities across Scotland, our capacity to support our communities is now multiplied even further with our collaborative use of SafeZone."

Alison Morrison, Head of Safety, Environment and Continuity at the University of Stirling, said: "The wellbeing of our students and staff is our top priority and we welcome the introduction of SafeZone Alliance to expand the network of safe spaces for our community.

"We've already received positive feedback on how easy SafeZone is to use and how it has provided staff and students with reassurance and access to services. With that in mind, it's great to know this vital support is available beyond the University of Stirling campus."

CriticalArc's SafeZone technology is a unified platform for safety, security, emergency management and wellbeing support. It is now used by more than half of UK universities, as well as NHS Trusts, to improve safety and wellbeing support for thousands of students and staff. Among the technology's many capabilities and benefits, it enables users with the SafeZone phone app, or a dedicated personal alarm, to request immediate assistance for themselves and others.

For more information on CriticalArc and SafeZone go to www.criticalarc.com.

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About CriticalArc
CriticalArc provides SafeZone®, the unified safety, security and emergency management solution that helps large organizations keep their people safe and respond more effectively to critical incidents so they can fulfil their duty of care and mitigate risks. SafeZone fundamentally transforms the ability to manage personal safety, security, and emergency situations so organizations can respond faster and more effectively to protect their most important asset, their people. Through real-time visualization, communications, and response coordination, SafeZone streamlines operations, is easy to use and quick to deploy. For more information on CriticalArc and SafeZone, please go to www.criticalarc.com or email marketing@criticalarc.com.

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