



Policy Document

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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Relevant Policies:

1. Child Protection Policy
2. Code of Conduct
3. Serious Incident Reporting Policy
4. Whistleblowing Policy

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Keeping Those Involved with the Award Safe from Harm

Saksham Yuwa Nepal, the National Award Operator (“the NAO”) of The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award (“the Award”) in Nepal has zero tolerance for harassment or exploitation against Award participants, their communities, Award operators, our partner organizations, staff, or volunteers. Organizations like ours must be held to the highest possible standards of safeguarding.

The NAO sub-licenses the Award programme to the Operating Partners (Award Centers and Open Award Centers) who offers the Award programme to young people aged 14-24. These young people are supported by adults who mentor Award participants through their Award journey and empower them to develop and support their communities, including other children, young people and vulnerable adults. Keeping Award participants, and those they engage with, safe from harm is our number one priority.

This policy is designed to inform the governance, management and delivery of all Award activities around the world. It stipulates the required standards and methodology for ensuring children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in the Award are protected and safe from harm. **It is therefore the safeguarding policy both The NAO and sub-licensed operating partners (Award Centers and Open Award Centers) must adhere to.**

The NAO is committed to:

- Ensuring the interests and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults are taken into account, in all our considerations and activities, wherever in Nepal those may be
- Respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we work.
- Taking all reasonable practicable steps to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse and to promote their health, wellbeing and human rights.
- Promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and their protection within a position of trust.

This policy has been developed based on guidance and support materials produced by The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation and The Act Relating to Children, 2018 of government of Nepal

Definition and Principles of Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to protecting all people and the environment from all harm, unintended or otherwise. In the context of the Award, it specifically refers to preventing and responding to harm caused by sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment or bullying of any kind. Children, young people and vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm from exploitation, harassment or abuse and the policy therefore focuses on these groups.

The aim of this policy, and connected policies and sub-license agreements, is to minimize the likelihood and impact of these actions on Award beneficiaries and on those working or volunteering for and with the NAO and/or sub-licensed Award Centers or Open Award Centers.

The purpose of the policy is to enable all children, young people and vulnerable adults to have the best outcomes from their Award experience, regardless of sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion or gender reassignment.

As per The Act Relating to Children, 2018, “Every child shall have the right to protection against any type of physical or mental violence and torture, hatred, inhuman treatment, gender or untouchability-based mistreatment, sexual harassment and exploitation that might be caused by his or her father, mother, other family member or guardian, teacher and other person.” It covers all children but those who have additional vulnerabilities (for example, children with disabilities, unaccompanied children, refugees, victims of trafficking/modern slavery) will require additional safeguarding considerations.

Award participants are aged between 14 and 24. For the purposes of the Award, all Award participants are considered to be either a child or young person when considering how they should be treated in regard to contact with adults in the Award. These “Adults in the Award” include paid staff and volunteers acting as Award Leaders, Adventurous Journey Supervisors, Award Assessors (or equivalent titles) and volunteers in a range of different roles. In the context of the Award, an ‘adult’ volunteer or paid employee is defined as anyone over the age of 18.

The NAO and sub-licensed Award Centers and Open Award Center’s approach to safeguarding are underpinned by the following principles:

- Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding
- Do no harm
- Act in the best interests of the child/young person/vulnerable adult
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults shall be treated equally, irrespective of race, gender, religion/or none, sexual orientation or disability
- Safeguarding should be embedded in all of our activities as an organization

Safeguarding Framework

The NAO's approach to maintaining a safe, positive and empowering environment for youth development is encompassed in a safeguarding framework comprising five core areas. This framework is based on guidance from The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation and includes the requirements as stipulated by the Award's International license agreements.

The framework sets out the key responsibilities and requirements for any licensed Award Operator and can be summarized in the following graphic



General safeguarding and child safeguarding

Safeguarding shapes the approach, practice and culture of the NAO and all sub-licensed Award Centers and Open Award Centers, ensuring a comprehensively safe environment for all people who come into contact with the Award in Nepal, including adults, children, young people and vulnerable adults. All Operating Partners should be able to demonstrate safeguarding policy with a child protection policy in place.

Human resources

Recruitment and vetting processes should support recruitment of the right people, and on-going safeguarding training should be provided for all staff and volunteers. The NAO as well as Award Centers and Open Award Centers should be

able to demonstrate that all that all paid staff, Award Leaders, Adventurous Journey Supervisors, and Award Assessors (or equivalent titles) must:

- Have clear job descriptions; including an identified risk level for each role
- Have competency-based selection procedures for roles working directly with children/young people
- Be 18 yrs+
- Be trained, including mandatory safeguarding and training at point of induction
- Be appropriately vetted (according to national standards). The NAO team are required to submit police clearance certificate every two years.
- Be aware of and committed to the vision and values of the International Award Foundation
- Be compliant with national child protection guidelines

Risk management

A risk management framework must set out the NAO's approach to risk identification and assessment. With the ability to demonstrate:

- Risk management policy; with safeguarding as a distinct risk category
- Risk assessments conducted on downstream partners
- Risk register, with safeguarding as a distinct category; maintained and regularly reviewed and signed every 2 years. It should include mitigating actions and identifiable owners for each risk.
- Oversight by a designated Board Member of the organisation [Designated Safeguarding Lead]

Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct describes the ethics and behaviors required of all individuals, to ensure a robust safeguarding environment. With the ability to demonstrate:

- Adoption of the Award Code of Conduct by all staff, volunteers and, where applicable, children/young people/vulnerable adults.
- An operating environment that supports Adults in the Award to adhere to the standards of the Code of Conduct, as a minimum.

Governance and accountability

The National Board in Nepal have ultimate responsibility and duty of care for the safeguarding of staff, volunteers and young people involved in the Award programme. **It is mandatory for the NAO team and National Board to complete the course "The Safeguarding Environment" on the online learning hub, as a minimum.**

In addition, A Designated Safeguarding Lead has been appointed by the National Board who ensures the safety and well-being of young people involved in The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award in Nepal. The responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are as follows:

- Oversee the implementation and adherence to relevant safeguarding policies across all levels of the NAO.
- Act as the primary point of contact for all safeguarding concerns, serious incidents, and allegations.

- Maintain a clear and confidential record of all reported incidents and actions taken.
- Work closely with Award Leaders, Award Coordinators, and NAO staff to ensure safeguarding protocols are followed.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are trained on recognizing and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Regularly review and update the Serious Incident Reporting Policy to align with national laws and international standards.
- Monitor and assess safeguarding and serious incidents risks associated with Award activities and events.
- Handle all safeguarding concerns with strict confidentiality, ensuring sensitive information is securely stored and only shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Ensure compliance with the safeguarding standards set by The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation and national laws.
- Promote a culture where safeguarding is a shared responsibility, encouraging openness and trust among all participants and staff.

Keeping Code of Conduct and Re-Committing on a Two Year Cycle

The NAO has published a Code of Conduct with regard to safeguarding for National Board, NAO team and volunteers. It describes what behaviors the NAO expects.

All Adults in the Award, regardless of appointment or role, are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct and treat it as a description of a minimum standard of behavior, recognizing that further standards may be required by their own national legislation or their own Award Centers or Award Operators.

Every Adult in the Award, and every Award participant working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, should be provided with a copy of Code of Conduct as part of their induction to the Award. It is recommended that, as a minimum, all Adults in the Award, re-sign the Code of Conduct every two years and where appropriate take a refresher version of the e-learning safeguarding guidance on a two-year cycle.

Safeguarding Due Diligence

The NAO conducts due diligence when selecting Award Centers and Open Award Centers and individuals with whom to partner with and license to deliver the Award. The NAO will not knowingly permit any person to be employed or engaged as a volunteer if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.

All new NAO personnel are required to provide an appropriate current police check (criminal record check). They must include police checks for overseas countries if they have worked or lived overseas for any period longer than one year in the last ten years.

All employment contracts must outline that the NAO has the right to dismiss, suspend or transfer to other duties personnel who breach the safeguarding code of conduct.

Appropriate due diligence should be carried out with Award Centers and Award Operators every three years based on Award Center Validation form.

Reporting Procedures

To respond to any incident or incidents of actual, suspected or alleged exploitation, abuse, harassment or bullying that arise:

- In the first instance the incident should be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities, should that be appropriate.
- Necessary immediate actions should be taken to remove any actual or alleged victim from threat of imminent (further) harm.
- If applicable, any incident of concern should also be reported to the designated Safeguarding Lead

Any contravention of the Safeguarding Policy, or any of the elements of the Safeguarding Framework, should be reported to the NAO team in the first instance. If the incident is serious, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Complaints Procedure

The complaints procedure, as set out in the Serious Incident Reporting Policy is as follows:

- *In the first instance, the complainant and Operating Partners must try to resolve the issue informally.*
- *If this cannot occur, the following process should be followed:*
 - *The National Chair will designate a suitable member of staff in order to support Designated Safeguarding Lead to seek a resolution.*
 - *The designated member of staff will acknowledge and confirm the complaint within 5 working days.*
 - *The Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek to resolve the complaint within one month.*
 - *Any outcome will be provided in writing to ensure that all are correctly informed and that any review or remedial action is carried out.*
 - *If the complaint is not resolved and the complainant wishes to appeal, final resolution will be coordinated by the National Chair*

Should you wish to make a complaint specifically about safeguarding and/or the associated safeguarding procedure, please email at report.doeianepal@gmail.com



If a person feels that the NAO has not dealt appropriately with a matter of concern, they may make a report to the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation at operations@intaward.org

Declaration

I am aware of my obligations as outlined in this policy and has my approval that my role as a National Board/Award Volunteer/ NAO Staff in relation to National Award Office of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award in Nepal may be terminated as a result of any breach by me of the undertakings in this policy

I agree to the above terms

Name	
Role	
Award Center	
Signature	
Date	

Safeguarding Incident Reporting Template

DATA PROTECTION: This form is used to collect information for the purpose of gathering compliant details as part of the complaints process. We don't share your personal data provided in this form with any third parties. We take your personal data privacy seriously. The data you provide to us is securely stored and we will keep the data we capture from this form for five years

Report Date:
Reported By: Contact Details:
Incident Date and Time:
Incident Location:
Involved Individuals and their Roles:
Nature of Incident: [Check the appropriate box and provide details] <input type="checkbox"/> Health & Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Misconduct <input type="checkbox"/> Abuse/Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Other: [Specify].....
Description of Incident: <i>Provide a detailed description of the incident, including events leading up to it, and any immediate actions taken.</i>
Witnesses: Contact Details:
Immediate Action Taken: <i>Describe any immediate action taken to address the situation, including medical attention, disciplinary action, or other interventions.</i>

<p>Further Actions Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Investigation Needed <input type="checkbox"/> Contact Authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Provide Counseling/Support <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <p>[Specify].....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p>Follow-up Plan: <i>Outline any follow-up steps or actions planned to address the incident and prevent recurrence.</i></p>
<p>Reported To:</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Position:</p> <p>Date of Report Submission:</p>
<p>Additional Comments (if any)</p>

For NAO Use Only	
Incident Review Date	
Action Taken by NAO	Details of Any Further Actions Taken by The NAO
Reviewing Officer	Name: Signature: Date: