

Keeping those involved with the Award safe from harm

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation has zero tolerance for harassment or exploitation against Award participants, their communities, Award operators, our partner organisations, staff, or volunteers. Organisations like ourselves must expect to be held to the highest possible standards of safeguarding.

The Foundation licenses Award Operators worldwide. In 2017, more than 1.3 million young people participated in the Award, working in their communities with millions of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Keeping Award participants, and those they work with, safe from harm is a priority for us all. Abuse and violence exist in all countries and all sectors. When things go wrong, we expect to be judged on two things: the measures the Award and its Operators have in place to prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring; and the actions they take to reduce the risk of the incident being repeated.

Hundreds of thousands of adults, defined for the sake of the Award as someone aged over the age of 16, are engaged in Award related activities that bring them into contact, regularly or from time to time, with children, young people and vulnerable adults. These "*Adults in the Award*" include paid staff, Award Leaders, Adventurous Journey Supervisors, Award Assessors (or equivalent titles) and volunteers in a range of different roles.

Award participants are aged between 14 and 24. For the purposes of the Award, all Award participants are considered to be children or young people when considering how they should be treated in regard to contact with adults.

Award participants may work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. In this case, an Award participant, even if aged under 16, must adhere to the standards of conduct described in this document expected of an adult engaged in Award related activity.

We are 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 the world those may be.
- Respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we, our licensees and associated organisations 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.



Award Operators and individual units are licensed subject to agreed Operational Guidelines and a set of fundamental standards, which include the stipulations

- 1.5. that all paid staff, Award Leaders, Adventurous Journey Supervisors, and Award Assessors (or equivalent titles) must:
 - 1.5.1. be 16yrs+
 - 1.5.2. be trained (according to guidelines laid down by the Foundation)
 - 1.5.3. be appropriately vetted (according to national standards)
 - 1.5.4. be aware of and committed to the vision and values of The International Award
 - 1.5.5. be compliant with national child protection guidelines and health & safety legislation

We expect Award Operators and individual units to undertake due diligence when selecting organisations and individuals with whom to partner on Award activity.

It is the responsibility of each *Adult in the Award* to ensure that:

- Their behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- They observe the rules established by the Award and by their own organisation for the safety and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- They follow the procedures of their organisation following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of any abuse, including those regarding the reporting of any suspicion, disclosure or allegation.
- They recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed.
- In every respect, the relationships they form with the children, young people and vulnerable adults under their care are appropriate.

To give positive guidance, in addition to insisting on appropriate vetting to national standards and compliance with national guidelines for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Foundation has published a Code of Conduct with regard to safeguarding that describes what it expects of individuals and the organisations to which they belong.

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 behaviour, recognising that further standards may be required by their own national legislation or policies set by their National Award Operators or their own organisations

Every Adult in the Award, and every Award participant working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, should be provided with a copy of this Code of Conduct as part of their induction to the Award.

(If an Award Operator's own policies and procedures, reviewed and agreed at the time of each licence review, cover these points, provision of those documents meets this requirement.)

Code of Conduct

All adults involved with the Award, as a minimum, must:

1. Keep to this Code of Conduct at all times.
2. Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
3. Set an example for others to follow.
4. Avoid favouritism
5. Plan for Award activities to involve more than one other person being present, or at least within sight and hearing of others. This is relevant in all sections of an Award Participant's programme.
6. Follow any supervisory ratios stipulated by their own organisations (and those responsible for a specific Award activity)
7. Respect a person's right to personal privacy.
8. Avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust. For instance, a sexual relationship between an Award leader or assessor and any Award participant, even one who is over the legal age of consent, would be unacceptable.
9. Have separate sleeping accommodation for children / young people and adults and adhere to any further rules on this matter stipulated by their own organisation and/or the organisation responsible for the Award activity.
10. Allow young people to talk about any concerns they may have.
11. Encourage others to challenge attitudes or behaviours they do not like.
12. Avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, e.g. tantrums and crushes
13. Make everyone (children, young people, parents and carers, Award Leaders, Adventurous Journey Supervisors, and Award Assessors) aware of their own organisation's safeguarding arrangements.
14. Remember this Code of Conduct at sensitive moments, e.g. when helping someone who has been bullied, bereaved or abused.
15. Tell other adults where they are and what they are doing
16. Remember someone else might misinterpret actions, even if they are carried out with good intention
17. Take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and immediately follow the reporting processes in use within their organisation and, where relevant, the organisation responsible for the Award activity.
18. Never trivialise abuse.
19. Never form a relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult that is an abuse of their position of power or influence over the other
20. Never allow abusive activities, e.g. initiation ceremonies or bullying.
21. Never take part in inappropriate behaviour or contact, whether physical, verbal or sexual.
22. Never take part in physical contact games with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
23. Never make suggestive remarks or threats to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
24. Never use inappropriate language when writing, phoning, emailing or using the internet.
25. Never let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported.
26. Remember this Code of Conduct when online or using digital methods of communication.
27. Never rely just on their good name, the name of their organisation or the name of the Award to protect them.

All organisations that work with Award participants should have appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure, as a minimum, that they allow adults to comply with this Code of Conduct.