Serious Incident Reporting Policy

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Malta Foundation

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Version Control

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Relevant Policies and documentation

1. Safeguarding Policy
2. Whistleblowing policy
3. GDPR Policy

1 Introduction

At the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Malta Foundation ("the Award"), we are committed to ensuring the highest standards of safety, integrity, and accountability in all our activities and operations. The Serious Incident Reporting Policy referred to hereunder the 'SIR Policy' is a crucial component of our governance framework, designed to safeguard our participants, staff, volunteers, and the reputation of the Award itself.

It is imperative that all individuals associated with the Award, whether staff, volunteers, or partners, are fully aware of this policy and adhere to its procedures. Compliance with the SIR Policy is not optional; it is a fundamental aspect of our operations and critical to our mission of providing safe and impactful experiences for young people.

Understanding and following the reporting procedures outlined in this policy ensures that any issues that may arise can be addressed promptly, maintain the integrity of the Award programmes, and uphold the values of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award.

2. Reporting

2.1 The Award is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, safety, and compliance with Maltese regulations. This policy delineates the processes and responsibilities for reporting serious incidents that could impact the Award, its participants, staff, and overall operations.

2.2 The Award requires all licensed Operators to report, as soon as possible and not later than 7 days from the incident, any serious incident, complaint and possible claim to the Award that may provoke significant adverse publicity or financial or legal liability for an Operator or the Award. Licensed Operators are required to keep the Award informed about the progress on any of these matters.

2.3 If a serious incident takes place that is associated with the Award, it is important that there is prompt, full and frank disclosure to the relevant local authorities

2.4 If a reportable incident involves actual or alleged criminal activity, licensed Operators must also report it to the relevant law enforcement agencies in the country or jurisdiction where the incident(s) occurred. The obligation to report an incident to the Award in no way affects the obligation to report actual or alleged criminal activity to the relevant law enforcement agencies.

2.5 Operators are to report to the Award once the relevant authorities have been informed.

2.6 The focus of the SIR Policy' is to provide licensed Operators with guidance to determine what constitutes a serious incident, what to report, to whom and when. The primary purpose of the policy is to govern serious incident reporting inline with the International Award Association.

3. Definition of a Serious Incident

In the context of the Award, a serious incident is defined as any event, actual or suspected, which results in or risks significant:

- Harm to participants, volunteers, staff, or any other individuals directly associated with the Award's activities.
- Loss or damage to the Award's assets or property.
- Legal issues, including breaches of Maltese law, which could impose liability on the Award or tarnish its public image and reputation.
- Harm to the International Foundation and/or Award's work or reputation.

Exclusions:

This Serious Incident Policy does not cover minor or medium injuries or accidents. Such incidents are governed by the Injury & Accident Reporting Policy. Specifically, this policy excludes:

- *Injuries or accidents that do not result in significant harm or require immediate medical attention.*
- *Incidents that do not involve substantial damage to property or equipment.*
- *Any event that is classified as minor or medium based on our organisation's risk assessment criteria.*

For procedures and reporting related to minor or medium injuries or accidents, please refer to the Injury & Accident Reporting Policy.

4. Categories of Serious Incidents

Any reportable incident should be fully risk-assessed, and a report should not be made if there is reasonable risk that doing so may cause further harm to the victim/survivors, or where due process and operation of the rule of law is not reasonably assured.

Specific categories under this policy include:

Safeguarding Incidents	Including but not limited to abuse or neglect of Award participants, especially minors and vulnerable adults.
Financial Misconduct	Such as embezzlement, fraud, or significant mismanagement of funds.
Anti-Money Laundering	Donations from an unknown or unverifiable source, or suspicious financial activity using the Award's funds.
Legal Non-Compliance	Breaches of Maltese laws and regulations governing non-profit operations.
Security and Data Breaches	Including unauthorised access to digital systems or loss of sensitive data, in violation of Maltese data protection laws. Such as failure or major data breach with the Online Record Book, Award Community and Alumni platforms.
Links to terrorism and extremism	Including 'proscribed' (or banned) organisations, individuals subject to an asset freeze, or kidnapping of staff or Award volunteers.
Other significant incidents	Such as insolvency, forced withdrawal of banking services without an alternative, significant data breaches/losses or incidents involving partners that materially affect the Operator.

5. What to report to the Award

5.1 To determine whether an incident is reportable under the Award's SIR Policy, the incident should be evaluated to identify its seriousness based on the risk it presents of provoking significant adverse publicity and financial or legal liability for an Operator or the Award.

5.2 To identify if there is a significant risk in one or more area you should complete an analysis using the Award's 'tension triangle' outlined in Figure 1.Analysis using the 'tension triangle' should be conducted using three key areas of consideration: behaviour, proximity, and reputation. A significant risk in one or more area deems the incident reportable to the Award.

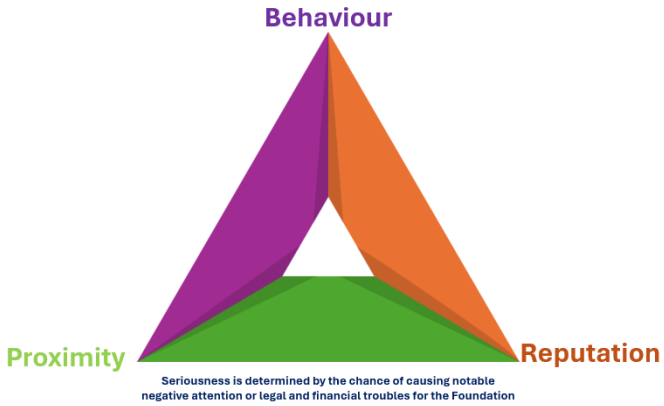

Figure 1: Tension Triangle

5.3 The non-exhaustive list of questions in relation to each key area, behaviour (5.3.1), proximity (5.3.2) and reputation (5.3.3), can be used as guidelines to form part of the analysis to verify if there is/are any significant risk/s.

5.3.1 Behaviour – questions and considerations:

- Does the actual or alleged incident reflect a breach of the volunteer Code of Conduct?
- Is the actual or alleged incident illegal in the jurisdiction?
- Is the actual or alleged incident illegal in Malta/ under international law?
- Is the actual or alleged incident a result of negligence?
- What other factors need to be considered relating to the behaviour involved in the incident?

5.3.2 Proximity – questions and considerations:

- What is the relationship between the alleged or actual perpetrator and the licensed Operator or donor?
- Who is/are the human victim(s)? What is the relationship between the victim(s) and the licensed Operator or donor?
- Did the incident(s) take place during activity directly associated with the Award?
- What other factors need to be considered relating to the proximity of the incident to the licensed Operator or donor?

5.3.3 Reputation – questions and considerations:

- What is the potential for adverse publicity for the Award Brand?
- Is there a reputational risk for key stakeholder individuals or organisations?
- What other factors need to be considered relating to publicity connected to the incident?

5.4 Finally, the result of the triangulated evaluation or analysis should be cross-referenced against a risk-assessment on any potential risks of further harm to the victim(s)/survivor(s) associated with reporting the incident to the Award.

6. Categories of Serious Incidents

6.1 The responsibility for reporting serious incidents on behalf of a licensed Operator to the Award is an obligation enshrined in Operator licenses, and rests with the licence signatory of the Operator:

Operating Partners	The Board of a National Award Operator or Operating Partner should be consulted and informed by the National Director or relevant Senior Manager before reporting to the Award. In practice, the National Director may report on behalf of the Board and licensed signatory.
Award Centres	The obligation to report rests with the licence holder, typically a Principal or Director of the school or organisation licensed as an Independent Award Centre. In practice, the Award Coordinator should consult and inform the Senior Management Team of their organisation, before reporting to the Award. The Award Coordinator may report on behalf of the licence holder.

6.2 The responsibility for reporting serious incidents on behalf of the Award rests with the Board of Trustees. The National Director is required to report all serious incidents to the Board who have designated responsibility for safeguarding, oversight of serious incidents, and their governance.

7. To whom and when to report a serious incident

7.1 Operating Partners and Award Centres must promptly report any actual or alleged serious incident. This requires reporting as soon as reasonably possible after the incident occurs, or immediately upon becoming aware of it.

7.2 In the event of a serious incident, it is crucial to ensure prompt, complete, and transparent communication with the appropriate authorities and/or regulator.

7.3 If a serious incident involves actual or suspected criminal activity, it is imperative that Operating Partners and Award Centres also report the incident to the relevant law enforcement agencies within the jurisdiction where the incident took place. This requirement to report to law enforcement operates independently of the duty to report the incident to the Award.

7.4 Operating Partners and Award Centres should report incidents to the Award only **after** the relevant local authorities have been informed.

7.5 Reporting of serious incidents should be conducted using the **SIR form**.

8. Complaints procedures

8.1 The Serious Incident Reporting (SIR) Policy and its associated procedures operate independently of the Award's complaints procedure, and do not affect it.

8.2 Should a serious incident be reported, and a stakeholder subsequently wishes to lodge a complaint about either the incident itself or the Award's response to it, the processes for handling the serious incident report and the complaint should be conducted separately.

8.3 In such a case, the Complaints policy must be enacted.

Empower Future Generations to Excel

Your centre is more than a place of learning—it's where young people ignite their passion for adventure and acquire a thirst for knowledge. As a Duke of Edinburgh's Award centre, you uphold the highest standards of safety and incident reporting. This steadfast commitment ensures that young adventurers can explore and grow with peace of mind, secure in the knowledge that their well-being is prioritised, paving the way for their lifelong success

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S INTERNATIONAL AWARD
MALTA

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If you have any questions regarding our policies or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. Comprehensive details of our policies can be readily accessed on our website.

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