Safeguarding Policy and Reporting Procedure

Safeguarding means protecting people from abuse, harassment, exploitation and neglect. This policy explains how to recognise concerns, participate safely and seek help during IJF Academy study, practical sessions, placements and related travel or online activity. It also covers people involved in your coaching or projects.

If someone is in immediate danger

Contact the local emergency services first. **In Malta call 112.** Move to safety if possible and seek appropriate medical help. Do not wait for an Academy or IJF reply; email and reporting forms are not emergency services.

How to report a concern

Academy help. Contact **academy@ijf.org** or use **Contact Us**. Following the Handbook, write in English and include your name, country, programme and request. Initially provide only the information needed to explain the safety concern and ask for a safe, private follow-up route. A tutor can help you make contact; keep sensitive details out of public forums and external social-media messages.

You may also contact the police or the relevant protection service where the person is at risk. An Academy or IJF report does not replace any report required by law.

What to include

- What happened, when and where, who may be at risk and whether a child is involved. Distinguish what you witnessed from what someone told you.
- Any immediate danger, relevant names or existing records, and anyone who should not receive the information because this could create a risk.
- A safe way to contact you and any communication or support needs. Ask how to provide sensitive material securely.

You do not need to investigate or prove an allegation before seeking help. You may report an older incident or a concern about someone else. Do not delay seeking help because you lack evidence or cannot complete a form; ask for assistance.

Following up your report

Ask your reporting contact about next steps and safe updates. To complain about an Academy decision or its handling of a concern, use **Contact Us** and select **“Complain”** or **“Appeal”**, with the details required by the Handbook. The Head of Institution communicates the final appeal decision. The direct IJF route and competent public authorities remain available.

Safe participation and support

Recognising harm

Concerns include violence, forced training despite injury, unsafe supervision or withheld care; threats, humiliation, bullying or degrading initiation; unwanted sexual attention, grooming or exploitation; and abusive messages, stalking or sharing private images. Harm may involve one incident or a pattern, peers or someone in authority. Sporting rank, academic influence or cultural practice does not excuse abuse.

Your safety and responsibilities

Respect other people's boundaries and follow practical safety instructions. Instructional contact must be appropriate and explained. Tell the instructor if an activity is unsafe or you cannot continue safely. Do not pressure another person to continue. Professional boundaries in the Ethics Policy apply to anyone influencing your learning, assessment or progression.

Respect privacy in changing and personal-care areas. Do not photograph or film there, share private images or use sexualised messages. For coaching or placement work involving children or adults needing additional protection, follow the activity's supervision and safeguarding arrangements and ask your tutor if anything is unclear.

If someone tells you about harm

Listen calmly without blame. Do not promise secrecy, confront the person reported or investigate. Help the person reach a safe reporting contact. Preserve existing messages and factual notes securely; do not circulate them. If material may depict child sexual abuse, do not download, copy, screenshot or forward it; note its location and seek police guidance.

Report concerns involving a child through a safe safeguarding route. A child includes anyone under 18 and anyone otherwise treated as a minor under applicable law. For another adult, normally seek their consent before sharing identifying details. Protection from serious harm or legal duties may require sharing without consent; ask the safeguarding recipient for guidance.

Support and fair treatment

You may ask for a trusted supporter, language help or an accessible way to communicate. Tell the Academy if the situation affects your learning or safe participation. Discuss support under the Equality Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments Policy; programme and assessment requirements remain those in the Handbook.

You should not be disadvantaged for raising a concern in good faith. Retaliation, threats or pressure to withdraw a report are further concerns to report. A report that cannot be substantiated is not automatically a false report. You do not have to confront the person involved or accept mediation to seek help.

Your privacy

Information must be handled sensitively and shared only where necessary and lawful. Absolute secrecy cannot be promised where protection, a fair process or legal obligations require disclosure. Explain any risks associated with contacting you or sharing information. GC Academy Limited is the data controller for Academy processing under the Privacy and Data Protection Policy; the IJF handles its own reports under its procedures.

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