



## **Policy on Safeguarding:**

### **Protection from Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation**

**2022**

#### **Notes**

- \* This version of the policy has been adapted for use on the AMQF Website*
- \* All inquiries pertaining to this policy should be directed to the Director of Administration.*
- \* “AMQF” and “Foundation” are used interchangeably to refer to the A.M. Qattan Foundation.*
- \* “Staff” and “employee” are used interchangeably to refer to all individuals who have a full time or part time employment contract with the Foundation- whether fixed term or open-ended.*

**A.M. Qattan Foundation is a UK charity (number 1029450) and a charitable company limited by guarantee (number 2171893). It is also registered as a non-profit international organisation operating in Palestine (number QR-0035-F).**

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## **1. Policy Statement**

Our values:

- The defence of the rights and dignity of all
- Freedom, diversity, dialogue, and the production of knowledge
- Working in a collegiate spirit of productivity
- The courage to be just

While we strive to realize our vision, and to create impact in the communities we work with through our support to culture and education, we also realize the fundamental importance of organizational culture and accountability in creating a safe and supportive environment for our staff, partners, and the communities with whom we work.

In line with our key values, we believe that all people have the right to live their lives free from any form of abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation.

We also believe that abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation, are more likely to be exerted over particular groups of people due to inequalities and vulnerabilities, particularly over women, vulnerable adults and children. We also recognise that there are unequal power balances in any situation, and we must thus ensure that the power held by the Foundation (and/or its employees) will not be used to abuse, harass or cause harm to others.

We take extremely seriously all reports of abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation. AMQF has a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation. We will carefully examine allegations and investigate and take appropriate disciplinary action where this is needed.

## **2. Scope & Definitions**

This policy and related procedures apply to all staff members, and related parties, including board members, volunteers, interns, visitors and international and local consultants, in addition to individual and corporate contractors of AMQF.

A list of Definitions can be found in Annex 1. While the list covers most of the topics mentioned in the policy, it is not exhaustive. Additional guidance from other relevant laws, codes of ethics and international conventions should be sought when necessary.

## **3. Legal Framework and Related Policies**

This policy sets out the basic standards and procedures that are to be followed. Reference is made to the Foundation's Human Resources Manual, Code of Conduct, Child Protection Policy and Media Policy. In cases of conflict or confusion, the more restrictive process and guideline are to be used.

This policy is based on, and informed by, the [United Nations](#) Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and non-UN personnel (2008). Operating in the UK and Palestine, the policy is to be applied in tandem with local and national laws and regulations.

#### **4. Our Commitments**

- AMQF will make every effort to promote, create and maintain a safe organisational culture for all people who work for and with it.
- AMQF staff are expected to lead by example, promoting the Foundation's values and safeguarding ethos, highlighting the organization's commitment to equality, diversity and respect for others.
- AMQF will create an environment where it is safe to address abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation.
- AMQF is committed to a transparent and confidential reporting mechanism that is centred around survivor protection.
- AMQF is committed to continuous learning and improvement to prevent and respond to abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation.
- AMQF is committed to reporting cases of abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation to the Foundation's Board of Trustees (BoT) and communicating with local authorities, when needed, as well with other parties upon the direction of the BoT- taking into consideration the best interests of survivors, the Foundation, and other related risks.

#### **5. Reporting and Investigation**

##### **5.1 Reporting**

Any actual, suspected, or alleged case of abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation should be reported immediately, using any of the following mechanisms:

**Updated reporting mechanisms can be found on:**

<https://www.qattanfoundation.org/en/feedback-and-complaints>

##### **5.2 Confidentiality of reports and investigations, non-retaliation**

- Any report of alleged or actual instances of abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation submitted pursuant to this policy must be treated confidentially to the fullest extent possible. Reports of actual or suspected abuse, physical or sexual harassment and exploitation can be done anonymously. Staff will not be retaliated against for reports made in good faith. Only personnel with a need to know should be advised of a report and any related investigation.

##### **5.3 Procedures**

- Upon awareness of an alleged or suspected Abuse, Sexual Harassment and

Exploitation relating to any function at the Foundation, the staff member should immediately report the known details using any of the mechanisms described in 5.1 above.

- If the alleged or suspected Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation was communicated to staff by a third party, staff members should a) advise third party on use of the mechanisms in 5.1 if within their ability; b) ensure they express compassion and act with sensitivity; c) provide confidentiality in a manner that respects the third party's dignity; and d) report on this to the Director General and/or Director of Administration immediately.
- The Safeguarding committee shall review all received details and issue an initial report to be shared with BoT.
- Depending on the nature of the allegations, other units may be consulted.

#### 5.4 Appropriate investigation, report, and follow-up

- Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation or allegations thereof, will be investigated and documented proportionate with protection of survivors, ensuring their safety and dignity.
- The Director General and the Board of Trustees will assign an investigator; either internally from a member of the staff or externally (e.g., a legal advisor, psychology professional etc). Any additional resources needed to facilitate the investigation will be made available. The outcome of the investigation, including findings and recommendations (if any) should be provided in a report to the BoT and DG.

## 6. Responsibilities

A safeguarding culture is the joint responsibility of all those involved in the Foundation. All employees will lead by example in ensuring adherence to values, ethics, and codes of conduct, as well as law.

#### 6.1 All staff, partners, recipients, agents, consultants, vendors will:

- Act according to the acceptable legal and ethical standards and expectations
- Be watchful for any Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation at AMQF or any related third parties
- Report as detailed in item 5 above
- Cooperate with any investigation if needed

#### 6.2 AMQF Management<sup>1</sup> will:

- Promote a safeguarding environment

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<sup>1</sup> Management in general is T1 & T2 staff at AMQF

- Maintain an effective control environment, perform regular risk assessments, implement appropriate procedures and internal control activities, ensure sufficient information communication, and monitoring of the whole control system
- Require staff to report suspicions, allegations or known Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation
- Report all instances of Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation

### 6.3 AMQF BoT and DG will:

- Appropriately investigate or assign an appropriate person or team to investigate allegations of Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation
- Depending on context, develop guidelines to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Ensure implementation of any required or recommended remediation activity
- Implement appropriate sanctions against staff who committed Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation
- Sensitize staff and partners about the Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation risk in the local environment regularly, act transparently and encourage open discussion
- Make the policy and procedures available to all staff including partners

## **7. Governance and Accountability**

The Director General will coordinate oversight of this policy in collaboration with the Board of Trustees, and review and update it according to the timeframe specified in the policy. The DG will monitor and report against this policy utilizing standardized data with appropriate levels of confidentiality.

In the case the DG is the subject of any suspected action of Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation, the Director of Administration is to report the case immediately to the Board of Trustees which will lead, or assign the lead, on any following action related to the case.

## Annex 1: Definitions

Child	Individuals at or below the age of 18.
Adult	Individuals above the age of 18.
Adults experiencing vulnerability	Anyone 18 years or over who: is unable to take care or protect themselves from harm or exploitation; or due to their gender, mental or physical health, disability, ethnicity, religious identity, sexual orientation, economic or social status, or because of disasters, epidemics, and conflicts, are deemed to be at risk; or is in a situation of subordination and therefore experiencing a power differential putting them at risk.
Safeguarding	The measures we take to prevent, report and respond to harm or abuse and to protect the health, well-being and human rights of children and adults that are in direct contact with AMQF, its services, and its programmes.
Abuse	Any action that can harm or cause harm, be it physical or psychological. This includes physical violence, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, ill treatment, exploitation and sexual abuse.
Types of abuse (non-exhaustive)	Physical abuse: any form of action that causes or can cause physical injury or suffering no matter the severity. This includes subjecting others to any form of harmful materials. Emotional or psychological abuse: emotional, psychological or verbal ill treatment through direct or indirect interaction. Examples are humiliation, degradation, name-calling, belittling, constant criticism, bullying, shaming, isolation, exposure to inappropriate visual materials, etc. Neglect: Neglect is the failure to provide (when in a position to do so) a child or a vulnerable individual with the conditions that are essential for their wellbeing while in the care of the Foundation Sexual: the actual or threatened intrusion of a sexual nature whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. Child sexual abuse may also include indecent touching or exposure, using sexually explicit language towards a child and showing children pornographic material.

Sexual harassment	<p>Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another.</p> <p>Such a conduct may also be perceived to interfere with work, is made a condition of employment, or may create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.</p> <p>While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident.</p>
Sexual Exploitation	Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another
Bullying	Any form of abuse directed by one child or more towards other children. Although more common among children, Bullying can be experienced and practiced by adults as well.
Self-inflicted violence	Self-harm, self-mutilation
Grooming	<p>Grooming generally refers to behaviour that makes it easier for an offender to procure a child or vulnerable adult for sexual activity. It often involves the act of building the trust of children, and/or their carers or a vulnerable adult, to gain access to them in order to sexually abuse them. For example, grooming includes the provision of, or attention paid to a specific child or adult, providing gifts, money, drugs or alcohol to them, encouraging romantic feelings or exposing them to sexual concepts through conversation or exposure to pornography.</p> <p>Online grooming is the act of sending an electronic message, series of messages or engaging over an online platform with content that may be of an indecent nature, with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in or submit to sexual activity with another person, including but not necessarily the sender.</p>
Best interests of a child	A basic principle in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), it signifies the main consideration of the ethical and legal framework surrounding work with children.



## **Annex 2: Reporting**

You must promptly report any suspicion, observation, experience, or knowledge of corruption (including fraud and bribery); any form of abuse, exploitation, or harassment—whether sexual or child-related; or any other wrongful conduct. The Foundation will protect your confidentiality and, to the fullest extent possible, ensure that no retaliatory action is taken against you.

Up-to-date reporting channels are available at:

<https://www.qattanfoundation.org/en/feedback-and-complaints>