



# ABBHEY ROAD INSTITUTE

## Abbey Road Institute Mumbai

# Safeguarding Policy

**Last updated:** October 2025

**Issuer:** Abbey Road Institute Mumbai (trading name of A R INSTITUTE LLP, India)

## Safeguarding Policy

### Abbey Road Institute Mumbai (Vocational Provider for Adults Over 18 Only)

#### 1. Purpose and Status

- 1.1. This Policy sets binding standards for the prevention of, and response to, abuse, harm, exploitation, neglect, bullying and harassment (including sexual harassment), and technology-facilitated harms in connection with Abbey Road Institute Mumbai (“ARI”) activities, premises, off-site events, and online environments.
- 1.2. This Policy is to be read with ARI’s Code of Conduct, POSH (Anti-Sexual Harassment) Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Student Handbook & Disciplinary Policy, Privacy & Data Protection Notice, and Health & Safety Policy as published on ARI’s website.
- 1.3. This Policy applies to all employees, visiting/guest faculty, contractors, interns, volunteers, adult students (18+), applicants, and visitors engaged in ARI activities.

#### 2. Legal Basis

- 2.1. **POSH Act, 2013:** ARI, as an employer, shall constitute and maintain an Internal Complaints Committee (“ICC”) and comply with statutory complaint, inquiry and

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- timeline requirements for complaints by women at the workplace, including employees, interns and trainees.
- 2.2. **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016:** ARI shall ensure non-discrimination, accessibility and measures to protect persons with disabilities from abuse, violence and exploitation.
  - 2.3. **Mental Healthcare Act, 2017:** ARI shall uphold the right to confidentiality of mental-health information, subject only to lawful exceptions.
  - 2.4. **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023:** ARI shall process digital personal data on a lawful basis with purpose limitation, data minimisation and security, including heightened care for any incidental processing of children's data (e.g., a visitor).
  - 2.5. **Emergency & Child Assistance References:** The Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) number **112** is a pan-India emergency service; **1098** (CHILDLINE) is a 24×7 emergency service for children who may require aid or protection.
  - 2.6. **Note on Incidental Minors:** ARI does not enrol under-18s. If a child is incidentally present on premises or at an ARI event and a sexual offence is suspected or disclosed, any person with knowledge or apprehension must report to the local police/SJPU without delay; failure to report may attract liability. (POCSO).

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Adult Student:** an individual aged 18 or over enrolled at ARI.
- 3.2. **Vulnerable Adult:** an adult who, by reason of disability, illness, age or other circumstance, may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.
- 3.3. **Abuse** (non-exhaustive): physical, emotional/psychological, sexual (including non-contact and image-based), neglect, discriminatory, financial, bullying, stalking/harassment, and technology-facilitated harms.

### 4. Governance and Responsibilities

- 4.1. **Shared Duty:** Safeguarding is a shared duty of all persons to whom this Policy applies.
- 4.2. **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** ARI shall appoint a DSL to receive concerns, triage and risk-assess cases, make referrals (including to police where indicated), coordinate measures and maintain secure records.
- 4.3. **Deputy DSL:** ARI shall appoint at least one Deputy DSL.
- 4.4. **ICC (POSH):** ARI shall maintain an ICC and POSH procedures for women at the workplace as mandated by law, without prejudice to ARI's separate student-facing sexual-misconduct procedure, which provides equivalent protections as an institutional standard.
- 4.5. **Leadership Oversight:** ARI leadership shall ensure resourcing, oversight, and annual review of this Policy.

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## 5. Safer Engagement of Personnel

- 5.1. ARI shall include a safeguarding statement in job advertisements.
- 5.2. Prior to engagement, ARI shall conduct identity and right-to-work checks, seek a minimum of two references and require declarations of pending convictions/cases; where lawful and practicable, ARI may seek police verification for roles that could interact with minors at public-facing events.
- 5.3. All personnel shall receive safeguarding induction and periodic refreshers aligned to applicable law and this Policy.

## 6. Standards of Conduct

- 6.1. Professional boundaries shall be maintained at all times; staff-student romantic or sexual relationships are prohibited.
- 6.2. Bullying, harassment, degrading treatment and retaliation are prohibited.
- 6.3. Official communications with students shall use approved channels consistent with ARI's data-protection and information-security standards.
- 6.4. ARI shall provide reasonable adjustments and accessible reporting in accordance with obligations relating to persons with disabilities.
- 6.5. Where a minor is incidentally present, unsupervised one-to-one contact is to be avoided; suspected or disclosed sexual offences against a child shall trigger the reporting duty noted in Clause 2.6.

## 7. Reporting and Case Handling

- 7.1. **Internal Reporting Channels:** Concerns may be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL, a senior staff member, or where the concern is sexual harassment of a woman at the workplace to the ICC Presiding Officer, or via ARI's designated safeguarding email/online channel or telephone line.
- 7.2. **Initial Handling:** Reports shall be recorded factually and escalated to the DSL without delay.
- 7.3. **Risk and Referral:** The DSL shall acknowledge receipt, assess risk, determine referrals (including police where indicated), implement interim measures as necessary, and coordinate case handling in accordance with law and this Policy.
- 7.4. **Criminal Allegations:** Where a criminal offence is alleged, ARI shall cooperate with competent authorities; internal fact-finding may be paused while ensuring appropriate safeguards remain in place.
- 7.5. **Incidental Minors:** For any child-related offence, referral to the local police/SJPU shall be made without delay in accordance with POCSO.

## 8. Protection Against Retaliation

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- 8.1. No person shall suffer retaliation for making a good-faith report or for assisting in a case. Retaliation constitutes misconduct and may attract disciplinary action.

## 9. Confidentiality and Records

- 9.1. Information shall be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis and retained securely in safeguarding records with restricted access and appropriate retention schedules.
- 9.2. Mental-health information shall be protected in accordance with the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 (right to confidentiality; limited lawful exceptions).

## 10. Data Protection

- 10.1. ARI shall process digital personal data in compliance with the DPDP Act, 2023 including (without limitation) lawful basis, purpose limitation, data minimisation and appropriate security measures, with heightened care for any incidental processing of children's data.

## 11. Visibility, Training and Review

- 11.1. ARI shall publish the contacts of the DSL/Deputy DSL and ICC, and display ERSS **112** and CHILDLINE **1098** on campus and online.
- 11.2. ARI shall provide induction and periodic refresher training to relevant personnel and student leaders commensurate with roles and risks.
- 11.3. This Policy shall be reviewed at least annually, or earlier upon change in applicable law or regulatory guidance.

## 12. External References (for public notice)

- 12.1. **Emergency:** ERSS 112 (pan-India emergency).
- 12.2. **Child Assistance (incidental minors):** CHILDLINE 1098 (24×7).
- 12.3. **Statutory Sources:** POSH Act, 2013; RPwD Act, 2016; Mental Healthcare Act, 2017; DPDP Act, 2023; POCSO (for reporting duty where a child is involved).
- 12.4. **Institute Contact:**

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