



ace
AFC Academic Centre
of Excellence



AFC Certificate in Child Safeguarding
2025

Insights | **Fundamentals** | **Essentials**



AFC General Secretary's Message

Dear football family,

It is with great pride that I welcome you to the latest programme by the AFC Academic Centre of Excellence (ACE) - the AFC Certificate in Child Safeguarding (ACCS).

As the governing body of Asian football, the AFC is firmly committed to protecting the rights of children and ensuring that football is played within a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere for all children.

As underlined in our Vision and Mission, social responsibility remains a key focus

area for the AFC and the three main pillars of Child Safeguarding, Education and Social Inclusion continue to be at the forefront of all our endeavours.

In recent years, the AFC has made tremendous progress in promoting child safeguarding by focusing on areas of governance and key operations, which include mandating the appointment of a Child Safeguarding Officer under the AFC Enhance Programme Regulations, in addition to launching the AFC Child Safeguarding Policy.

While the AFC continues to play a significant role in developing the capacities of Member Associations (MAs) and Regional Associations (RAs) to strengthen their child safeguarding practices in football, there is a need to further empower our stakeholders in developing, implementing, and strengthening Child Safeguarding systems on their own.

The ACCS has been designed for this purpose and includes modules that cover the AFC Child Safeguarding system, risk and impact management in child safeguarding, leadership in safeguarding, individual roles in safeguarding children, communicating child safeguarding to various stakeholders and other critical aspects.

Every child deserves a safe and conducive environment in which to enjoy football, and through the delivery of the ACCS' curated content, we are confident that participants will be equipped with the required competencies to further develop Asian football with the utmost integrity.

Most importantly, the ACCS - the latest in the ACE's range of purposeful and transformative programmes - will serve to further reinforce the AFC's Vision and Mission of strengthening the capabilities of our MAs, RAs and the wider Asian football ecosystem.

Datuk Seri Windsor John
AFC General Secretary

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Programme Overview

Children have the right to be safe from harm at all times, including and especially within the football environment.

To help achieve this, we offer the AFC Certificate in Child Safeguarding (ACCS) programme, which consists of (3) three different courses:

1. Insights
2. Fundamentals
3. Essentials

The programme will provide information about the AFC's Child Safeguarding Policy, practices and systems in six (6) languages: English, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Persian and Russian. It is designed to equip participants with the practical knowledge they need in order to implement policies and systems to keep children safe from harm in football.

It will define child safeguarding and provide an understanding of its concepts and best practices, and why child safeguarding is important in football.

The programme will also equip participants with the skills to identify and reduce the risk of harm to children, and to report and manage child safeguarding concerns safely and confidentially, in addition to providing guidance on the day-to-day practical applications of child safeguarding within an organisation.

This online programme welcomes independent applicants, regardless of their direct or indirect connection to football and/or the larger sporting ecosystem and in particular the AFC stakeholders as it would provide an understanding of the AFC's child safeguarding expectations.



Programme Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this programme, participants will be able to:

Insights

- Understand the concept of child safeguarding and its importance.
- Understand everyone's responsibilities in child safeguarding.
- Understand the types of risks that children are exposed to in society, and when involved in football.
- Identify the different types of child abuse and harm.
- Identify and apply the AFC policies, codes and guidelines that support the safeguarding of children in football.
- Understand the obligation to report concerns regarding children.
- Understand conduct prohibited for all stakeholders involved in the football environment.
- Understand how to develop localised safeguarding policies, codes and systems.
- Identify how to build awareness of child safeguarding throughout Asian football.

Fundamentals

It is expected that participants have previously completed the Insights child safeguarding training to:

- Understand the types of child safeguarding arrangements that should be in place to keep children safe in football.
- Communicate effectively and develop working relationships with all stakeholders including professionals, children and families to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Understand how to communicate effectively with children and young people.
- Understand the diversity of different cultural practices when working together to safeguard and promote the well-being of children.
- Set clear standards of good practices and identify poor practices and abuse.
- Identify and assess child safeguarding risk areas in football environments and activities.
- Apply child safeguarding risk mitigation strategies within football to reduce abuse and harm.
- Understand and recognise the barriers for reporting that are experienced by children, young people and/or their families.
- Recognise, respond to, and understand the best practices for sharing child safeguarding concerns.
- Know how and when to consult with the AFC Safeguarding team.
- Understand how to be an effective advocate for children and ensure that the child's well-being is taken into account at all times.

Essentials

It is expected that participants have previously completed the Fundamentals child safeguarding training to:

- Understand the role and responsibilities of the designated/lead child safeguarding officer.
- Understand the local legislative and good practice requirements for child safeguarding.
- Understand in depth the barriers for reporting that are experienced by children, young people and/or their families and any other person in an organisation.
- Understand the best methods to communicate with children, young people and/or their families and any other person in an organisation.
- Build a transparent case management system (step-by-step guide on how to develop a case management plan, approach witnesses, collect and evaluate information/evidence from witnesses).
- Understand the reasoning and methods to ensure that decisions made are proportionate and defensible.
- Understand the requirements for making decisions concerning child safeguarding as a collective group within an organisation with clear terms of reference/roles and accountabilities.
- Understand what to do if a child safeguarding concern is raised and how to support staff/volunteers in recognising these concerns.
- Document concerns in a manner that is appropriate for child safeguarding and legal processes.
- Have the ability to reflect on current practices and make changes to better safeguard children.



AFC CERTIFICATE IN CHILD SAFEGUARDING (ACCS)

AFC Certificate in Child Safeguarding | Insights



Module 1: Introduction to Child Safeguarding

- Identify the basic concepts of Child Safeguarding.
- Be able to define terms relating to Child Safeguarding.



Module 2: Child Safeguarding in Football

- Be able to state why child safeguarding is important.
- Understand how all of football plays a role in protecting children.
- Describe positive strategies that prevent abuse of children.
- Outline child safeguarding examples in football.



Module 3: The AFC Child Safeguarding system

- Be able to list all or some of the AFC Child Safeguarding documents.
- Understand that the AFC Child Safeguarding Policy and AFC Code of Behaviour apply to all.
- Identify inappropriate conduct.



Module 4: Reporting concerns and managing risks

- Be able to demonstrate an understanding of the reporting obligations.
- Understand and implement the Child Safe recruitment protocols when recruiting.
- Identify ways to reduce risks to children using risk management strategies.



Module 5: Everyone's Role in Safeguarding Children

- Recognise the value of strong leadership in safeguarding children.
- Understand that the AFC Child Safeguarding Policy and AFC Code of Behaviour applies to all AFC stakeholders.
- Identify inappropriate or prohibited conduct from the AFC Code of Behaviour.



Module 6: Developing Child Safeguarding Systems

- Be able to find information on how to develop child safeguarding documents.
- Confidently identify how to develop a strong child safeguarding culture.
- Confidently identify how to develop child safeguarding reporting systems.



Module 7: How to communicate child safeguarding to football stakeholders

- Understand the value of empowering children and their families.
- Recognise the value of educating various football stakeholder groups to safeguard children.



Module 8: Conclusions and Further Information

- Recognise the importance of child safeguarding in football (post-training).
- Understand where to get further information and support.

AFC Certificate in Child Safeguarding | Fundamental

AFC Certificate in Child Safeguarding | Essentials

The details of the modules for ACCS Fundamentals and Essentials will be shared in due course.

Format

The ACCS is an online programme that will be delivered asynchronously (online private studies). The total anticipated study time for each participant in the ACCS Insights is approximately 145 minutes.

The details of the schedule for ACCS Insights, Fundamentals and Essentials will be provided separately.



Eligibility and Application

This programme is designed to raise awareness on child safeguarding and equip participants with the knowledge and skills to keep children safe from harm when engaged in all football activities.

- Each Member Association (MA), Regional Association (RA) and AFC Stakeholder is encouraged to nominate staff to participate in the ACCS. They should hold a permanent position within the MA, RA, league, club or at other AFC stakeholders.
- Independent applications for those working in or connected to the football or sports industry.
- Highly motivated and dedicated.

Application & Selection Process



Applicants will be required to complete the ACCS application form.



Upon submission of a completed application form, applicants will be required to attend an online interview.



Successful applicants will then be registered to commence with the ACCS programme.



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