

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

PART 1

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy provides information on Volleyball England's obligations and commitments pertaining to Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity in all of the Volleyball disciplines. The policy includes reference to Volleyball England's expectations, the legal framework and the relevant procedures in the event the policy is breached. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions are applicable:
- 1.2 **Equity** – Ensuring that every individual has fair access and opportunity to fulfil their potential regardless of individual's background thereby promoting equal possible outcomes for all.
- 1.3 **Diversity** – Refers to the differences among people that enrich the sport. We want our membership to be reflective of the communities in which we are based.
- 1.4 **Inclusivity** – Having a welcoming culture where everyone feels respected, valued and celebrated for who they are, creating a sense of belonging.

2. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 2.1 Our vision is to be a sustainable, self-sufficient organisation that creates a deep-rooted sense of belonging for everyone within our community.
- 2.2 The 10-year strategic plan for volleyball, [GamePlan](#), sets out five core guiding principles to achieve our purpose. The first principle emphasises:
 - 2.3 *Our people, diversity and inclusivity will be at the heart of everything we do, influencing every decision we make and the way in which we conduct ourselves.*
 - 2.4 [The People Plan](#) and [Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan](#) speak of an inclusive and diverse community of people with three overarching goals.
 - Volleyball England workforce to reflect the diversity across England.
 - Supporting all levels of our sport to foster a culture that encourages inclusive behaviours, collaboration and fairness.
 - Embed diversity and inclusivity into our systems and processes through accepted responsibility and accountability.

3. COMMITMENT

- 3.1 Volleyball England and its partner organisations are fully committed to the principles and practice of equity of opportunity in all its functions. It is committed to the advancement of equity, diversity and inclusivity beyond the minimum standards and legal requirements detailed within this policy.
- 3.2 Volleyball England considers the volleyball formats to provide “sport for all”. They can and should be made accessible to everyone, to the greatest extent possible.
- 3.3 Within the organisation, Volleyball England aspires to provide a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness, respect, transparency, inclusivity and belonging.
- 3.4 To that end, all employees, workers, volunteers, clients, members, suppliers and contractors whether permanent or temporary are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy.
- 3.5 This policy has been produced to both prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against Stakeholders that may preclude them from participating fully in volleyball related activities.
- 3.6 Volleyball England recognises the need to provide different and diverse opportunities as a means of creating fair access and commits to this being prevalent throughout our organisational planning.
- 3.7 Volleyball England is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair treatment and values the differences that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation. This policy has been produced to prevent and address any such treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against team members and workers.
- 3.8 Volleyball England shall also promote equity, diversity and inclusivity in the workplace through its Staff handbook, which forms a related but separate policy of Volleyball England.

4. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 Volleyball England recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of, the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.2 It is responsible for ensuring that no member of the volleyball community or stakeholders are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity,

race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the "Protected Characteristics") or any other relevant characteristic protected by law.

4.3 Volleyball England will seek advice each time this policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

4.4 Volleyball England recognises the following as being unacceptable.

"Discrimination, harassment, and victimisation"

4.5 Unlawful discrimination or prohibited conduct can take the following forms:

4.6 **Direct Discrimination:** treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic.

4.7 **Indirect Discrimination:** applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.

4.8 **Harassment:** engaging in unwanted conduct relating to a relevant Protected Characteristic or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct. Volleyball England is committed to ensuring that its Stakeholders are able to conduct their activities free from harassment.

4.9 **Victimisation:** subjecting someone to a detriment because they have in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).

4.10 Volleyball England regards discrimination, harassment, or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, or victimises any other person.

4.11 In the event of a claim of bullying, Volleyball England will refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Reasonable Adjustments

4.12 Volleyball England recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

- 4.13 What is to be deemed ‘reasonable’ will be determined based on the following criteria: effectiveness of the adjustment, practicality, cost and health and safety implications. These considerations will be made whilst remaining mindful of the aim to remove or reduce the identified disadvantage.
- 4.14 The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, when acting as a service provider, Volleyball England has an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing its service.
- 4.15 Volleyball England will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled people to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully.

Tackling Inequalities

- 4.16 Volleyball England recognises that, in some cases, to further the principle of equity, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. If appropriate and proportionate, and to the extent that is lawful, Volleyball England will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a Protected Characteristic which is currently underrepresented within any group.
- 4.17 Volleyball England has established a Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan “DIAP” that has a summary of the work that is being done, the review of its policies and practices on an ongoing basis, to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, demographics and internal business requirements and where possible good practice.
- 4.18 Volleyball England has convened a D&I Advisory group to further the areas of equity, diversity and inclusivity in the sport.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility

- 5.1 The following responsibilities will apply:
 - The Board is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that this policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.
 - The Chief Executive Officer has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy.
 - A Board member will be appointed by the Board and will ensure that equity is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equity issues into consideration when making decisions.

- The Lead for Diversity and Inclusivity shall have the overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy and for achieving any equity related actions resulting from it.
- All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure they understand and comply with this policy. They recognise that not doing so may leave them subject to disciplinary action, under contract (where applicable) or otherwise personally liable under Volleyball England policies or the Equality Act 2010.
- Volleyball England encourages all members and stakeholders to challenge inappropriate behaviour and will support them in doing so.

Implementation

5.2 The DIAP will be used to ensure the objectives of this Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy are delivered. The DIAP will be regularly reviewed by the Lead for Diversity and Inclusivity. Progress relating to the policy will be recorded annually and a full report will be presented to the Board to review the policy status. This shall include statistical and, if appropriate qualitative, information. Progress of the DIAP will be included in the Annual Report.

6. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

6.1 To safeguard individual rights under this policy, any member of stakeholder who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through the appropriate procedures as set out below.

6.2 Either via the Complaints Procedures or the Whistleblowing Policy.

6.3 Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation are disciplinary offences and will be investigated under the appropriate Code of Conduct and the Grievance and Disciplinary Policy, if proven such acts may be considered as gross misconduct which could lead to dismissal, or suspension from volleyball activities. The Organisation takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy by anyone within the volleyball community.

This policy is to be reviewed - every three years.