



## EQUALITY POLICY (CLUB & TRUST)

### ***Introduction***

Equality is based on respect for individual human dignity and fair treatment of all. It seeks to recognise that some sections of the population will be affected by discrimination and be denied opportunities for developing their talents, or accessing some services, to the full.

An Equality Policy is a statement of intent, derived from these values. Such a Policy when backed by operation objectives provides basis for endeavours to achieve equal opportunities across all areas of the Club's and Trust's operation.

QPR Football Club (QPR Holdings Ltd and Queens Park Rangers Football and Athletic Club Ltd) and QPR in the Community Trust are committed to equality. We recognise that sections of our community may have been affected in the past by discrimination. We wish to create an atmosphere in which every section of the community will feel welcome. We wish to uphold the principles of equality and providing equal opportunities for everyone, in all of our dealings, both public and private.

It is the Club/Trust's Policy to provide equal opportunities for all employees. We will also take every action possible to avoid discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation (this group is known as the protected characteristics).

The Club/Trust believes that the adoption of an explicit Equality Policy will:

- Raise the overall awareness and level of consciousness throughout the Club/Trust
- Set out and clarify expectations for staff, directors, fans and customers, and other agencies with whom the Club/Trust work, to provide professional football and associated services
- Ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and various European regulations in association with discrimination and the football authorities
- Facilitate the monitoring and effectiveness of action to further equality across all areas.

### ***Responsibilities for Implementation***

In line with the adoption of the Equality Policy, the Club/Trust will ensure that the following schedule of responsibilities for different levels of employees will be applied:



### **All staff**

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or encourage others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics;
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic;
- inform their line manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

### **Management**

Are required;

- To ensure that the Policy is effectively communicated, understood and implemented
- To encourage staff to report any breaches of Policy and investigate fairly and as quickly as possible using appropriate procedures.
- To provide training and awareness for all staff, including senior management, to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities under this Policy.

### **Board of Directors**

- Are accountable for monitoring the effectiveness of this Policy, assessing the impact of all procedures and policies on staff with particular reference to age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.
- Are required to direct the management of the Club/Trust to carry out appropriate action in relation to equal opportunities.

### **Policy Commitment**

The Club/Trust aims to achieve equality, in both the provision of its services, and the recruitment and employment of staff.

In pursuit of this aim the Club/Trust will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation, by applying conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.



Therefore the Club/Trust commits to ensuring that:

- No event, action or behaviour is condoned or promoted within the Club/Trust which is threatening, abusive, insulting, demeaning or otherwise unwelcoming to any individual or section of the community on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. Action will be taken to prevent any words or behaviour infringing on the above statement by spectators, employees, workers or other persons, in accordance with the notices displayed in various places at Loftus Road Stadium. This action may take the form of exclusion from a match or matches, serving a banning order for a period of time to be decided by the senior management team or disciplinary action.

### **Service Provision Objectives**

In our provision of professional football and associated services, the Club/Trust will use its best endeavours to ensure that:

- Everyone receives equality of consideration when both seeking and using our services
- Information regarding our services offered is provided and publicised in a form that will (a) achieve the maximum accessibility, and (b) avoid unnecessary jargon and all discriminatory language
- An external disabled access audit is conducted in line with the Accessible Stadia Guidance document and the Club/Trust uphold a detailed Policy for disabled supporters and service users
- Seekers and users of services are made aware of the Club/Trust's Policy and of how to lodge a complaint if they feel they have been unjustly treated
- Complaints will be investigated promptly and thoroughly and dealt with in accordance with the Club/Trusts complaint procedures.

### **Employment Objectives**

The Club/Trust views its staff as its most valuable resource and believes staff development and promotion opportunities should be available regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. With this in mind, the Club/Trust's continued aim will be to ensure that within available resources:

- All staff undertake relevant training
- Resources will be made available where necessary to assist an individual to do his or her job to the best of their ability
- Promotion opportunities will be brought to the attention of all employees and decisions made on the basis of an individual's ability, requirements of the job and other relevant criteria.



## **Recruitment Objectives**

The recruitment of players depends largely upon the personal and professional judgement of the team manager and/or coaching staff. The Club/Trust will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation, by applying conditions or requirements which cannot be justified. The principles of equal opportunities and the above statement will be applied as far as possible.

In the recruitment of non-playing staff and subject to the need to maintain its services, the Club/Trust will use our best endeavours to:

- Advertise job vacancies internally and externally and as widely as possible to ensure that people with appropriate knowledge and skill are attracted and no person(s) are discriminated against
- Avoid discriminatory language, all jargon and any mention of specific particulars i.e. requesting applicants of a certain age or gender
- Where practicable, involve more than one person in the shortlisting, interviewing and/or selection of potential employees
- Where possible, ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in a non-discriminatory selection of techniques
- Be aware of personal prejudices, and how they can affect judgement
- Make sure the requirements outlined for the job are consistent with those necessary to do it effectively
- Monitor all decisions made to ensure they are consistent in decision making and are following the Equality Policy.

## **Harassment and Victimisation**

The victimisation and harassment of individuals will not be tolerated by the Club/Trust. Such behaviour on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation may also be unlawful.

Harassment includes comments, actions, jokes or suggestions that might create a stressful working environment for a person. Harassment may be verbal (language, jokes, comments, ridicule, nicknames, and verbal threats), non-verbal (gestures, staring and offensive written or electronic communication) or physical (jostling, mistreating or assaulting).

The stress that such harassment can cause may not only be damaging to the individual harassed but may also affect others and have an impact on the organisation. The fact that an employee may not verbalise their objection to such harassment does not mean that they accept it.



Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others because they have brought proceedings, given evidence or complained about behaviour or conduct on the basis that it breaches the Club/Trust's Policy.

Staff who suffer or experience what they consider may amount harassment or victimisation are encouraged to report their complaint through the Club/Trust's Grievance Procedures. Staff should also refer to the Staff Handbook for further information on Harassment and Discrimination. Supporters should report all complaints to the nearest steward or to a member of Club staff through the Club/Trust's complaint reporting procedures.

Should any supporters, service user or employee be found guilty of harassment and or victimisation they will be dealt with accordingly and could result in ejection from the stadium or a potential arrest. Employees of the Club/Trust will be disciplined through the Club/Trust's Disciplinary Procedures.

### **DEFINITIONS – Protected Characteristics**

The Equality Act 2010 covers exactly the same groups of individuals that were protected by previous legislation. They are now referred to as 'protected characteristics'. The Act extends some protections to characteristics that were not previously covered, and also strengthens particular aspects of the law.

#### **Age**

It protects people of all ages. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if you can justify it e.g. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. Age is the only protected characteristic that allows an employer to justify direct discrimination.

#### **Disability**

The Act has made it easier for a person to show that they are disabled and protected by disability discrimination. Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has had a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, which would include things like using a telephone or reading a book.

#### **Sex**

A man or a woman.

#### **Gender Reassignment** (a process of transition from one gender to another)

The Act provides protection for transsexual people. The Act no longer requires a person under medical supervision to be protected – so a woman who decides to live like a man but does not undergo any medical procedure would be covered. It is discrimination to treat transsexual people less favourably for being



absent from work because they propose to undergo, or are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.

### **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

The Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected. Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same sex couples can have their relationships recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples.

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

Pregnancy is a condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth and includes treating women unfavourably if they are breastfeeding. A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave which she is entitled to.

### **Race**

It refers to a group of people defined by their race, and nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins.

### **Religion and belief**

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief e.g. atheism. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live, for it to be included as a definition.

### **Sexual Orientation**

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both, the Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian.

### **DEFINITIONS – Types of Discrimination**

There are now seven different types of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 and these are:

#### **Direct Discrimination**

This is where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.



### **Indirect Discrimination**

This can occur when you have a rule of policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person in a particular characteristic.

### **Harassment**

This is behaviour that is deemed offensive by the recipient. Employees can now complain of the behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

### **Victimisation**

This occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under the legislation.

### **Associated Discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against someone because they have association with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. An example of associative discrimination might be a non-disabled employee who is discriminated against because of action they need to take in order to care for a disabled dependent.

### **Discrimination by perception**

This is direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just perceived to. Perceptive discrimination already applies to age, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation and has been extended to cover disability, gender reassignment and sex.

### **Harassment by a third party**

Employers are potentially liable for the harassment of their staff or their service users by people they don't themselves employ, e.g. a contractor or delivery person. An employer will only be liable if the harassment has occurred on at least two occasions, knows that it has taken place and has not taken reasonable steps to prevent it happening again.

Details of the Club's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found on the Club's Intranet and Simply Personnel. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

### **Non-compliance with this Policy**

Failure to adhere to this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against you, up to and including dismissal.