

1. Introduction

Equality in the Touch community means taking all possible steps to ensure that all our players, coaches, officials, administrators, or a volunteer in any other role (together stakeholders), understand the principles of equality and embed those principles into everything they do. We want to ensure our sport is fair and inequalities are recognised and addressed.

The England Touch Association recognises that it is about changing the culture and adapting the structure of our sport to ensure that the game of Touch is a sport for all.

2. Policy Objectives

The England Touch Association is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no 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 'protected characteristics') included in the Equality Act 2010.

The England Touch Association;

- will encourage partner organisations, including affiliated clubs, leagues and events to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles set out in this Equality Policy.
- recognises that we live in a diverse society and is committed to promoting playing Touch at all levels regardless of socio-economic backgrounds.
- will ensure that its recruitment, selection and deployment procedures are fair, equal and transparent, and ensure continuing compliance with equal opportunities legislation.
- is committed to ensure training opportunities are available to all coaches, volunteers and referees.

3. Purpose of the Policy

The England Touch Association acknowledges that discriminatory behaviour including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, associative discrimination and discrimination by perception is against the law and will not be tolerated.

Equity & Inclusion Policy



The England Touch Association regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation as serious misconduct and likely to bring the sport into disrepute. Appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person in accordance with the European Touch Federation Judiciary Procedures.

4. Complaints Procedures

To safeguard individual rights under this Equality Policy, any stakeholder who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through the England Touch Association Customer Charter.

All complaints will be taken seriously and an individual stakeholder will not be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.

The formal point of appeal relating to this policy is the Advisory and Disciplinary Panel.

5. Legal Requirements

The England Touch Association recognises its legal obligations under appropriate current legislation and will abide by the requirements of, the Equality Act 2010, any equivalent legislation or later amendments in UK jurisdiction.

The England Touch Association will ensure its policies, procedures and practices at all times meet the requirements of the legislation.

6. Monitoring & Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the England Touch Association policy review schedule approved by the Executive Board (not less than once every three years).

The England Touch Association will regularly monitor and evaluate the policies, procedures and practices and inform stakeholders and partners of their impact and of any resulting recommendations.

Appendix A

Standard Definitions from Equality Legislation are attached, making reference to the changes due to the Equality Act 2010.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perceptive discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see associative discrimination below).

Associative discrimination

Already applies to race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Now extended to cover age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination

Already applies to age, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Now extended to cover disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Already applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership. Now extended to cover disability and gender reassignment.

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

A legitimate aim might be any lawful decision you make in running your business or organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful.

Being proportionate really means being fair and reasonable, including showing that you've looked at 'less discriminatory' alternatives to any decision you make.

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Harassment

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. An individual will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves.

Individuals are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

Bullying

The misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.

Third party harassment

Already applies to sex. Now extended to cover age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The Equality Act makes you potentially liable for harassment of your employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of your company, such as customers or clients. You will only be liable when harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions, you are aware that it has taken place, and have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an individual is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An individual is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need to compare treatment of a complainant with that of a person who has not made or supported a complaint under the Act.