ENGLAND NETBALL		
	Diversity & Belonging Policy	
	Responsible Officer	Diversity & Belonging Business Partner
	Group Owner	Executive Team
	Date Created / Modified	January 2026
	Version	1.4
	Review Date	August 2027
	Applicable for	This policy is mandatory. It applies to Clubs, Registered Leagues, Regional Management Boards, County Netball Associations and Partners delivering recognised and authorised netball activity as well as all England Netball employees and volunteers acting in any capacity within netball where a separate policy does not exist.
	Summary	This policy (which may also be referenced at times as the Equality Policy) sets out England Netball's aim to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and not subject to unlawful or unfair discrimination. The policy sets out the objectives to explain how they will achieve the aim of eliminating discrimination for everyone participating in netball.

Version Control:

Person Responsible	Version and summary of changes	Date
Compliance Manager	Extended to include England Netball employees	August 2018
Company Secretary	General review and update	May 2021
Head of People	General review and update – links to other relevant policies and reporting mechanisms	July 2023
Diversity and Belonging Business Partner	General review and update. Updated definition of victimisation broadened to make it more generic and less focussed on the workplace so more applicable to clubs and associations. Introduced equity as an objective of the policy	January 2026

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1.1 England Netball is fully committed to:

- creating a diverse and inclusive culture in which everyone is treated fairly and with respect, individuals have equal access to opportunities and are not judged by reference to unlawful or irrelevant attributes.
- creating an environment that is free from unlawful and unacceptable behaviours and organisational practices including discrimination, harassment and bullying.

- creating a wider netball environment and culture in which everyone is treated fairly and with respect and can enjoy our sport with a genuine feeling of belonging.

- commit to these responsibilities whilst maintaining an unapologetic focus on women and girls.

1.2 The principles of Diversity & Belonging are underpinned by England Netball's purpose, Belonging Commitment statement, Moral Compass and current equality legislation.

1.3 England Netball will take seriously any breaches of this policy and any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, volunteers, customers, suppliers, visitors and the public during the organisation's activities.

1.4 England Netball undertakes to investigate every complaint raised in line with the appropriate policy or regulations detailed in item 8 (Related Documents)

POLICY AIMS & OBJECTIVES

2.1 England Netball aims to ensure that:

- Anyone participating or wishing to participate in netball can do so in an environment free from harassment and discrimination.

- Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging drive our ability to attract, retain, motivate and develop the best talent and deliver the sharpest insights as we grow our netball family.

- No employee, volunteer or job applicant is unlawfully discriminated against or receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic as described in the Equality Act 2010.

- Every employee within England Netball has equality of opportunity and access to job opportunities, promotion, training and other employee services without any unlawful discrimination or unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect.

- Through working in partnership, we will successfully deliver accessible services and employment opportunities.

2.2 In consideration of the aims above, this Policy is based on the following objectives which England Netball commits to uphold:

- Create an environment for equality and diversity in the workplace and across the sport of netball.

- Create a working and sporting environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.

- All employees, volunteers and job applicants are entitled to be fairly treated regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Together these are referred to as "protected characteristics".

- All employees, volunteers and job applicants are given the same opportunity regardless of their socio-economic background.

- Equality is woven throughout the organisational, strategic, individual and departmental planning.

- Through partnerships with a variety of netball delivery partners, every individual who wishes to participate in netball should be able to access an opportunity to do so in some form.

- Consider an equitable approach to support the removal of barriers to participation and address underrepresentation across the sport in line with our Dedicated to Difference Action Plan. Where appropriate, positive action will be used to address past inequalities and areas which are under-represented within netball.

- Provide an appropriate and effective means to report incidents of discrimination or concerns relating to the topics raised within this Policy. No individual who raises a concern in good faith, or those who support another

person to raise a concern should be treated unfairly or discriminated against because of raising the concern.

2.3 This commitment includes training employees and volunteers and informing them about their rights and responsibilities under this Policy.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Equality Act 2010

3.1 England Netball recognises its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act defines nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

3.2 Not one protected characteristic has a higher priority than any other. Discrimination can be on the grounds of a single protected characteristic or a number of single, but unrelated, characteristics.

3.3 It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment, employment or in the provision of goods, services or clubs and associations because of a protected characteristic.

3.4 England Netball recognises that in the provision and governance of competitive netball the exceptions detailed within S195 of the Equality Act 2010 pertaining to age and sex are applicable.

Reasonable Adjustments for Employees and Job Applicants

3.5 A reasonable adjustment is a change or adaption to the physical or working environment that has the effect of removing or minimising the impact of the individuals' impairment in the workplace, so that they are able to undertake their job or duties.

3.6 As a responsible employer England Netball will consider making reasonable adjustments to ensure that workplace requirements or practices do not disadvantage disabled employees or potential employees if:

- England Netball become aware of the impairment
- A disabled person asks for adjustment(s) to be made
- A disabled employee is having difficulty with any part of their job
- Either an employee's sickness record or delay returning to work is linked to their impairment

3.7 England Netball are accountable for deciding what adjustments are considered 'reasonable'. Where appropriate, and with the consent of the individual involved, further advice may be sought when reaching a decision. What is 'reasonable' will be determined based upon factors such as effectiveness, health and safety, cost and organisational size/ resource. All decisions will be communicated in writing with the individual, either accepting the adjustment in full or providing an alternative solution for discussion.

3.8 England Netball recognises reasonable adjustment request can include complex considerations.

3.9 For further support and advice for those employed by England netball please contact hr@englandnetball.co.uk

For further advice and support, please contact belonging@englandnetball.co.uk for adjustments relating to the delivery of netball.

APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

Implementation

4.1 England Netball has a 'Dedicated to Difference' Action Plan (sometimes referred to as a DIAP)) which ensures the objectives of this Policy are delivered. The Dedicated to Difference Plan in conjunction with this Policy is designed to increase diversity of the organisation and its membership and ensure an inclusive environment.

4.2 The Dedicated to Difference Plan details the actions that England Netball will take to improve accessibility to the sport of netball. Making the sport of netball more accessible will help to reduce inequalities and under representation in the sport.

4.3 It is a requirement of the Membership Regulations that members adopt and implement this, Policy. There is an expectation that Regional Management Boards and County Associations will also adopt this Policy and develop their own Diversity Action Plans.

4.4 England Netball will regularly review its employment practices to ensure continued compliance with relevant legislation and good practice. All jobs advertised by England Netball will contain a statement regarding equal opportunities.

4.5 No applicant for any post (including job applicants, consultant advisers, suppliers and volunteers) will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the role, or which constitute unlawful discrimination.

4.6 Suppliers and third-party providers used by England Netball will be required to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of Equality.

Communication

4.7 The Policy will be communicated in the following ways:

- A copy of the Policy will be accessible to all employees, both permanently and casually contracted. It will also be made widely available to England Netball members.
- The Policy will be highlighted in all staff and volunteer inductions carried out by England Netball.
- The Policy will be publicly available on the England Netball website.

4.8 England Netball will promote continuing professional development for all employees and volunteers to support equal opportunities within the organisation and where appropriate provide reasonable adjustments.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 England Netball has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and will take all reasonable steps to prevent and eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination and victimisation.

5.2 The Board of England Netball is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is implemented, followed and reviewed where appropriate. The England Netball Board is also responsible for ensuring that this Policy is enforced, and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.

5.3 The Executive Team has the overall responsibility for communicating and embedding the Policy in our practices to create a culture where volunteers and employees understand the policy aims and their responsibilities and bring them to life in their daily activities.

5.4 A Board Member will be appointed as the 'Diversity & Belonging Champion' and will advocate for our Equality and Belonging commitments to the Board and ensure these areas are considered when making decisions.

5.5 The Diversity & Belonging Business Partner is responsible for the practical implementation, monitoring and review of the Policy, including reporting to the Executive Team. This will include advice, support and dealing with any queries or concerns arising from the Policy.

5.6 All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to create a culture where everyone feels included and that they belong. A culture where diversity is recognised as strength and people are treated fairly, where harassment, unlawful discrimination and bullying are unacceptable.

England Netball actively encourages all employees and volunteers to challenge inappropriate behaviour and support colleagues who are experiencing harassment, unlawful discrimination and bullying.

MONITORING, AUDIT AND REVIEW

6.1 This Policy will be reviewed every two years unless proposals to the Board or legislation change requires an interim review or amendment.

6.2 This Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn.

6.3 The Dedicated to Difference Plan is created to ensure the objectives of this Policy are delivered and will be reviewed by the Executive Team and Diversity & Belonging Business Partner annually.

6.4 On an annual basis, statistical and (if appropriate) qualitative information will be collected and a report will be produced by the Diversity & Belonging Business Partner for the Board. Once reviewed by the Board, the report will be published internally and externally (with due regard to sensitive information) to show the impact of this Policy and the associated Dedicated to Difference Plan.

DEFINITIONS

7.1 All forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation are unacceptable. Unlawful discrimination and unlawful or unacceptable behaviours can take the following forms:

Direct discrimination
Someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Direct discrimination by association
Someone is treated less favourably directly because a protected characteristic of someone they are associated with, such as a friend, family member or colleague.

Direct discrimination by perception
Someone is treated less favourably directly because a protected characteristic they are thought to have, regardless of whether this perception by others is correct or not.

Indirect discrimination
Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to a group of individuals but has (or will have) the effect of putting those who share a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared to others in the group and it is unable to be justified.

Bullying
Unwelcome, offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying may be treatment by one individual or groups which may be persistent or an isolated incident.

There can be circumstances when an individual might experience conduct amounting to both bullying and harassment, with the bullying part of the behaviour not related to a protected characteristic.

Harassment
Unwanted conduct with the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Harassment has a legal definition under the Equality Act 2010 when this unwanted conduct is related to a relevant protected characteristic. Harassment can take many forms. For example, abusive language, name calling, offensive screen savers, jokes, offensive emails, texts, cruel or offensive postings on social media sites. It can also include spoken or written words. The conduct is unwanted in the sense of unwelcomed or uninvited, even if the victim has not expressly communicated to the harasser that they object to the behaviour. A serious one-off incident, for example forwarding a pornographic email, can be classed as harassment.

7.2 **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when a person is subjected to a detriment because they have done (or are believed to have done or may do) a protected act under the Equality Act 2010.

- A protected act includes:
    - Making or bringing a complaint about discrimination or harassment.
    - Supporting someone else's complaint or acting as a witness.
    - Gathering evidence related to a discrimination claim.
    - Alleging that someone has breached the Equality Act.

Examples of victimisation include but are not limited to:
Being belittled or bullied

- Being excluded from meetings or denied opportunities after raising a discrimination complaint.
- Being labelled a “troublemaker” following submitting a complaint or being a witness or supporting a discrimination complaint.
- Denied access to join a club or association as a result of raising a discrimination complaint.
- Receiving unfair disciplinary action after raising a complaint or supporting someone else's complaint.

You are protected from victimisation when:
You carry out a protected act in good faith (e.g., raising a complaint about discrimination).
You face negative treatment or a detriment because of that act (or an employer/association thinks you did or might do it).

You’re not protected if your complaint or evidence is malicious or knowingly false.

Other definitions:

Belonging
The feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group or place. For people to feel like they belong, the environment (in this case the workplace or netball more broadly) needs to be set up to be a diverse and inclusive place.

Diversity
Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among all individuals, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organisation is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist.

Employee
Where the policy references ‘employee’, it is also applicable to a worker but for avoidance of doubt, a worker does not have a contract of employment or the same employment rights as an employee.

Equality
Evenly distributed access to resources and opportunity necessary for a safe and healthy life and to ensure fairness.

Equity:
Fairly distributed access to resources and opportunity for all based on the elimination of barriers that prevent some groups from participating.

Inclusion
The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

8.1 Codes of Conduct
8.2 Disciplinary Regulations
8.3 Dedicated to Difference Action Plan (DIAP)
8.4 Gender Eligibility and Participation Policy
8.5 How to Report a concern
8.6 Whistleblowing Policy
8.7 Anti- Bullying, Harassment & Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Policy for employees can be found on the Everyday Company Documents.
8.8 England netball Grievance Policy for employees can be found on the Everyday Company Documents.