



Wexford FC
Equality & Inclusion
Policy

What is diversity and inclusion?

Diversity is a shorthand word that relates to a mix of employees in the workplace, it is inclusive of all employees when it comes to gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family status and so forth. Diversity is a positive action from a governing body/association when they create an inclusive culture through their recruitment and retention practices and policies. Equality is a legal requirement to ensure that employees are protected against discrimination under the nine grounds. Diversity is a step beyond equality - it is positive commitment to create an inclusive work culture.

Inclusion essentially means people having a sense of belonging, of being comfortable in being part of something they value. Diversity means being aware of, accommodating and celebrating difference. Inclusion and Diversity in many ways go hand-in-hand. Real inclusion reflects diversity, i.e. it aims to offer that sense of belonging to everyone, irrespective of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, race or ethnicity, and/or disability.

The benefits of diversity include:

- ✓ Higher retention rates of volunteers/employees and increased loyalty
- ✓ Improved communication
- ✓ Reduction in conflict / grievances amongst volunteers/employees
- ✓ Increased innovation and creativity
- ✓ Better understanding of member needs

What is a diversity and inclusion policy?

A Diversity and Inclusion Policy is a Statement of Commitment identifying positive actions to be taken to promote diversity and inclusion in the Club. A diversity and inclusion policy assists with compliance with legislation by providing an agreed basis for implementing practices that eliminate discrimination in the Club. It further supports the Governance Code by demonstrating leadership and showing the values of the Club in action.

Further considerations around diversity and inclusion in the organisation include:

- Ensuring the make-up of staff, Board, committees and the volunteer workforce is genuinely diverse and reflective of contemporary society
- Taking positive actions to ensure diversity in the workplace e.g., undertaking diversity events, or promoting and supporting 3rd party events e.g., LGBTI week
- Communicating openly around diversity and highlighting positive actions in this area e.g., in the newsletter/ezine
- Ensuring that people of diverse backgrounds are reflected in the organization's publications, in a genuine way
- Taking steps to build a more inclusive environment and providing leadership at Board and Committee level around diversity and inclusion

Equality Statement

The FAI & League of Ireland is responsible for setting the standards, values and expectations of all Clubs in relation to equality, inclusion and diversity. Football is for everyone, it belongs to and should be enjoyed by anyone who wants to participate in it whether as a player, official, staff member or spectator.

Wexford FC endorses the principle of equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in the club whether as players, match-day fans, staff, board members, participants in

Community programmes and other people engaged with the club's activities (for example, suppliers, corporate partners) has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation; and can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their engagement at the club without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment, bullying or abuse.

Equality Policy

1.1 The Club's policy is not to discriminate in any way or treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of gender, age, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, disability, pregnancy or maternity. These are known as 'protected characteristics' under . The Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011. The Club will not tolerate any such discrimination in any of the Club's activities.

1.2 The Club is committed to the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunity in all of its activities. The Club is an equal opportunities employer and will abide and adhere to the requirements of the Codes of Practice issued by the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 & Immigration Council of Ireland.

1.3 All employees and members of staff are expected to abide by the requirements of the Equal status act, Disability Act 2005, and any other anti-discrimination acts.

Discrimination is prohibited by:

Treating any individual on grounds of gender, age, colour, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, or maternity less favourably than others.

Expecting an individual solely on the grounds stated above to comply with requirements(s) for any reason whatsoever related to their employment or membership, which are different from others.

Imposing on an individual requirements or conditions which are in effect more onerous on that individual than they are on others.

No individual will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which cannot be shown to be necessary to the satisfactory conduct of the job or task.

Victimisation or harassment of an individual, by virtue of discrimination.

Any other act or omission of an act which has the effect of disadvantaging an individual against another, or others, purely on the above grounds.

Thus, all of the Club's recruitment, selection, promotion and training processes, as well as disciplinary matters, will be determined solely by the application of an objective assessment of personal performance and ability.

Complaints and Compliance

2.1 The Club regards all forms of discriminatory behaviour as unacceptable and any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this policy should raise any bona fide grievance or complaint with a member of staff, their team leader or CEO of the club and without fear of being penalised.

2.2 The Club commits itself to the immediate investigation of any claims of discrimination on the above grounds and where such is found to be the case, an undertaking that the practice cease forthwith, restitution of damage or loss (if necessary) and to the investigation of the employee, member, volunteer or spectator accused of discrimination.

2.3 Any person against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter. The parties in question will be notified of the outcome of the investigation, in writing. If the investigation reveals unacceptable discriminatory behaviour on the part of a person or organisation, the Club may impose sanctions on that person or organisation in line with its policies. Sanctions may range from a written reminder concerning future conduct extending to temporary or permanent expulsion from club activities.

2.4 Where the violation of the Equality Policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed. In the event that an individual or organisation associated with The Club is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the club will cooperate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action, as above, in relation to the matter concerned.

2.5 Any employee or member of staff found guilty of discrimination will be instructed to desist forthwith and will be dealt with under the Club's disciplinary procedures.

2.6 The Club opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of disability. No applicant, employee or member of staff shall receive less favourable treatment than others, because of disability. The difficulties of their disability permitting, assistance will be provided, wherever possible, to ensure that disabled employees or members of staff are helped to gain access and to undertake their duties.

Forms of unacceptable Discrimination

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics. Under the Equality Act, the protected characteristics are defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' any of these protected characteristic. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or are with someone who is assumed to have it.



Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

Direct discrimination - can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected Characteristics.

Indirect discrimination - occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Associative discrimination - Discrimination can also occur when someone discriminates against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. An example of this is if 'A' does not give 'B' – a job applicant, for example – the position, even though they have met all of the competencies for the role, just because 'B' has told 'A' they have partner with one or more Protected Characteristics.

Discrimination by perception - can occur when someone discriminates against an individual because they think they possess a particular protected characteristic, and this applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic. An example of this is if 'B' is selected for redundancy by 'A' because they perceive 'B' to have a progressive condition i.e. they are disabled.

Discrimination arising from disability - It is unlawful when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and such unfavourable treatment cannot be justified. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

Harassment- is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation - It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying - Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.

Statement of Commitment

The Club confirms that it is fully committed to ensuring its 'Equality Policy' is always up-to-date, fit for purpose and meets statutory responsibilities.

In order to achieve this the Policy will be reviewed as a minimum annually but also in accordance with any new or amended legislation the Club receives.

In addition, our Staff Handbooks are reviewed annually by our external consultants to ensure they meet the latest requirements and where this is not the case they are amended accordingly.

