



Regulation 3.1 – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Effective date: June 2025

Acknowledgements

MUSC CIC would like to express our thanks to the following organisations who have assisted in the development of this policy

Sport England Code for Sports Governance https://www.sportengland.org/corporate-information/diversity-and-inclusion_

UK Sport Equality, Diversity and inclusion Strategy

<https://www.uksport.gov.uk/news/2021/06/24/new-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy>

Objective of the Policy

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This Mariners United Sporting Club CIC (MUSC CIC) Equality Diversity and Inclusion policy (EDI policy) supersedes our previous Equality policy. The latter policy is now withdrawn.

MUSC CIC 's EDI policy aims to ensure that:

1.2. No job applicant, employee, volunteer, participant, official or member is unlawfully discriminated against in any employment or Kabaddi activity. This includes receiving less favourable treatment because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (these are known as 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010).

1.2 All staff, volunteers, officials and members are aware of our stated position on matters of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within Kabaddi.

2. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

2.1. The policy applies to all MUSC CIC employees including contractors and agency workers (regardless of their employment status), volunteers, officials and members.

2.2. MUSC CIC is recognised by Sport England as the national governing body for Kabaddi in England. This policy therefore extends to all aspects of our work including that facilitated by third party contractors, domestic competitions organised by or on behalf of MUSC CIC, all England teams and the Talent Pathway, club teams representing England, our members and also any other events held in England where third party organisers adopt this policy.

3. OUR POLICY POSITION

- MUSC CIC is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in both employment and in Kabaddi generally. MUSC CIC recognises the unique contribution everyone can make, the benefits of equality and diversity within both the workforce and the sport.
- MUSC CIC will not tolerate any form of direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of but not limited to disability, age, gender reassignment or identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation, responsibility for dependents, political beliefs, trade union activity, socio-economic background, or any other relevant factors.

About our workforce, whether paid or voluntary:

- MUSC CIC is committed to ensuring that all employment policies and practices are non-discriminatory in line with relevant employment legislation and best practice.
- Any employee who believes that they have been discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, should follow MUSC CIC 's Grievance, Disciplinary and Appeals policy, which can be found on SharePoint.
- Any employee who believes that others may have been discriminated against, either

directly or indirectly, should follow MUSC CIC 's Whistle-blowing policy, which can be found on SharePoint.

Regarding members:

- MUSC CIC is committed to ensuring everyone wanting to be involved in Kabaddi can do so in a friendly and welcoming environment.
- Any member who believes that they have been discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, should follow MUSC CIC 's Grievance, Disciplinary and Appeals – Members policy, which can be found on our website.
- This policy supports MUSC CIC 's aims to encourage the development of a diverse workforce, where employees understand and promote equality, and where equality diversity and inclusion is embedded into every aspect of our work and sport.

4. OUR EDI OBJECTIVES

- MUSC CIC is committed to ensuring everyone wanting to be involved in Kabaddi can do so in a friendly and welcoming environment. To ensure this, we will endeavour to implement the following principles.
- Everyone involved in Kabaddi should respect the rights of all others and support them in participating in and enjoying representing.
- All staff, volunteers, officials and members of MUSC CIC will be treated the same regardless of their gender, gender reassignment, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Equality will be embedded at all levels of the sport.
- It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that equality is embedded and that any discrimination does not go unchallenged.
- Anybody who feels they have been unfairly treated within the scope of this policy should raise a concern in relation to the AT Grievance, Disciplinary and Appeals policy.
- Anybody raising a concern or supporting another in relation to a concern should not be treated unfairly.
- Positive action is encouraged to address any previous inequalities/barriers.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MUSC CIC

MUSC CIC recognises its responsibility to work to ensure that the sport of Kabaddi is free from any form of discrimination. We will work to promote these standards and will:

- Promote the benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the sport of Kabaddi.
- Promote Kabaddi as a sport/pastime that should be open to all.
- Recognise religious and other cultural events and festivals, both internally and externally, where there is a connection to Kabaddi.
- Deliver programmes that reach into communities that have traditionally not tried contact sport.

- Operate a universal entry system to most of our Kabaddi competitions that is open to all with the sole exception of a lower age limit of 16 years to protect young players. Parents and Coaches of players between the ages of 13 and 16 may apply for a Youth Player Exemption if they meet the relevant criteria.
- Operate restricted access Kabaddi competitions that aid the development and/or continued participation of some classes of players. This may include youth and veteran age groups, female (biological and transitioned) events, and events for those with disabilities. The lower age limit and the Youth Player Exemption as detailed above would equally apply to female and disability events.
- Embed fair and open selection processes that ensure those selected to represent for England are chosen on merit based on their ability.
- Work with the international Kabaddi federations to ensure most events are universal entry and that specific restricted access events exist to aid the development and/or continued participation of some classes of players. This may include youth and veteran age groups, female (biological and transitioned) events, and events for those with disabilities.
- Encourage other Kabaddi organisations to adopt these standards through this policy or a similar one.
- Adopt good practice standards throughout MUSC CIC relating to the recruitment, training, management and ongoing support of all employees and volunteers. This will include family friendly policies, opportunities for alternative or flexible working patterns as appropriate and advertising vacancies in ways that reach into the wider community.
- Work in partnership with all affiliated organisations to implement this policy.
- Encourage people from all backgrounds to become involved in Kabaddi at any level of participation, coaching, management and volunteering.
- Hold ourselves and others to account where any instances of exclusion or discrimination occur. MUSC CIC will work to ensure inequality is avoided: In all recruitment including both training and employment. In the production of any resources both print and video.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INDIVIDUAL

- It is everybody's responsibility to ensure that where necessary, individuals make MUSC CIC aware of any specific requirements.
- Individuals can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of the organisation for any unlawful discrimination. Individuals who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.
- Individuals should report any concerns to the Program Lead or Directors. Staff may also report concerns to their Manager/Team lead.

7. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- MUSC CIC recognises its legal obligations under and will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to MUSC CIC.
- It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment, employment or in the

provision of services because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership.

MUSC CIC recognises that unlawful discrimination, which can take the following forms, is unacceptable:

Direct Discrimination: - treating someone less favourably than another person because of a Protected Characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination: an action, rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages someone with a particular Protected Characteristic.

Associative Discrimination: direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a particular Protected Characteristic.

Discrimination by perception: direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular Protected Characteristic.

Discrimination arising from disability: someone is treated unfavourably because of something connected with his or her disability.

Bullying: repeated instances of offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and /or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end.

Harassment: unwanted or offensive conduct directed at oneself or another person that relate to one or more of the nine 'protected characteristics' outlined in point 1.1. of this document.

Harassment or bullying by a third party: the company is potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people not employed by them.

Victimisation: treating a group or individuals in a detrimental way because they have made or intend to make a complaint or provide evidence in support of another complaint.

MUSC CIC regards any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation as very serious issues. MUSC CIC staff, officials, members, licensed coaches or volunteers who are found to have been responsible for such action against another person and following investigation and disciplinary, will be dealt with accordingly and in line with MUSC CIC Grievance, Disciplinary and Appeals policies.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- MUSC CIC will regularly monitor and evaluate the success of this policy with at least biennial reviews, which will be submitted to MUSC CIC Board and relevant sub-committees for approval.
- MUSC CIC will develop and maintain a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to record agreed actions and progress against the same in embedding this policy across our areas of work.
- Changes in legislation and/or any incidents may lead to an earlier policy review.

ANNEX 1 - TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY PLAYERS AND COMPETITION KABADDI POSITION STATEMENT

Introduction

MUSC CIC is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in both employment and in Kabaddi generally. We recognise the unique contribution everyone can make, and the benefits of equality and diversity within both the workforce and the sport.

MUSC CIC wishes to try, as far as is possible, to permit transgender men and women as well as non-binary individuals to compete in domestic Kabaddi competition and participate in representative England teams, while balancing this with providing fair competition.

MUSC CIC will not tolerate any form of direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of disability, age, gender reassignment or identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation, responsibility for dependents, political beliefs, trade union activity, socio-economic background, or any other relevant factors. In determining this position statement, MUSC CIC has considered both guidance from several sources, including Sport England, the UK's Sports Councils published "Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport" (2021), and the position of the international Kabaddi federations/associations and the law as stated in the Equality Act 2010 and the Gender Recognition Act 2004. In particular, the Sport England guidance requires us to consider the following factors:

- Inclusion – the desired outcome
- Fairness – to all competitors
- Safety – of competitors in the competitive environment
- Whether competition Kabaddi is a gender-affected sport or not

While this position statement focusses on competitive players, the same protections apply to any transgender or non-binary staff, officials, volunteers and other members.

The definitions used within this policy and position statement are as follows:

Trans or transgender person – the term trans or transgender is used to describe those people who, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, share the protected characteristic of gender reassignment and are described as transsexual people under the legislation. The terms transgender man or male or trans man/male are used to describe a female-to male transsexual person and transgender woman or female or trans woman/female to describe a male-to-female transsexual person. Intersex people, androgynous and polygender people, crossdressing, and transvestite people are not included under these terms, nor is sexual orientation included.

Gender reassignment – this is one of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 and is the process of transitioning from one sex to another. This legislation prohibits discrimination against a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process, or part of a process, for reassigning their sex. Although it is often

associated with medical treatment, this is not a requirement to be protected by the law.

Non-binary - people may identify as an intermediate or separate third gender, identify with more than one gender, no gender, or have a fluctuating gender identity.

Affirmed gender – this describes the gender that the person has transitioned to as opposed to that which is assigned at birth, their ‘birth gender’.

Gender Recognition Certificate ('GRC') – this is a certificate issued under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 to a person of 18 years or older who has transitioned to their affirmed gender. The certificate grants legal recognition of the affirmed gender. Applying for a GRC is optional. While a GRC may be sought to change the sex marker on a passport, this may also be achieved by way of a letter from a doctor confirming that the person is trans and that the change is likely to be permanent.

Consideration of the Factors

As guided by the UK Sports Councils, MUSC CIC has considered the factors of inclusion, fairness, safety and whether competition Kabaddi is a gender-affected sport, and reached the following position:

Inclusion – It is the generally accepted position to aspire to be inclusive. This outcome is supported by the Equality Act 2010, which states it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly against a person based on their sex or gender reassignment. However, it is lawful under the Equality Act 2010 to restrict participation of transgender individuals from sporting competitions where physical strength, stamina or physique are important factors in deciding who wins if that restriction is necessary to make an event fair or safe for everyone.

Fairness – The concern for MUSC CIC, and all other NGBs, is to ensure that competition remains fair for all. In this instance, we specifically considered whether born females would be disadvantaged by the inclusion of trans females in female competitions and teams.

Safety – As Kabaddi is a contact sport where individuals physically interact with another, we do consider this factor as relevant in our decision making.

Our Determined Position

Having considered the factors for both inclusion and fairness and in considering the extent to which Kabaddi is or is not gender-affected, the view of MUSC CIC is as follows:

- We consider competitive Kabaddi has the potential to be sufficiently gender-affected to the extent where the need to be fair overrides the desire to be inclusive.
- We acknowledge that Kabaddi has a huge number of success factors, including technique, strength, knowledge, tactics, focus, skills application, and adaptability. Kabaddi is also a sport that utilises equipment (PPE – mouth guards, rash guards, shoes etc.) without the requirement for uniformity. Further, participation does not take place on uniform venues with identical characteristics within any discipline of the sport.
- However, there are elements of all the different Kabaddi disciplines where inherent

strength, size, stamina or other physical attributes could provide an advantage that needs to be considered in relation to fairness. We therefore feel the need to apply a precautionary principle to ensure that fairness can be maintained in all circumstances.

- Based upon the criteria laid out by Sport England and the Sports Councils, it is the current view of MUSC CIC that when all success factors are considered there is sufficient evidence to deem that the sport of Kabaddi has the potential to be severely or overtly gender impacted.

Implications for our Domestic Competitions, England teams and Talent Pathway

- Female only events both domestically and internationally (via selection for Team England/GB) are open to participants whose sex at birth is female and whose gender is identified as female on the date of competition.
- Universal events both domestically and internationally (via selection for Team England/GB) are open to all participants regardless of sex or gender.
- Transgender women (male-female transition) remain welcome to participate in universal competitions both domestically and internationally. Transgender women are not permitted to compete in female only events.
- Transgender men (female-male transition) remain welcome to participate in universal competitions both domestically and internationally. Transgender men are not permitted to compete in female only events.
- Non-binary individuals remain welcome to compete in universal competitions both domestically and internationally. Non-binary individuals are not permitted to compete in female only events.

Subject to age criteria, all individuals may also participate in related youth or older age group competitions on the same basis. Participants within universal competitions should be permitted to compete as their affirmed gender.