

Equality & Equal Opportunities

Commitment to equality and equal opportunities

We are committed to the principle of equality and equal opportunities in employment. We are opposed to any form of less favourable treatment or financial reward through direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation to employees or job applicants on the grounds of age, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability.

We recognise our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and The Codes of Practice published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the European Commission for the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Maternity and pregnancy;
- and for the elimination of discrimination in pay between men and women who do the same work, or work of a similar nature or work of equal value.

The Chief Financial Officer, as a member of the Board of Directors, is the Club's champion for equality; responsible for ensuring that the Equality Policy and Equal Opportunities action plan is implemented.

Employment Practices

We will actively promote equal opportunities in our business to ensure that throughout the employment process through recruitment, terms and conditions, pay and benefits, working hours and time off, and in our procedures for dealing with disciplinary matters, grievances and dismissals, redundancies, retirement and after they have left our employment, individuals receive treatment that is fair and equitable and consistent with their relevant aptitudes, potential skills and abilities. Employees will be recruited and selected, promoted and trained on the basis of objective criteria. Similarly our methods of training, career development and our overall staff management will be based on principles of equality and without discrimination of any kind. Sexual, racial and other forms of harassment against our employees will not be tolerated. We will also treat any unfair discriminatory conduct by any employee or member of staff as a disciplinary offence (see the chapter on disciplinary procedures in the staff handbook).

You have a personal responsibility to adhere to the principles of equality and equal opportunity and maintaining racial harmony. When required we shall ensure that staff receive training to promote equality and prevent discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

Monitoring and Review Arrangements

We monitor ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age and religion and belief. All monitoring is carried out via a staff survey on an annual basis and the results will be used only for the purpose of equal opportunity monitoring and will be anonymous.

We will regularly review our HR policies to ensure that we pursue an effective policy of equality and equal opportunity. When required we shall modify or amend any of our policies and this Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy to ensure that the law of equality is complied with and promoted in our business.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

We will ensure that any employee who feels that he or she has been treated unfairly or subjected to direct or indirect unfair discrimination can raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure when every effort will be made to secure a satisfactory resolution. Any employee making a complaint of unfair discrimination will be protected from any victimisation in any form.

Recruitment

All recruitment procedures followed by your employer will be on the basis of fair and objectively justified criteria that do not apply any requirements or conditions that are not necessary for the needs of the post or the business.

Training and career development

We will train, develop and promote on the basis of merit and ability and encourage employees and applicants from all races and regardless of their race, age, sex, disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or whether or not in a Marriage and civil partnership, or pregnancy.

Rehabilitation of Offenders

We will not discriminate against anyone who has a spent conviction under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Equal Pay

Men and women are entitled to be paid equally without any bias on the grounds of sex and that this right is set out in the Treaty of Rome and is enforceable under UK Law.

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that male and female staff receive equal pay for the same work and for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.

Harassment at work

Harassment is unsolicited and unwelcome behaviour that adversely affects the dignity of the recipient. Where such behaviour is motivated by age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation it also amounts to infringement of equality and equal opportunity in employment.

We are committed to ensuring that no harassment or victimisation at work, whatever the motivation, is overlooked or condoned. Such behaviour can range from extreme forms such as violence or bullying to less obvious actions like practical jokes and ridiculing colleagues or subordinates.

Conduct becomes harassment if it persists after the recipient has made clear that it is regarded as offensive, although a single offensive act can amount to harassment if it is so serious as to be obviously offensive towards the recipient.

We aim to create a work environment where you all know that you are able to work in workplace that is free from discrimination and that all of you know that you are able to achieve your full potential in your job. We will make all management and employment decisions without reference to discriminatory criteria. All of you must be aware of this policy and should abide by its terms at all times.

Any form of harassment is a potential disciplinary matter that may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal.

We will consider all the circumstances in investigating whether there has been harassment including the perception of the individual who alleges that he or she has been harassed. Harassment will include unwanted conduct whether verbal or not, which is of a sexual or racial nature or is based upon age, religion or sexual orientation, or other behaviour that is based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or age, and in this respect:

- Sexual, racial or religious banter or comments about sexual orientation may amount to harassment even if intended as humour and should be avoided;
- We will not tolerate the display in the work place of any material that has sexual, racist or homophobic connotation and which may offend or make someone feel uncomfortable in the workplace;
- Verbal or non-verbal conduct or other behaviour that is directed to someone because of a disability and could affect the dignity of any individual in the workplace. By way of example comments about someone's ability to carry out the job because of their disability or their age may amount to harassment.
- Any form of verbal or non-verbal conduct which could be regarded as bullying or intimidatory behaviour will fall within this harassment policy. By way of example comments made to a junior employee that demeans them or humiliates them in the workplace may amount to harassment.

Any of the above types of behaviour even those committed outside the workplace or outside working hours will be regarded as harassment if it affects the working environment. The issue is whether the recipient of the conduct could take the view that he or she was being harassed; it does not make any difference if you consider your conduct to be acceptable where the recipient does not.

Harassment at work by third parties

If you are ever subjected to harassment by anyone that you encounter in the course of your work it is very important that you bring this to the attention of your employer as soon as possible because we cannot take action to prevent this occurring unless we are made aware of it. We will take all reasonable steps to prevent our employees being subjected to any harassment in the course of their work.

Sexual harassment at work

Sexual harassment is a particular form of harassment. It is conduct at work directed towards an employee by another employee or group of employees which is of a sexual nature, or which is based on a person's sex or sexual orientation or gender reassignment, and which is regarded as unwelcome or offensive to the recipient.

The following examples illustrate the sort of conduct that may be treated as sexual harassment:

- unwanted physical contact, or conduct which is intimidating, or physically or verbally abusive. Harassment can also be non-verbal, for example, staring or gestures;
- suggestions that sexual favours may further a person's career, or that refusal may hinder it;
- sexual advances, propositions, suggestions or pressure for sexual activity at or outside work;
- derogatory or demeaning remarks based on gender, or the display of sexually explicit material in the workplace.

Sexual harassment is a denial of equal employment opportunity and has the effect of insulting and demeaning the employee who is harassed.

Racial Discrimination

Racial harassment is a particular form of harassment. It is conduct at work directed towards an employee by another employee or group of employees which is of a racial nature, or which is based on a person's race, colour or origins, and which is regarded as unwelcome or offensive to the recipient.

The following are examples that illustrate the sort of conduct that may be treated as racial harassment:

- Jokes about race.
- Offensive names used.
- References to people by offensive racist descriptions.
- Verbal or physical abuse because of a person's race or colour.
- Detrimental behaviour because of a person's race.
- Denial of opportunity because of race.

This policy applies to verbal and physical actions as well as any other form of communication including electronic communication such as text messages, emails, and faxes as well as written communications.

If you believe you are the subject of harassment or that other harassment is occurring in the workplace you should make a formal complaint. Depending on the seriousness of the allegation, the alleged harasser may be suspended on full pay while the matter is being investigated under our disciplinary procedures.

The aim throughout is to resolve the complaint of harassment sensitively, impartially, effectively and quickly.

There will be no victimisation of any employee for making or supporting or assisting a complaint of harassment – even if the complaint is not upheld – provided the action was taken in good faith.

Age Discrimination

Discrimination or harassment on grounds of age by employers is prohibited in the areas of recruitment, promotion and training. There can be direct and indirect age discrimination.

It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person in the arrangements made for the purpose of determining to whom employment should be offered; in the terms on which that person is offered employment; and by refusing to offer, or deliberately not offering, employment.

Similarly, it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against that person in the terms of employment; in the opportunities for promotion, a transfer, training, or receiving any other benefit; by refusing or deliberately not affording that person any such opportunity; or by dismissing or subjecting that person to any other detriment.

There are certain circumstances when some of the Regulations may not apply in relation to genuine occupational requirements of employment.

Disability Discrimination

We have a separate policy in the staff handbook that deals in more detail with issues around disability discrimination and our commitment to prevent discrimination at work against people who suffer from a disability.

Summary

West Ham United will not tolerate discrimination on any grounds and operates an active equal opportunities policy. However, we cannot operate to stamp out discrimination unless we are made aware that it is happening.

Discrimination may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. The equal opportunities policy will apply at all stages from recruitment, throughout employment to issues of termination of employment.