

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Football Club Accreditation Guidance Document

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Introduction and Criteria

Norfolk FA is proud to be providing an accreditation for LGBTQ+ Inclusive Clubs. We want our Clubs to promote that the LGBTQ+ community are welcome in Norfolk Football and to provide an inclusive environment whereby all our football family can feel free to be themselves without fear or discrimination. We have now provided a framework of obligations that Clubs must complete to receive their official accreditation. To be an official LGBTQ+ Inclusive Norfolk County FA Club you will need to complete the following:

- Have a Club equality statement that details the ethos of the club and outlines the Club's aims around LGBTQ+ inclusion that must be displayed on the Club's website and publicised via their social media platforms. This can include commitments to language, behaviour, and creating a welcoming atmosphere.
- Display inclusive posters provided by Stonewall to publicly demonstrate your commitment to inclusion within your Club.
- Club Officials, Players, and Coaches to sign an agreement of LGBTQ+ inclusion.

We also encourage Clubs to undertake any additional LGBTQ+ inclusive steps they feel are relevant to their Club.

In this document, you will find guidance relating to the criteria that needs to be completed to assist you with your official accreditation.

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LGBTQ+ Equality Statement Guidance

Your Club's equality statement is key to outlining why your club is LGBTQ+ inclusive. The statement will outline the general ethos of your club as well as specific areas in which you are promoting LGBTQ+ equality and inclusivity. The page gives you some guidance in relation to examples of text to incorporate in your statement, as well as other areas to consider. It is important that you create a unique statement that relates to your Club to represent your aims and objectives as an LGBTQ+ Inclusive Club.

What should you include in your Club's LGBTQ+ Equality Statement?

- An explicit zero-tolerance approach to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- An explicit zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- What you intend to achieve as a Club by being LGBTQ+ inclusive.
- Making it known that you want to welcome anyone from the LGBTQ+ community.
- Other areas which you consider relevant to being an LGBTQ+ Inclusive Club.

Samples of LGBTQ+ Equality Statements & Zero-Tolerance Approaches

"[Club Name] is committed to promoting equality and inclusivity within our Club. All players, coaches, and supporters will receive equal treatment regardless of their gender identity, marriage and civil partnership status, or sexual orientation."

"[Club Name] has a zero-tolerance approach to any member of their Club being subjected to harm, threats of harm, bullying and harassment, discrimination, or any inappropriate behaviour or language, on or off the field, irrespective of whether it is instigated by a competitor or a member of their own Club. In particular, this behaviour is expressly prohibited (but not limited to) if it is on the grounds of gender expression or gender identity (transphobia), or sexual orientation (homophobia or biphobia)."

Stonewall Posters

Stonewall posters should be displayed publicly to demonstrate your Club's commitment to inclusion. Posters can be downloaded and printed by clicking [here](#).

Stonewall Strategy: Free to Be

Stonewall's Strategy for 2021-25 is Free to Be. This campaign organises Stonewall's goals into three pillars: freedom, equity, and potential for all LGBTQ+ people. More information on the strategy can be found [here](#). You will also be able to sign up to Stonewall's newsletters.



Agreement of LGBTQ+ Inclusion

As a Player or Club Official of [Club Name], I confirm that I will be an advocate for LGBTQ+ inclusion as this Club on and off the field. I will abide by the following statements:

- I will always show respect to everyone involved in the game and to carefully consider the language that I use.
- I will never engage in abusive, derogatory, bullying, or discriminatory behaviour.
- I will consider carefully how I engage in "banter" and how this may affect others.

I understand that if I do not follow the agreement as stated above that my Club may take disciplinary action against me including the following:

- Apologising to those whom I have upset.
- Receive a formal warning.
- Be dropped, substituted, or suspended from training.
- Not selected for the team.
- Be asked to leave the club.

Name..... Date.....

Signature.....



What's next?

Once you have completed all the relevant criteria to become an LGBTQ+ Inclusive Club, we need to know! Below is a checklist of the criteria and guidance around how to submit your evidence of completion so that we can award you with your official accreditation.

1. **Club Equality Statement** – once your Club Equality Statement has been written, it must be submitted to Norfolk County FA to sign off. Once confirmation has been received, the statement must be displayed on the Club website and promoted via social media platforms. It is also recommended that the statement is displayed in the club house.
2. **Display inclusive posters provided by Stonewall** – Posters should be clearly displayed in changing rooms and around the Club House. Photos of the posters being displayed should be sent to Norfolk County FA.
3. **All players and Club Officials must sign the Agreement of LGBTQ+ Inclusion.**

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Optional, but recommended: take part in the annual Rainbow Laces campaign.

All evidence should be referenced in the above checkpoints must be sent to Nina Buckingham, Office Manager, via email at Nina.Buckingham@norfolkfa.com. Once all evidence has been submitted and confirmed as complete, your Club will receive an official accreditation certificate presented by Norfolk County FA, awarding your Club with the LGBTQ+ Inclusive Club status. You will also receive Norfolk Football is Proud posters and branding which should be visible at your club site.