

# Draft Diversity Competence Framework for Football

## Draft Report

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## 1 Background

### Project Brief

In May 2004, Angela Ishmael was asked by Lucy Faulkner, Ethics and Sport Equity Manager of The Football Association, to assist in the development of diversity competencies for the whole of football.

The key objective of the project is:

- *To produce diversity training competencies.*

The scope of the project is:

- *To provide examples of diversity training competencies from external organisations and from within The FA*
- *To produce draft diversity training competencies for football*
- *To suggest issues that might arise and recommend any relevant approaches.*

One of the key recommendations to come out of the research was the need to complete the development of the overall core competencies, and to define further the diversity training competencies.

This document develops further issues raised in the original research report, and expands the development of the work, producing a basic Diversity Competence Framework for Football.

## **2 Core Diversity Competencies for Football**

In order for the game of Football to truly embrace the principles of Diversity and Sport Equity, and create environments where discrimination is rare, an innovative approach to learning has to be adopted.

The positive impact that Diversity awareness can have should not be underestimated, and the investment in learning and development will bring about the following positive changes:

- A greater appreciation and understanding of Diversity and Sport Equity at all levels in Football
- The ability to set clear standards of behaviour, which will bring about desired behavioural changes.
- Supports a healthy change in the culture and climate of the organisation's promoting football
- Football in England will become more flexible and respond appropriately to all types of change.
- Improvements in the level of skill required to handle abusive behaviour effectively
- Helps to turn policy into practice, and also meets legislative requirements

The competency framework has been designed to ensure that these benefits will be gained and will become key benchmarks for measuring its impact.

### **The Learning Cycle**

Most behavioural development reflects the different stages of learning demonstrated through Kolb's learning cycle.

Kolb viewed learning as a continuous process, and identified the key stages of the cycle as: experience; observation of and reflection on that experience; analysis of the key learning points arising from it; and the consequent planning and trying out of new or changed behaviour.

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Often people go through this cycle almost instinctively, sometimes so skilfully that they produce increasingly successful behaviour in situations which initially caused them challenges. However, they make mistakes at one or more stages of the cycle so that the ultimate skills, knowledge or attitudes acquired do not lead to any improvement.



In this instance, the integration of football and diversity awareness is an important learning challenge, and appreciating the nature of learning helps when introducing a cycle of continuous diversity development for all those involved in the game.

The competency framework must reflect the nature of learning, and the learning cycle itself. In addition, the framework must also support the development of organisational as well as individual growth.

### Core Diversity Competencies for Football

As mentioned in the original research report, competency frameworks contain a mix of behaviours, functional skills and knowledge. It is important to keep the system simple; restricting the number and complexity of competencies and using a cluster design to make the framework accessible.

Taking all of the above into account, (as well as information from the original research report) we have recommended that three core diversity competencies should be adopted for football, and these should be:

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- Sports Equity in Football
- Strategy and Policy
- Sports Equity in Action



- **Sports Equity in Football:**

*Competencies that focus on the theory and principles of Diversity and Sports Equity*

This is the awareness element of learning and is likely to form the biggest component of any training and development programme.

A behavioural shift largely relies on individuals gaining an appreciation of the concepts and theories connected to Diversity and Sports Equity, as in principle, awareness raising helps individuals to review negative assumptions and stereotypes they may hold, developing a more diversity-sensitive mindset. This mindset gives them the confidence to adopt new and more appropriate behaviours.

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Most of the competencies in this area focus on giving relevant, objective knowledge and information with regard to Diversity and Sports Equity. They are also designed to challenge prejudices and widen the learner's experiences by sharing others.

- **Strategy and Policy:**

*Competencies that focus on strategy, policy and procedure development, monitoring, review and evaluation systems*

Once the commitment to Diversity and Sports Equity is spread throughout football organisations, the creation and implementation of policy and practice becomes slightly easier, as there will be less resistance to the changes generated by them. However, the methodologies and practices involved in strategy and tactics requires higher levels of skills and knowledge than most people anticipate.

A few of the competencies designed in this area are likely to be focussed on specific skill needs, nevertheless for some individuals understanding process is essential to successful practice.

Although there are general elements of learning relevant across the board, most of these competencies will be aimed at operational football professionals (eg Human Resources, Facilities Management, etc) as well as those at all managerial levels.

- **Sports Equity in Action:**

*Competencies that focus on the practical aspects of policies, action plans and best practice sharing.*

Individuals who have high levels of commitment to Diversity and Sport Equity, and who are keen to promote them are more likely to feel frustrated when they do not have the appropriate level of competence to act. Most of the competencies in this area address this issue, focussing on building confidence levels as well as improving and enhancing practical skills.

The competencies also focus on supporting individuals in implementing realistic measures, encouraging them to take incremental personal actions and/or quick wins that demonstrate the positive benefits Diversity and Sport Equity will bring to their club/organisations.

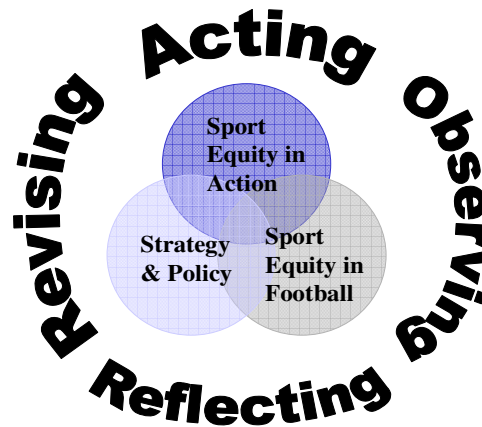
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Sharing and promoting best practice with regard to Sport Equity in Action is also an integral component in the design of these competencies. As Football is part of our cultural heritage, practices will differ vastly across the whole country. It becomes therefore, vital that good practices are shared amongst different clubs, leagues and organisations in an effort to embed Diversity philosophy within football.

The core competencies for Football also take into consideration the stages of the learning cycle necessary to gain the level of behaviour shift necessary to embrace diversity, and the diagram illustrates the link between each core competency and its relevant theme of learning:

### Core Competencies and the Learning Cycle



At a later stage, the core competencies designed can be utilised in ways other than learning and development through training, such as; Human Resource/Organisational Planning Performance and Reward, Recruitment and Selection and Service Delivery.

### **3 General Diversity Training Competencies**

The diversity training competencies are the behavioural components of the core competencies within the framework.

They define specifically the outcomes of learning that need to be achieved in each core competency, and focus on the development and/or enhancement of key diversity behaviours.

We have created a maximum of 12 individual training competencies, reflecting the principles and aims of each core competency.

In general, two types of competency are normally used within competency frameworks: those that define performance in behavioural terms (Personal) and those that define performance in task related or output focused ways (Technical).

Although some of the competencies designed are either Personal or Technical, others can be adopted either way, and the design of the learning event is normally the most appropriate time to agree the type of competency required. For this reason, we have categorised the competencies in the following manner:

**(P)** = *Personal Development*

**(T)** = *Technical Skills*

**(P/T)** = *Both Personal and Technical.*

The competencies are listed in the table below and are in no particular order:

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**Individual Diversity Training Competencies**

<i>Sports Equity in Football</i>	<i>Strategy and Policy</i>	<i>Sports Equity in Action</i>
Ability to define Equality, Diversity and Sport Equity (P/T)	Understands their organisation's policy and procedure with regard to Diversity and/or Sport Equity (P)	Is able to communicate effectively Sport Equity policy, procedures and action plans (P/T)
Understands differences between Equality, Diversity and Sport Equity (P)	Creates policy and procedures that meet the requirements of strand discrimination legislation (T)	Advises others confidently on Sport Equity policy, procedures and action plans (P/T)
Appreciate the importance of Diversity and Sport Equity to Football (P)	Creates mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the impact of Diversity and/or Sport Equity mechanisms (T)	Adopts the use of Diversity-sensitive language and other behaviours (P)
Aware of UK demographic and their impact on Football (P)	Creates mechanisms to conduct audits and surveys that will analysis and diagnose Diversity and/or Sport Equity mechanisms (T)	Is able to assertively challenge prejudice and discrimination (P)
Aware of demographics specific to football and their links with Sport Equity (P)	Is able to review existing policies and practices to make recommendations for improvement (T)	Actively promotes the concept of Sport Equity in Football and identifies good practice (T)
Understands key diversity terminology such as stereotyping, prejudices and discrimination (P/T)	Is able to disseminate and communicate results of audits and surveys at all levels effectively.	Actively sponsors key diversity initiatives for football (P)

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**Individual Diversity Training Competencies (cont..)**

<i>Sports Equity in Football</i>	<i>Strategy and Policy</i>	<i>Sports Equity in Action</i>
Appreciate the process of discrimination and potential barriers to diversity (P)	Is able to develop appropriate training strategies for Diversity and/or Sports Equity (T)	Is able to manage diversity effectively within a (work) team and/or (football) team (T)
Appreciate the experience of belonging to a minority group (P)	Creates Positive Action Initiatives in support of the organisations Diversity and/or Sports Equity aims and objectives (T)	Shares best practice experiences of Sport Equity with other organisations and encourages partnership working (T)
Understands theory behind specific issues such as ageism, cultural diversity, disability, gender issues, harassment and bullying, religion and belief, sexuality, work-life balance, etc (P/T)	Develops a working knowledge of the legislation that underpins Diversity and Sports Equity (T)	Encourages good working relationships based on valuing diversity (P)
Develops a basic understanding of the legislation that underpins Equality and Diversity in the UK (T)	Understands the organisation's grievance/complaints procedure (P/T)	Can handle discrimination complaints on an informal basis (T)
Understands their personal responsibilities within the organisation's Equity or Diversity policy framework (P)	Can identify discriminatory barriers within their club/organisation and make recommendations for active improvement (T)	Can manage discrimination complaints using the organisation's formal procedures and/or is able to investigate formal complaints according to procedure. (T)
Identify issues arising from Sport Equity and Diversity that can be put into a personal action plan. (P/T)	Is able to plan and conduct consultation sessions with key stakeholders on Diversity and/or Sports Equity issues (T)	Liaises and creates networks with external organisations that give guidance and support on sports equity (T).

### 4 The “Three Tiers”

To achieve the desired behavioural changes necessary when embracing diversity, learning must be designed and pitched at appropriate levels to meet differing needs within the organisation. Most competency frameworks take into account the various layers or “tiers” that exist amongst people within organisations, and categorize them to reflect the different standards of behaviour and potential development required at each level.

Taking into account the issues identified in the original research document, as well as conversations with key stakeholders, we are suggesting that Football adopts a three tier approach, with a clear rationale supporting the standard of behaviours and development in each tier. The Tiers are as follows:

- *Tier 1 – Senior Management and Board Members*  
**Rationale:** Senior Managers and Board Members will sponsor key diversity initiatives internally and externally. They will create a culture conducive to diversity and take full accountability for their clubs/organisation's HR and Diversity strategy.
- *Tier 2 – Middle Management, County FA Officers*  
**Rationale:** Middle Managers and County FA Officers will ensure that policy is effectively turned into practice. They will challenge discrimination as part of their role and encourage others to take appropriate actions to break down the barriers that currently exist within Football.
- *Tier 3 – Grass Roots Officials*  
**Rationale:** Those at grass roots level will promote Football for all, challenging discrimination in the game and taking personal actions to break down barriers to Sport Equity.

There is the possibility of extending the tiers to take into account the needs of football specialists, however it appears that most of the personnel within football fit into these levels.

Nevertheless, they form a good starting point for consultation, and it may be necessary to review the Tiers and the rationale for each one during the pilot phase of the Framework.

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### **Linking the Tiers to NVQs**

On this occasion, we have not focussed on creating “levels” (stepped development indicators) to avoid any confusion with NVQs at this point. It was decided by the Diversity Forum to consider the introduction and integration of NVQ competency levels at a later point, in particular, when all of the organisations involved had had the opportunity of embedding the proposed Framework initially.

### **Specific Diversity Competencies for the Three Tiers**

Using the general diversity training competencies as a guide, specific charts have been designed for each of the three tiers, reflecting the rationales stated. The charts can be used as the basis for designing appropriate learning events for each tier.

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## Diversity Competencies for Football

### Tier 1 – Senior Management and Board Members

**Rationale:** Senior Managers and Board Members will sponsor key diversity initiatives internally and externally. They will create a culture conducive to diversity and take full accountability for their clubs/organisation's HR and Diversity strategy.

**(P)** = Personal Development, **(T)** = Technical Skills (P/T) = both Personal and Technical

Sports Equity in Football	Strategy and Policy	Sports Equity in Action
Appreciate the importance of Diversity and Sport Equity to Football (P)	Understands their organisation's policy and procedure with regard to Diversity and/or Sport Equity (P)	Is able to communicate effectively Sport Equity policy, procedures and action plans (P/T)
Understands differences between Equality, Diversity and Sport Equity (P)	Develops a working knowledge of the legislation that underpins Diversity and Sports Equity (T)	Adopts the use of Diversity-sensitive language and other behaviours (P)
Aware of demographics specific to football and their links with Sport Equity (P)	Understands the organisation's grievance/complaints procedure (P/T)	Actively promotes the concept of Sport Equity in Football and identifies good practice (T)
Understands theory behind specific issues such as ageism, cultural diversity, disability, gender issues, harassment and bullying, religion and belief, sexuality, work-life balance, etc (P/T)	Can identify discriminatory barriers within their club/organisation and make recommendations for active improvement (T)	Actively sponsors key diversity initiatives for football (P)
Understands their personal accountability within the organisation's Equity or Diversity policy framework (P)	Is able to plan and conduct consultation sessions with key stakeholders on Diversity and/or Sports Equity issues (T)	Shares best practice experiences of Sport Equity with other organisations and encourages partnership working (T)

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## Diversity Competencies for Football

### Tier 2 – Middle Management and County FA Officials

**Rationale:** Middle Managers and County FA Officers will ensure that policy is effectively turned into practice. They will challenge discrimination as part of their role and encourage others to take appropriate actions to break down the barriers that currently exist within Football.

**(P)** = Personal Development **(T)** = Technical Skills (P/T) = both Personal and Technical

Sports Equity in Football	Strategy and Policy	Sports Equity in Action
Ability to define Equality, Diversity and Sport Equity (P/T)	Understands their organisation's policy and procedure with regard to Diversity and/or Sport Equity (P)	Is able to communicate effectively Sport Equity policy, procedures and action plans (P/T)
Appreciate the importance of Diversity and Sport Equity to Football (P)	Is able to disseminate and communicate results of audits and surveys at all levels effectively.	Advises others confidently on Sport Equity policy, procedures and action plans (P/T)
Appreciate the process of discrimination and potential barriers to diversity (P)	Develops a working knowledge of the legislation that underpins Diversity and Sports Equity (T)	Adopts the use of Diversity-sensitive language and other behaviours (P)
Understands their personal responsibilities within the organisation's Equity or Diversity policy framework (P)	Understands the organisation's grievance/complaints procedure (P/T)	Is able to manage diversity effectively within a (work) team and/or (football) team (T)
Identify issues arising from Sport Equity and Diversity that can be put into a personal action plan. (P/T)	Can identify discriminatory barriers within their club/organisation and make recommendations for active improvement (T)	Manages complaints using the organisation's formal procedures and/or is able to investigate formal complaints according to procedure. (T)

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## Diversity Competencies for Football

### Tier 3 – Grass Roots Officials

**Rationale:** Those at grass roots level will promote Football for all, challenging discrimination in the game and taking personal actions to break down barriers to Sport Equity.

**(P)** = Personal Development, **(T)** = Technical Skills (P/T) = both Personal and Technical

Sports Equity in Football	Strategy and Policy	Sports Equity in Action
Ability to define Equality, Diversity and Sport Equity (P/T)	Understands the organisation's grievance/complaints procedure (P/T)	Adopts the use of Diversity-sensitive language and other behaviours (P)
Understands key diversity terminology such as stereotyping, prejudices and discrimination (P/T)		Is able to assertively challenge prejudice and discrimination (P)
Appreciate the experience of belonging to a minority group (P)	Can identify discriminatory barriers within their club/organisation and make recommendations for active improvement (T)	Actively promotes the concept of Sport Equity in Football and identifies good practice (T)
Develops a basic understanding of the legislation that underpins Equality and Diversity in the UK (T)		Shares best practice experiences of Sport Equity with other organisations and encourages partnership working (T)
Understands their personal responsibilities within the organisation's Equity or Diversity policy framework (P)		Liaises and creates networks with external organisations that give guidance and support on sports equity (T).
Identify issues arising from Sport Equity and Diversity that can be put into a personal action plan. (P/T)		

## **5 Other issues to be considered**

### **The development of diversity competencies for specialists areas**

At present, the framework does not include competencies that have been designed to meet the needs of those who provide specialist skills and knowledge within Football.

Other competencies can be designed using the core competencies already in place, and to implement this we would recommend the following actions:

1. Identify and agree the specialist roles across Football that would require competencies to be designed to meet their specific responsibilities.
2. Conduct a few small facilitated sessions (preferably focus groups) to discuss the current framework and their learning needs within it.
3. Define and draft relevant competencies, consulting with the focus group members in a limited timeframe.
4. Publish the agreed competencies as Phase 2 of the overall competency framework.

### **Development of “Licensed Training Packages”**

One of the issues that arose from the Diversity Forum meeting in May was the challenge of maintaining quality control of the competency framework and subsequent training. Some consideration should be given to starting the process of creating a quality control system which would form the basis of a “Licensed Package” for delivering Diversity and Sport Equity training approved by The FA and/or other key stakeholders, as well as conducting monitoring and evaluation.

Elements of the system would typically include:

- Template training programmes
- Background notes
- Train the Trainer programmes (supporting those who would deliver the training)
- Approved Supplier/Trainer lists

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- Health Check Tools
- Self-Assessment Tools
- Approved Assessors/Evaluators.

In addition, it may be useful to consider flexible awareness/learning and development packages as part of the process.

We suggest that once the competency framework has been piloted in at least 3 different football organisations/clubs, consultation and planning of a quality control system should commence.

### **Brokers of best practice.**

Once the competencies have been piloted, monitored and evaluated, it would be a valuable exercise to promote the success of the framework as an example of best practice.

The lead organisations within Football should not underestimate the uniqueness of the Framework, and as the original research reveals, the difficulty that exists in finding good practical examples of diversity competencies that make a difference.

Other sports institutes would welcome support through the learning and sharing of your experience. Consideration must be given as to the most appropriate way of promoting and publicising the Framework once all key stakeholders are satisfied with its impact.