The Welcoming Clubs Standard

Public Draft (V1.0)

Welcoming Sport
Welcoming Clubs

The power of sport to build community

Australia is a proud sporting nation. From the footy field to the swimming pool and everywhere in between, sport and recreation has a special place in our hearts and communities.

We are now one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world and our communities are more vibrant than ever before.

Sporting and recreational clubs can be a place for connection, for the promotion of positive health and wellbeing and most importantly a place where all members of the community can feel safe and welcome.

Sports and recreation clubs make a significant contribution to economic and social capital, and they have traditionally held a unique position in the community as a gathering and facilitation point for physical and community activity.

Successful modern clubs are adaptable, responsive to community needs and proactive in engaging with new membership groups and participants using the power of sport to bring people together to belong, contribute and thrive.

Modern clubs face complex challenges

While sports and recreation are a defining characteristic of the Australian identity, modern clubs face complex challenges and they require resources and support to continue to be places where community connection can thrive and grow.

What is required is a coordinated framework and approach that:

- Provides sports and recreation clubs with the know-how, framework and resources to cultivate a culture of welcome and embrace cultural diversity and inclusion practices; and,
- Supports people from all backgrounds including migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum – to access the support that is often required to participate in sports and recreational opportunities and broader community life.

Welcoming Clubs

Welcoming Clubs is a growing network of sport and recreation clubs who are committed to building communities where people of all backgrounds have equal opportunity to participate in physical activity. Welcoming Clubs is a core program of Welcoming Sport, an initiative of Welcoming Australia.

The Welcoming Clubs network is built around:

Knowledge Sharing
Supporting sporting codes and clubs to access evidence-based research, policies, case studies and leading practice.

Partnership Brokering
Facilitating cross-sector collaboration and brokering multi-sector partnerships to maximise learning, reach and impact.

Celebrating Success
Sharing good news stories and recognising the existing efforts of councils, sporting codes and clubs that demonstrate leading practice and innovation in welcoming efforts.

Standard + Accreditation
Setting the Standard for cultural diversity and inclusion policy and practice in sports and recreation.

Foundations

Fundamental human rights, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* underpin many policy and practice guidelines of inclusion and welcome and should be extended in sport to inform both planning and decision making.

These rights include:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (LINK)

Article 1: Right to Equality
Article 2: Freedom from Discrimination
Article 24: Right to Rest and Leisure
Article 27: Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (LINK)

Article 5: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.
Article 24: 2. Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realisation of this right.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (LINK)

Article 22: Children who come into a country as refugees should have the same rights as children who are born in that country.
Article 31: Children have the right to relax, play and to join in a wide range of leisure activities.

Sports organisations play an important role in maintaining, promoting and advancing these rights through:

- Leadership
- Inclusion policies and practice
- Codes of Conduct and adherence

National and State policy and resources should be considered in the process of implementing and developing a club plan for diversity, inclusion and welcome.

Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this document the following terms and conditions apply.

Accessible Information
Information that is culturally sensitive and available to communities in many languages, including simple Australian English and in formats relying on icons, symbols, and images, to convey content and meaning. Distribution is via a wide range of channels and mediums including digital, in-language radio, community media, traditional media, printed materials, and via trusted agents within communities.

Club
A sports or recreation club of any type or size including small local community, large commercial, licenced, unlicensed or professional.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)
People who were born overseas, have a parent born overseas or speak a language or languages other than English.

Diversity
Diversity is the mix of peoples' different attributes and backgrounds (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion).

New and Emerging Community/ies
Individuals or groups from a recently arrived refugee, migrant or other humanitarian background. They can include culturally and linguistically diverse people, refugees, people seeking asylum, and temporary or permanent residents.

Receiving Community/ies
All Australian-born residents not covered under the definition of migrant community. This includes Indigenous communities and previous generations of migrants.

Social Cohesion
The willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper. Social cohesion broadly incorporates five domains:

- Belonging
- Social justice and equality
- Participation
- Acceptance and rejection legitimacy, and
- Worth

Social Inclusion
The act of enabling all groups of people within a society to have a sense of belonging and to be able to participate in community life. It is based on fundamental values of equity, equality, social justice and human rights as well as on the principles of acceptance and embracing diversity.

Substantive Equality
Principles that seek to address systemic discrimination in service delivery; recognising that policies and practices put in place to suit the majority may appear to be non-discriminatory but may not address the specific needs of certain groups of people. In effect they may be indirectly discriminatory, creating systemic discrimination.

Volunteering
Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. Including activities which are ad hoc, informal, non-organised, private or within small communities.

Champions of Change
Individuals within a sports or recreation club or organisation that volunteer or are selected to facilitate change that may challenge established trends, cultural behaviours or traditions.

Welcoming Club/s
A sports or recreation club that has committed to, communicated, planned, built and/or sustained a welcoming community; and is assessed against The Welcoming Clubs Standard as such.

The Standard

The Welcoming Clubs Standard is a central element of the Welcoming Clubs network. The Standard establishes the framework for sport and recreation clubs to:

1. Connect and consult with their club community;
2. Connect and consult with the wider community (especially people from culturally and linguistically diverse or migrant backgrounds, and organisations that work directly with these communities);
3. Benchmark their cultural diversity and inclusion policies and practices across the organisation;
4. Identify where and how further efforts could be directed; and,
5. Assess progress over time.

The Welcoming Clubs Standard is applicable to all sports and recreation clubs and organisations in Australia. This includes small local clubs, large commercial clubs and professional sporting clubs. Clubs can access and progress through The Welcoming Clubs Standard according to their capacity and resources.

The extent to which clubs measure their activity against The Welcoming Clubs Standard will be based on their understanding of their club and local community's needs.

Many clubs across Australia are already taking action to progress inclusion as part of their core business. These actions address elements of the Welcoming Clubs Standard. The initial stocktake process, completed at the beginning of the implementation process allows clubs to identify and validate existing efforts towards greater diversity and inclusion.

We recognise the important and complementary work of other specialist organisations with a focus on diversity and inclusion and encourage clubs to seek and utilise existing resources and best practice models.

A Guide to reading the Standard

The Standard is organised under the following six categories:

1.0	Leadership
2.0	Community Engagement
3.0	Recruitment and Retention
4.0	Social and Cultural Inclusion
5.0	Places and Spaces
6.0	Economic Participation

Each category has three levels of progress:

Level One: **Welcome**

Level Two: **Include**

Level Three: **Celebrate**

For definitions of each level see **Assessment and Accreditation**, page 17.

Each category contains a principle, criteria and indicators that can be applied by a club through existing or new policies and practices. The requirements for each progress level are shown in colour alongside the criteria.

1.0   Leadership

Club Champions

Welcoming Clubs progress diversity and inclusion in sport and recreation. Leaders within Welcoming Clubs cultivate a culture of welcome, fairness, equality and inclusion. Management and systems encourage participation for all members of the community. Welcoming Clubs share success and demonstrate leadership in the sports sector.

1.1   Welcoming Clubs recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of this Nation and seek to engage local Indigenous communities in club activities. Demonstrated by:

    1.11   Acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in club policy and public events.

    1.12   Alignment with relevant aspects of Reconciliation Actions Plans from associated state and/or national sporting bodies.

    1.13   Facilitating opportunities for the club community to engage with and learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

1.2   Welcoming Clubs understand and work towards the implementation of national and state level policies for diversity and inclusion. Demonstrated by:

    1.21   Active engagement with State and National bodies to seek resources and support for the implementation of current and relevant Diversity and Inclusion policy and plans.

    1.22   Current and relevant policy intent and value shared to wider club community.

1.3   Welcoming Clubs incorporate cultural diversity and inclusion in strategic planning and decision making and monitor progress in advancing practices at their club. Demonstrated by:

    1.31   Engaging club members from different backgrounds, including new and established members, in the development, planning and implementation of strategic plans.

    1.32   Assessing the priorities of the club and local community needs and using that feedback to improve strategic plans over time.

1.4   Leaders within Welcoming Clubs at all levels (committee, admin, coaches, senior players) cultivate a culture of welcome and inclusion. Demonstrated by:

    1.41   Determining and demonstrating non-negotiable language, behaviours and actions to promote inclusion, understanding and to discourage exclusion.

    1.42   Developing and promoting opportunities to encourage diversity in club leadership with the long-term goal that club leadership reflects the diversity of the club community.

1.5   Welcoming Clubs create opportunities and experiences that empower their members to take action against discrimination and racism and celebrate members who drive greater diversity and inclusion. Demonstrated by:

    1.51   Supporting initiatives that empower individuals to prevent and respond to racism and discrimination.

    1.52   Public celebration of success stories and 'Champions of Change'.

    1.53   Communicating processes that club leadership will utilise to address any issues relating to racism and discrimination (including a complaint resolution process).

2.0 Community Engagement

Our Community

Welcoming Clubs understand the strengths and benefits of diversity and are committed to engaging people from all backgrounds as members and supporters of the club. Welcoming Clubs proactively engage marginalised or under-represented groups.

2.1 **Welcoming Clubs work closely with the local community and stakeholders (such as schools, community and cultural groups) to encourage club membership and participation across various club roles. Demonstrated by:**

2.11   Developing a stakeholder engagement plan that includes specific actions to engage people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or emerging community groups present in the local geographic area.

2.12   Building relationships with state or regional sporting bodies and community organisations to identify opportunities for engagement with new or emerging communities.

2.13   Identifying key opportunities and events to profile your club and its inclusive values in the wider community.

2.2 **Welcoming Clubs support and promote activities and initiatives that nurture connections between new and established community members within the club and the broader geographic area. Demonstrated by:**

2.21   Identifying and facilitating opportunities that bring together people from CALD backgrounds and the established club community including non-sporting groups or activities.

2.22   Creating and facilitating opportunities for the club community to engage with local schools, community or cultural groups through shared activities and cross promotion.

2.23   Providing social events and activities where club members can learn about and engage with cultures other than their own.

2.3 **Welcoming Clubs facilitate diverse cultural expression through a range of activities and observances. Demonstrated by:**

2.31   Collaborating to participate in or acknowledge community festivals, cultural events and religious observances that represent diversity and encourage dialogue.

2.32   Encouraging and supporting events and initiatives that bring together diverse cultures and support opportunities for cultural expression and intercultural understanding.

3.0 Recruitment and Retention

Everyone is welcome

Welcoming Clubs understand their local community and proactively seek to engage people from all backgrounds in club activities so that their club reflects their wider community and Australian society.

3.1 Welcoming Clubs policies and practices actively include and engage both established and emerging communities in their local area. Demonstrated by:

3.11 A stated commitment to engagement by ensuring that the development, implementation and review of club policies, strategies, programs and initiatives are compliant with National and State sporting body policies for racial and religious non-discrimination and the principles of substantive equality.

3.12 Conducting reviews to identify and revise any policies that exclude or disenfranchise certain members or groups at the club.

3.13 Consulting with people from various backgrounds including existing club member and cultural groups to contribute to a recruitment and retention plan that specifies considerations for engaging with people from CALD backgrounds.

3.14 Engaging existing members from diverse backgrounds and community groups to assist in the development of targeted promotional material and resources.

3.2 Welcoming Clubs actively engage, recruit and support the membership process for people of all backgrounds. Demonstrated by:

3.21 Producing and promoting club programs, event and activities in all languages relevant to the club and wider community at locations relevant to emerging groups.

3.22 Displaying club and code information in languages other than English (as relevant to the club and local community).

3.23 Designating a 'Welcoming Plan or Crew' for new members who have identified additional barriers such as language or are joining a club formally for the first time.

3.24 Design and delivery of place-based initiatives/activities at locations suited to recently arrived or emerging communities as a soft entry/introduction and promotion point.

3.3 Welcoming Clubs implement actions to build a volunteer workforce that is inclusive, diverse and reflects the community. Demonstrated by:

3.31 Identifying and addressing barriers (such as lack of understanding of the role of volunteerism in Australian sport) and unconscious bias, which may limit diversity and inclusion in volunteer recruitment and support.

3.32 Exploring innovative ways of promoting volunteering opportunities to reach a broad and diverse range of potential community members.

3.33 Highlighting the value of a diverse volunteer workforce and encouraging community members from diverse backgrounds to apply.

3.4 **Welcoming Clubs lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and ensure volunteers are highly valued in the club community. Demonstrated by:**

3.41 Volunteer roles are well defined, explained and shared across a variety of platforms.

3.42 A public declaration of the club's intent to build a diverse volunteer workforce with its overarching commitment to building the volunteer capacity of the club.

3. 5 **Welcoming Clubs celebrate and acknowledge their volunteer workforce, its contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated. Demonstrated by:**

3.51 Public acknowledgement of volunteer contributions across a variety of platforms in the club and wider community as appropriate and in respect of privacy.

3.6 **Welcoming Clubs actively work to understand why members may leave to improve welcoming and inclusion practices as well as identifying exclusive practices. Demonstrated by:**

3.61 Implementing processes to understand and monitor why people/members are leaving.

3.62 Develop and implement an annual review process to identify and reduce exclusionary practices.

4.0 Social and Cultural Inclusion

Everyone belongs

Welcoming Clubs value the unique talents and experiences that people of all backgrounds contribute and seek to encourage representation and promotion of these as valued aspects of the club culture and community. Welcoming Clubs reflect the wider community and are a place where all members can express their identity and experience a sense of belonging.

4.1 Welcoming Clubs are committed to embedding diversity and inclusion approaches across their club. They recognise that there are often additional barriers and vulnerabilities faced by people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, people from migrant, refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds, people living with a disability or people that identify as LGBTIQ. Demonstrated by:

4.11   Knowledge and implementation of initiatives and strategies that consider additional barriers to access and inclusion and the additional challenges of intersectionality.

4.12   Utilising best practice approaches from experienced and reputable organisations including National and State sporting bodies that can reduce barriers to inclusion.

4.13   Investment in workforce development such as cultural competence and education that encourages greater cross-cultural understanding for under-represented groups and supports club members to better engage with people from diverse background.

4.2 Welcoming Clubs partner with diverse groups and stakeholders to promote a welcoming culture across various platforms. Demonstrated by:

4.21   A public resolution declaring the local club or sport to be a welcoming community, and an explanation of what this means.

4.22   Messaging that communicates the community wide benefits of cultural diversity and inclusion and the benefits of this to a sports club or code.

4.3 Welcoming Clubs facilitate language access and works to eliminate language as a barrier to participation. Demonstrated by:

4.31   Providing accessible information for club members to specify language needs (and provide access to translators and interpreters if possible).

4.32   Surveying existing club members to find volunteers who speak languages other than English that may be willing to support new families in their introduction to the club.

4.4 Welcoming Clubs will create, encourage and support opportunities for all members of the community to express their identity. Demonstrated by:

4.41   Presenting stories and experiences that communicate positive sports diversity stories and contributions.

4.42   Emphasising social activities and encouraging community involvement.

5.0 Places and Spaces

Our Place

Welcoming Clubs provide and value, physical, social and emotional spaces and facilities that are safe, that encourage participation, social connection and inclusion.

5.1 **Welcoming Clubs provide spaces and facilities are safe and accessible for all. Demonstrated by:**

5.11 Ensuring spaces and facilities are planned for and produced in accordance with National and State sporting organisations and government recommendations for accessibility and inclusion.

5.12 Consulting with community members and diverse groups to explore how club spaces and facilities may be more accessible, inclusive and responsive to community needs and aspirations.

5.13 Assessing development applications against non-discriminatory access requirements.

5.2 **Welcoming Clubs provide spaces and facilities that encourage community interaction and facilitate diverse cultural expression and celebration. Demonstrated by:**

5.21 Promoting and enabling the use of club space and facilities for people who represent the diversity of the community including local community groups (non-sporting).

5.22 Providing culturally or religiously appropriate spaces where all members of the community can be comfortable, engage with other club members and are not limited in their ability to participate in club activities.

5.3 **Welcoming Clubs ensures equitable access to all facilities and spaces for all members of the club community. Demonstrated by:**

5.31 Ensuring all spaces and facilities are equally accessible (as relevant) for all members and not segregated by inherent hierarchies.

5.32 Sharing the origin story of the club and significant cultural background where applicable and appropriate.

6.0 Economic Participation

Access for all

Welcoming Clubs recognise that participation in sports and physical activity requires significant financial contribution. And that sustainable, accessible membership for all requires a flexible economic model that creates varied opportunities for its members.

6.1 Welcoming Clubs work closely with their membership and community to develop and implement fee structures and participation models that do not exclude due to cost. Demonstrated by:

6.11   Providing alternative participation models that reduce financial barriers and promote participation, in particular for families in the early stages of settlement.

6.12   Financial hardship planning or alternative fee structures providing for varied levels of participation.

6.13   Providing alternative membership options for non-participant community members to demonstrate support for the club.

6.2 Welcoming Clubs engage and partner with a diversity of local businesses for economic and social benefits and to promote the values of welcoming and inclusion. Demonstrated by:

6.21   Providing information and resources for local business to promote all club programs, events and initiatives.

6.22   Providing opportunities for local business to attend and participate in club events that promote the club values of diversity and inclusion and encourage sponsorship.

6.3 Welcoming Clubs partner with local business and community organisations to identify opportunities for appropriate and relevant funding that addresses needs in the community. Demonstrated by:

6.31   Creating and promoting opportunities for shared applications to funding that are beneficial for the club and wider community.

6.4 Welcoming Clubs work closely with their membership and community to prioritise local procurement for business and services. Demonstrated by:

6.41   Implementation of an ethical procurement policy.

6.42   Commitment to engage specialist service providers and organisations to support club events, activities and programs.

6.5 Welcoming Clubs celebrate the contribution from their sponsors and community. Demonstrated by:

6.51   Public acknowledgement of club sponsors through events and activities across platforms including through sponsor businesses.

Assessment and Accreditation

To cater for the diversity of sports and recreation clubs, and their communities, The Welcoming Clubs Standard has three progress levels. Subject to their capacity and resources, Clubs can choose to be assessed at any level. Prior to engaging with the Welcoming Clubs Standard, and the assessment and accreditation process, Clubs need to Commit to the Welcoming Clubs network.

Formal commitment to Welcoming Clubs requires approval from either the Club President or CEO/General Manager. Clubs join a network of like-minded peers and gain the benefit of support and experience to monitor their progress and identify the next steps towards becoming a Welcoming Club.

Level	Description	Assessment
Welcome	Clubs at this level have taken action towards becoming a more connected and cohesive community. The Club has cemented their status as a key member of the network and driver of cultural change. They have an initial clear assessment of their current position.	**Self-Assessment** Criteria and indicators across all categories at L1 Welcome level are met and verified by Welcoming Clubs.
Include	Clubs at this level have activated club wide involvement in the process of welcoming and inclusion. Clubs have their values communicated to all club membership and clear actions have been taken to establish their position in the wider community as a place where everyone is welcome. They have a clear assessment of their current position and a plan to progress their efforts.	**Peer Assessment** Criteria and indicators across all categories at L1 Welcome and L2 Include level are met. Another equivalent and approved peer club verifies the assessment.
Celebrate	Clubs at this level are setting and achieving goals that progress diversity and inclusion across their club and the wider community. Practices are embedded in all club activities and culture. Clubs at this level are projecting their reputation as a leader in the sports sector, are prominent members of the network and serve as an example to others.	**External Assessment** ALL criteria and indicators in ALL categories L1 Welcome, L2 Include and L3 Celebrate are met. An approved Welcoming Clubs Assessor verifies the assessment.

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to the numerous people and organisations who have contributed to the development of the Welcoming Clubs Standard.

We would particularly like to acknowledge the contributions and advice from:

- Department of Home Affairs
- Multicultural Affairs Queensland State Government
- Brisbane City Council
- Sport Australia
- Netball Queensland
- Play by the Rules
- Community Football Australia
- Tennis Australia

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