



## QGSSSA SPORTS EVENT HARASSMENT and BULLYING POLICY

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### OVERVIEW

The Queensland Girls' Secondary Schools Sports Association (QGSSSA) is committed to its events being free from harassment and bullying.

### PREAMBLE

QGSSSA considers harassment and bullying unacceptable forms of behaviour that will not be tolerated under any circumstances. The QGSSSA is committed to taking all reasonable steps to achieve a sporting environment free of intimidation, bullying and harassment.

The QGSSSA has a proper concern where harassment may occur at one of its organized, endorsed or sponsored sporting events which:

- creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;
- adversely affects an individual's performance at the event or thereafter; or
- reflects adversely on the integrity and standing of the QGSSSA.

The QGSSSA is committed to taking all steps to prevent and resolve (when reported) incidents of harassment and bullying.

Every member of the QGSSSA community is required to support this policy.

This policy provides details regarding:

1. the definition of harassment, bullying and sexual harassment;
2. strategies which QGSSSA will utilise to address complaints and protect complainants;
3. how complaints will be dealt with; and
4. the right to take action to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland.

### Legal References

Legislation which is relevant to this policy includes the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1992* (Qld) and *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth).

## 1 DEFINITIONS

**Harassment** is any unwelcome behaviour which does, or is likely to, offend, humiliate or intimidate another person.

**Bullying** is a form of harassment which is repeated, unreasonable behaviour that demeans, intimidates, victimizes, threatens or humiliates people, either as individuals or as a group.

**Harassment** and **bullying** may take many forms, including:

**Physical:** including fighting, pushing, unnecessary and unwelcome physical contact, aggressive behaviour, teasing or practical jokes;

**Verbal:** including name calling, offensive language or unwelcome comments;

**Non verbal:** including inappropriate mimicking, suggestive looks or leers, moving or taking items of property.

Harassment and bullying can create an intimidating, hostile and offensive environment. It is distressing and can affect the recipient's mental and physical wellbeing. It is therefore an important health and safety issue.

**Sexual harassment** is any unwelcome sexual attention.

**Sexual harassment** is defined widely to include:

- Unsolicited acts of physical intimacy;
- Unsolicited demand or request for sexual favours;
- Remarks with sexual connotations;
- Offensive comments on physical appearance, dress or private life;
- Lewd jokes;
- Wolf whistling; or
- Any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is unacceptable behaviour and is a breach of the fundamental right of a student, parent, spectator, convener, umpire, referee, official or employee of the QGSSSA or participating school to participate and interact in a physically and psychologically safe environment and to be treated fairly and with respect.

Further, under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1994* (Cth), sexual harassment may constitute a serious form of sex discrimination. It is demeaning, and threatens and undermines the individual concerned.

## **2 STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES TO IMPLEMENT POLICY**

### **2.1 Recognising sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is any form of sexual attention that is unwelcome. As stated above, some examples of sexual harassment include unwelcome touching, patting, pinching, deliberately brushing against someone, comments about a person's body, remarks with sexual connotations, smutty jokes, requests for sexual favours, leering or the display of offensive material.

Sexual harassment can occur between students, parents, spectators, conveners, umpires, referees, officials, and employees. Sexual harassment can be a single incident or it may occur as an ongoing course of behaviour. The key point is that it is unwelcome.

#### **2.1.1 Sexual Harassment Allegations involving Children/ Students**

It is the policy of QGSSSA in relation to allegations that a child has been sexually harassed whilst at a QGSSSA organised, endorsed or sponsored sporting event, that:

- (a) Any reasonable suspicion held by or notified to an employee of a member school that sexual misconduct or abuse has taken place is to be reported to the police or the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services along with notification that a report has been lodged (subject to (e) below), regardless of when the misconduct is alleged to have taken place;
- (b) The overriding concern in relation to allegations of sexual harassment is the protection of the child/student;
- (c) Reports of sexual harassment are to be dealt with by the QGSSSA Management Committee;
- (d) QGSSSA requires member schools to offer to any of its students who are victims of sexual harassment a long-term, supportive environment (including the provision of assistance for counselling);
- (e) The identity of anyone mentioned or involved in reports of sexual harassment is only to be disclosed to persons authorised by law to receive those reports;
- (f) The President or a delegate from the QGSSSA Management Committee is responsible for making any statements to the media, and all efforts will be made to ensure that media coverage should not affect the education of any student;
- (g) The specific child protection measures set forth in the QGSSSA Risk Assessment Manual shall apply; and

- (h) The member schools agree to comply with the decision of the QGSSSA Management Committee, including: -
- i. suspension or barring of a student from participation in QGSSSA organized, endorsed or sponsored sporting events;
  - ii. exclusion or barring a parent, spectator, convener, umpire, referee, official or employee from attending QGSSSA organized, endorsed or sponsored sporting events; and
  - iii. exclusion or barring of the school most closely associated with the perpetrator of the harassment/ bullying from attending QGSSSA organized, endorsed or sponsored sporting events
- for such period as the QGSSSA Management Committee determines.

## **2.2 Recognising other forms of Harassment and Bullying.**

- (a) Reports of harassment or bullying are to be dealt with by the QGSSSA Management Committee;
- (b) The President or a delegate from the QGSSSA Management Committee is responsible for making any statements to the media, and all efforts will be made to ensure that media coverage should not affect the education of any student; and
- (c) The member schools agree to comply with the decision of the QGSSSA Management Committee, including: -
- i. suspension or barring of a student from participation in QGSSSA organized, endorsed or sponsored sporting events;
  - ii. exclusion or barring a parent, spectator, convener, umpire, referee, official or employee from attending QGSSSA organized, endorsed or sponsored sporting events; and
  - iii. exclusion or barring of the school most closely associated with the perpetrator of the harassment/ bullying from attending QGSSSA organized, endorsed or sponsored sporting events
- for such period as the QGSSSA Management Committee determines.

## **3. QGSSSA ACTION**

- 3.1 When a report of any alleged harassment or bullying at a QGSSSA event has been received by a member school, it should be referred immediately to the QGSSSA President. If the report of the harassment or bullying is received directly to the QGSSSA, the member school's Principal shall also be informed.
- 3.2 Notification of the alleged incident should include:
5. a written report
  6. where possible, reports from witnesses
- 3.3 If harassment or bullying is been found to have occurred, appropriate action will be taken to:
7. endeavour to protect the victim from further harassment,
  8. advise the offender (in the case of QGSSSA staff) and/ or the member school (in the case of member school staff) or students that such behavior is unacceptable,
  9. ensure that the relevant member school arranges or facilitates the counseling of the offender to help him/her to understand the implications of their actions before any consideration is given to the lifting of any exclusion imposed on the offender under 2.1.1(h) or 2.2 (c),
  10. advise the offender of the likely consequences if harassment or bullying continues, and
  11. in appropriate cases, request that the relevant member school discipline the offender under their own internal guidelines for harassment or bullying or refer the matter to the police, and
  12. in appropriate cases, put in place necessary counselling or require the relevant member school to arrange for necessary counseling for the offender and / or victim
  13. Consequences for misconduct will be determined by the QGSSSA Management Committee.

For example:

For students, disciplinary action may result in suspension or exclusion from QGSSSA activities including inter-school sport.

For QGSSSA staff, disciplinary action may lead to termination of their employment.

For member schools, their membership may be reconsidered by the QGSSSA if a history of unaddressed harassment at QGSSSA sporting events develops.

QGSSSA will take all reasonable steps to avoid a harassment or bullying victim or witness being further victimized.

Any person who submits a harassment or bullying complaint which after investigation is determined on reasonable grounds to have been maliciously or falsely made shall be dealt with under this policy as if that person was an offender who had committed an act of harassment or bullying.

#### **4. REFERRAL TO ANTI DISCRIMINATION COMMISSION QUEENSLAND**

- 4.1 Any person who has been subject to discrimination, sexual harassment, victimization or other behaviour prohibited by the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) may make a complaint to the Anti Discrimination Commission Queensland (Commission).
- 4.2 If the person is a child, a parent or guardian may make a complaint on behalf of the child.
- 4.3 The contact details for the Commission can be found via its website located at [www.adcq.qld.gov.au](http://www.adcq.qld.gov.au) and are also listed below:

Telephone: 1300 130 670 (Toll free)

TTY: 1300 130 680

Facsimile: 07 3247 0960

Email: [enquiries@adcq.qld.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@adcq.qld.gov.au)

Brisbane street address:

Level 17

53 Albert Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

Office hours: 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

Brisbane postal address:

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