



LANGUAGE & TERMINOLOGY GUIDE

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WHY IS LANGUAGE IMPORTANT?

- Language is a very powerful method of structuring attitudes.
- Language and terminology can hugely influence how people perceive themselves, others, and the world around them.
- Language and terminology can contribute to the creation and perpetuation of stereotyping and belief systems.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- Develop your own awareness of, and sensitivity to, the oppressive and discriminatory potential of language.
- Be aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable and why.
- Acknowledge that certain language and words are unacceptable regardless of whether or not they are intentionally used to hurt. The intent behind language doesn't necessarily alter the effect words can have.
- It is everyone's responsibility to challenge and report all use of discriminatory language, regardless of intent, following the reporting discrimination in football guidelines.

USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Discrimination – is when someone is treated differently because of a Protected characteristic.

Race – The term 'race' is a social construct used to classify people. Originally race was based on a false belief that biologically there were different species of humans.

Ethnicity / Ethnic group - is a category of people who identify with each other based on similarities such as common ancestry, language, society, culture or nationality.

BAME – acronym used to describe people from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background. A now more accepted term is Ethnically Diverse Communities.

Prejudice - involves 'pre-judging' someone and is used to describe the negative attitudes some people have towards certain groups.

Sexism – is prejudice, discrimination or unwanted conduct based on sex or gender, especially against women and girls.

Homophobia - The fear or dislike of someone, based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, gay or bi people.

Transphobia - The fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including the denial/refusal to accept their gender identity.

Xenophobia is "attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or "foreigners".

WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE OR UNACCEPTABLE?

The following section is a guideline based on the use of language. Please be aware that derogative language is included in this section with the intention for this guide to be used for educational purposes only and to support Club Officials in identifying derogative language for reporting.

*ACCEPTABLE TERMS

COLOURED

Historically used in a derogatory way to separate and segregate black people. White people decided this was the word that should be used to describe anybody who was not white, which also implies that to be white is 'normal' or default.

BLACK

Black is a term that describes a skin colour. Some people may feel uncomfortable about saying black but it is acceptable as a descriptive term.

WHITE

White is a term that is used to describe and "classify" people with white or pale/fair skin.

NIGGER/NIGGA

Originated as a term referring to black people as a variation of the Spanish/Portuguese noun negro and descends from the Latin adjective Niger meaning 'black'. Historically nigger was used as an intentionally derogatory word as early as the 17th C. It has accompanied the slave trade, innumerable lynchings, castrations, beatings, acts of arson, and other racially motivated attacks against black people. The slave trade alone saw an estimated 22-55 million deaths of black people.

The term is a complicated word as hip-hop culture has tried to re-appropriate it as a term of endearment to mean 'friend'. However even when people talk about appropriating the word its history still exists. The word is inextricably linked with violence and brutality on black people's self-worth and physical abuse. No amount of appropriating can erase that. Allowing anyone to use this word to describe someone is unacceptable.

HALF-CASTE

Historically used to describe people of mixed race or ethnicity. It is derived from the Latin castus, meaning pure. In other words, half-caste meant a person that was half-pure. In Australia, the term half-caste was widely used in the 19th and 20th C British Commonwealth Laws to refer to the offspring of White Colonists and Aboriginal Natives. Laws stated that the Australian government could seize such children and forcibly remove them from their parents.

MIXED RACE / MIXED PARENTAGE / MIXED HERITAGE

'Mixed parentage', 'mixed heritage' and 'mixed race' are acceptable alternatives to describe a person's ethnicity. However, when using 'mixed race', it is important to remember that 'race' is a social construct and there are not different races within humanity.

GYPO / PIKEY

These are derogatory terms to describe Gypsies or Travellers often used to describe someone who is scruffy, creating negative associations with gypsies. Pikey derives from pike, which meant to “go away from, to go on” and related to the words turnpike (toll-road) and pike-man (toll-collector).

GYPSY, ROMA, TRAVELLER

The terms Gypsy, Roma or Traveller may be appropriate but proceed with caution as there are many different Gypsy and Traveller groups.

PAKI

This term is not acceptable. During the 1970's and 80's Britain was faced with a wave of racist violence. This included 'Paki-bashing' gangs for whom 'Paki' meant any person who was presumed to be from South Asia or of South Asian descent because of their skin colour. People from different age groups and backgrounds were murdered or physically and verbally attacked.

PAKISTANI/ASIAN

Pakistani is the correct term for the nationality of a person from Pakistan. Pak means 'pure' in Urdu and Persian and stan is the Persian word meaning 'place of'. Hence the name Pakistan means land of the pure. The 'i' was added to ease pronunciation. People from an Asian background sometimes refer to themselves as 'brown', which is an acceptable descriptor, along with the term Asian.

CHINKY

Chinky (also chink) is an ethnic slur referring primarily to a person of Chinese ethnicity, although it is sometimes used to refer to people of other Asian descent, or to people who have physical features that are characteristic of many Asian people.

CHINESE

Chinese is the correct term for the nationality of a person from China. China is the English translation for Zhongguo, believed to have become popular in the mid-19th C.

PERSON WITH A DISABILITY - DISABLED PERSON/PEOPLE

'Person with a disability' is inappropriate as it assumes that the person has the disability; disabled people are disabled by their environment. Under the Equality Act 2010 a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. Under social model thinking, the person is disabled by oppressive barriers of attitude, structures and environments in society. 'Disabled people/person' is more acceptable as it recognises the social oppression and environment that disables the person.

THE DISABLED / THE DEAF / THE BLIND ETC

To call any group of people 'the' anything is to dehumanise them. Use blind people, deaf people or disabled people.

CRIPPLE / INVALID

The word comes from Old English crypel or creopel. These, in turn, come from old (Middle) German 'kripple' meaning to be without power. Referring to a person as being in-valid or not a valid person is also disempowering. These words are extremely offensive. Use disabled person.

HANDICAPPED

Handicap means having an imposed disadvantage. It's origin comes from going "cap in hand" and begging. Use disabled person.

ABLE-BODIED / NORMAL - NON-DISABLED PERSON

Avoid able-bodied/normal person as the opposite of disabled; 'Disability' is not a description of a personal characteristic. A disabled person is not a 'person with a disability' as the person does not own the disability in the way that someone might be 'a person with brown hair'. Consequently, the opposite of 'disabled' is not 'able-bodied' or 'abled', but 'non-disabled' or 'enabled'.

CONFINED TO A WHEELCHAIR, WHEELCHAIR-BOUND - A WHEELCHAIR (WHEN REFERRING TO THE PERSON WHO USES IT) - A WHEELCHAIR USER.

Use wheelchair user, Wheelchair users see their wheelchair as a means of mobility and freedom, not something that restricts them, apart from problems with lack of access. Avoid the mentally handicapped.

AFFLICTED BY, SUFFERS FROM, VICTIM OF - HAS (NAME OF CONDITION OR DISABILITY)

Disabled people are not victims because this implies they are consciously singled out for punishment. Similarly, the word sufferer can imply someone upon whom something has been imposed as a punishment.

Use person who has / person with... these are neutral terms, unlike victim. In this way we can denote difference between illness, difference, and social oppression. We cannot assume that an impairment comes with pain. Unfortunately we can assume that difference leads to the oppression of marginalised groups caused by enduring negative stereotypes.

MENTALLY HANDICAPPED, MENTALLY DEFECTIVE, RETARDED, SUBNORMAL, SIMPLE - LEARNING (OR INTELLECTUALLY) DISABLED PERSON

These terms are not acceptable and portray a person in a negative and derogative way. Use person with a learning difficulty.

DWARF(ISM) / MIDGET - A PERSON WITH RESTRICTED GROWTH OR SHORT STATURE

Dwarfism is a medical or genetic condition that results in a stature below 4'10," When used in a non-medical sense, it can be considered offensive. Avoid the term *dwarf* unless it is being used in a medical context. Use a person with restricted growth or short stature. Only refer to a person's short stature if it is relevant.

The term *midget* was used in the past to describe an unusually short and proportionate person. It is now considered derogatory. Also avoid using the term vertically challenged.

AN EPILEPTIC, DIABETIC, DEPRESSIVE, ETC. – A PERSON WITH EPILEPSY OR SOMEONE WHO HAS EPILEPSY, DIABETES, DEPRESSION, ETC.

Avoid labelling people by a medical condition. Do not categorise them collectively. Use for example, ‘a person with epilepsy’.

SPASTIC – A PERSON WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

The term spastic is outdated and now seen as insulting and offensive. Use a person with cerebral palsy.

MENTAL PATIENT, INSANE, MAD – A PERSON WITH A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE

These terms are outdated and have been used with negative connotations over time. They are insulting and offensive. Use a person with a mental health issue.

THE DEAF, DEAF, AND DUMB; DEAF MUTE – A PERSON WHO IS DEAF AND / OR HARD OF HEARING

These terms are now seen as insulting and offensive, particularly the word dumb, that is now often used as to mean stupid. You may see deaf written as “D/deaf”, due to how the individual identifies. A Deaf person is often profoundly deaf, uses sign language and identifies as part of the Deaf community. People who are hard of hearing or have gradual hearing loss, would usually use the term “deaf”. It is good practice to use both in written format.

THE BLIND, VISUALLY IMPAIRED – A PERSON WHO IS BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED PERSON

The word “blind” is grouping everyone together but separating from the rest of society. The word impaired is seen as negative, as it is referring to what the person cannot do.

FITS, SPELLS, ATTACKS – A PERSON WHO HAS SEIZURES

Use of these terms are outdated and negative. Its important to focus on the person first.

THE AUTISTICS – NEURODIVERSE PEOPLE

Using the term “the” is grouping everyone together but separating from the rest of society. Use neurodiverse people. Neurodiverse conditions also include, but not limited to ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and Tourette’s syndrome.

HIDDEN DISABILITY – NON-VISIBLE DISABILITY

Hidden disability could imply that a person is trying to ‘hide’ or is ashamed, but it just cannot be seen. An example is someone with Crohn’s disease or diabetes.

BI

Bi is an umbrella term used to describe an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, bi-curious, queer, and other non-monosexual and non-monoromantic identities.

GAY

Refers to man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality - some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian.

HOMOSEXUAL

This might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used and accepted.

FAGGOT / POOF / RENT BOY

These terms are derogative and have been used negatively predominantly towards gay men and boys.

LGBTQ+

The acronym for lesbian, gay, bi and trans. The Q in Q+ refers to Queer, which is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism etc). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who have embraced it. It can also refer to Questioning, which is the process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity. To represent those who do not identify with one of the letters in the acronym, a plus sign is often used. This can include intersex, asexual, demisexual, non-binary, gender fluid, pansexual, polyamorous, questioning and many more.

TRANSGENDER MAN

A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male. Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

TRANSGENDER WOMAN

A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, cross dresser, non-binary, genderqueer (GQ).

CISGENDER

Cisgender refers to someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were 'assigned' at birth. This might include physical gender cues (hair or clothing) and/or behaviour which is historically or culturally associated with a particular gender.

NON-BINARY/AGENDER/GENDERQUEER

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

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