

ATHLETE HARASSMENT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

University Rugby Football Club is committed to providing the highest levels of care and protection to its athletes .

Everyone in sport shares the responsibility to identify and prevent harassment and abuse and to develop a culture of dignity, respect and safety. For the purposes of this policy the following definitions are relevant;

“Harassment” includes physical or psychological abuse and sexual abuse (which can be a form of physical and/or psychological abuse) and is generally defined as repeated and unwanted attention.

Harassment can be based on any grounds such as race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender or sexual orientation. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online. Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited or coercive.

“Physical or psychological abuse” means any improper and unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence, harm or humiliation to another.

“Sexual abuse” means any unwanted, groomed or forced involvement in sexual behaviour, unwelcome verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature (e.g. the use of offensive stereotypes based on gender, sexual jokes, threats or intimidation) that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another.

Sexual harassment is specifically outlawed in Hong Kong under Section 2(5) of the Sexual Discrimination Ordinance.

These definitions are consistent with those provided in guidance from the International Olympic Committee to National Olympic Committees and International Sports organisations.

This policy is intended to;

- Safeguard athletes
- Protect the integrity of the sport of rugby in Hong Kong
- Protect the values and benefits of rugby

Who this Policy Applies too

This policy applies to all involved in the game of rugby in Hong Kong including but not limited to coaches and support staff, athletes, referees, club officials, volunteers and spectators.

With respect to athletes, the policy applies to all athletes but particular vigilance should be given to groups which could be considered to be at higher risk; these include;

- - Children
- - Young adults
- - Athletes with physical or mental challenges

Prevention of Harassment

The best approach for dealing with harassment is to take pro-active measures to prevent it taking place at all. There are a number of ways this can be done.

“Information” This policy will be made available to club members via the club website and other social media channels to ensure that everyone in our rugby community is aware of the need for vigilance in this area.

“Appointment” We will appoint a representative within the club that can receive reports of harassment cases. The contact details of our club representative can be found at the end of this document. This person will be able to receive complaints within the club and assist with reporting to the HKRU if necessary.

“Education” Athletes should be aware of what constitutes harassment and should be aware of reporting mechanisms with the club and within the sport.

Handling Harassment

It is important that there is a clear and confidential mechanism for the reporting of harassment. It should be emphasised that anyone believing themselves to be a victim reports this immediately through the appropriate channels.

In many cases, initial action can be taken by the victim and no further action/reporting is required. This involves the victim clearly telling the harasser that their attention is not welcome and that they should cease. For more serious cases, including persistent sexual harassment, there may be a need to report these formally and follow up actions taken.

Fear of reporting is one of the biggest hindrances in preventing harassment; therefore our reporting process will be readily available and well understood. Reports can be made in person, in writing or by phone to the appointed club representative or directly to the Hong Kong Rugby Union (HKRU) if deemed appropriate in the circumstances. It should also be noted that cases of harassment do not have to be reported by the victim and can be reported by a third party.

If a person believes they have been harassed then they should take the following actions;

1. Speak up as soon as possible by letting the harasser know their actions are not welcome and should stop them immediately.
2. Keep a written record of the incident and note down as many details as possible (location, witnesses, nature of the event, date, time, location etc)

3. Report the incident as soon as possible to the appointed club representative or if it is believed to be appropriate, the personnel at the HKRU (contact detail are provided at the end of this document).
4. For more serious allegations, legal advice should be sought and a report made to the Hong Kong police. Once reported to the Hong Kong police it becomes a police matter.

Reporting Flow Chart

For the HKRU personnel receiving a complaint against an individual either from a club representative or from a victim directly; they will discuss the report at the earliest opportunity with the HKRU CEO. They will then decide on the following actions;

1. Contact the harasser and inform them that a complaint has been filed against them. In the first instance, it should be discussed with the harasser and victim whether the situation can be resolved between the parties and if harassment has taken place. If this is the case, the CEO will be informed and no further reporting will take place.
2. If it is decided that harassment has taken place, a written report will be made by the harasser and the victim detailing the incident, this will be passed to the HKRU's CEO for consideration.
3. Take disciplinary action against the offender if deemed appropriate.
4. If external reporting is made then the HKRU should seek legal advice and comply with the investigation as required. This may be the case in more serious cases such as sexual harassment.

5. Where the complaint received relates to an issue more than 12 months old, the HKRU personnel should decide whether this case merits further investigation on a case by case basis (e.g. is the alleged harasser still involved in the sport).

It is important to note that anyone making false accusations without basis for doing so can also face



disciplinary action.

HKRU Personnel

Club Representative

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This template has been created by the HKRU for clubs to use as a reference. Clubs are encouraged to adapt the template to reflect their individual circumstances.