



**Premier
League**

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Standard

**Championing equality,
diversity and inclusion
in the Premier League**

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Foreword

The Premier League and our Clubs are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, and tackling all forms of discrimination.

Football is a diverse sport, which brings together communities and cultures from all backgrounds. This diversity has made the game stronger on the pitch and it is vital we ensure this is reflected across all areas.

Clubs undertake significant action in this area, and I am proud of the role the Premier League Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Standard plays in supporting them to create inclusive environments.

This updated Standard builds on the work already carried out by Clubs and is integral to ensuring equality is embedded across all policies and practices. It provides a framework to support Clubs in setting and achieving their targets for greater representation of under-represented groups, as well as placing emphasis on mental health and wellbeing.

This is underpinned by the Premier League No Room For Racism Action Plan and our long-standing partnerships with organisations such as LGBT+ charity Stonewall. We will continue to work with Clubs and our Partners across football to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, and address all forms of prejudice.

I look forward to seeing Clubs continue their commitment to progress through the Premier League Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Standard as we work together to ensure football is open and welcoming for all.



Richard Masters

Premier League Chief Executive



Introduction

The 2015 Premier League Equality Standard (PLES) has helped generate significant progress in equality, diversity and inclusion work across the Premier League.

Clubs have established clear governance frameworks for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and built equality principles into systems and processes across all areas of their operations. These achievements have been demonstrated through Club evidence, recognised by expert Assessor Consultants and verified by the independent Premier League Panel, drawn from across business and the voluntary and statutory sectors.

The revised Standard, the Premier League Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Standard (PLEDIS) remains a progressive mechanism with a clear thematic journey through the levels. It focuses on addressing under-representation by mandating greater accountability for long-term and measurable progress, including the publication of annual progress reports. The PLEDIS also aims to address EDI match day incidents in a coherent and structured way, with a clear emphasis on identifying and responding to emerging trends and EDI learning and development opportunities.

The PLEDIS incorporates all areas of equality. Clubs are asked to use data and insight to identify key EDI priority groups where under-representation needs to be addressed, or where special emphasis needs to be placed, e.g. mental health and wellbeing (MH&W). Priority groups should be drawn from the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010, which ensures that individuals are not discriminated against on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Clubs may also have other priorities, for example socio-economic status, poverty, areas of deprivation, Welsh language, young people not in employment, education or training (NEETS) and young offenders.



Club Community Organisations

The PLEDIS is the Clubs' EDI framework and will be led by them. Club Community Organisations (CCOs), such as trusts and foundations, are an integral part of Clubs' activities and are also expected to contribute directly to the delivery of targets and achievement of the EDI outcomes.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

MH&W has been included as a specific element of the PLEDIS to support Clubs with a framework for their ongoing work in this priority area. Mental health is included in the definition of the protected characteristic of disability; however, many people with mental health concerns may not identify this way. By having a framework for MH&W, the PLEDIS ensures Clubs can focus on positive wellbeing outcomes as well as supporting people with mental health concerns.

The FA's Football Leadership Diversity Code

The FA's Football Leadership Diversity Code (FLDC) asks Clubs to commit to its principles and pledges. Clubs working to the PLEDIS will be able to use evidence from the process to report to The FA on progress, avoiding duplication. The PLEDIS guidance and templates will refer to the reporting requirements of the FLDC. The diagram below maps the FLDC against the PLEDIS themes and outcomes.

The FLDC is specific in its current reporting requirements on gender (male and female) and ethnicity. The scope of the PLEDIS requires Clubs to consider all protected characteristics for data and insight collection. Clubs can determine their own priorities based on where change needs to happen, for example, prioritising disability, ethnicity and women and girls.

The scope of the PLEDIS is very clear: Clubs are asked to consider all protected characteristics for data and insight collection and can determine their own EDI priorities based on where change needs to happen, e.g. a Club might prioritise disability, ethnicity and women and girls.



FLDC Principles and Pledges	PLEDIS Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation will champion diversity across both ethnicity and gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and commitment • Promoting inclusion; challenging and preventing discrimination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching staff should reflect the professional playing base of diversity • Senior leadership and team operations' diversity should match the local population diversity • Targets for new hires in senior leadership, team operations and coaching (men's Club and women's Club) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data, insight and delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment will be based on merit while ensuring a diverse pool of candidates • Shortlists for interview will have at least one male and one female Black, Asian or of Mixed Heritage candidate (if applicants meeting the job specification apply) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and commitment • Data, insight and delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club will have an EDI Plan with targets, reporting annually and supported by data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data, insight and delivery



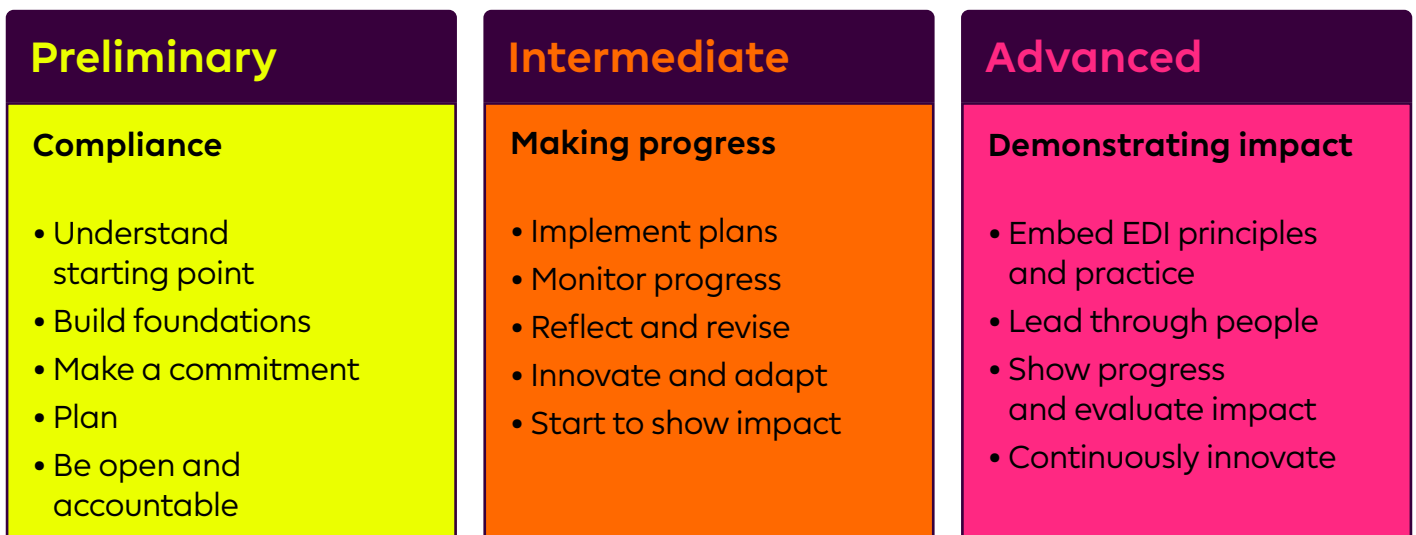
Principles of the PLEDIS

The PLEDIS provides Clubs with a framework to drive continuous improvement in equality, diversity and inclusion and create meaningful and sustainable change.

Key threads running through the framework include:

- Accountability for and leadership of EDI
- Collating and using data effectively
- Action planning and setting long-term targets
- Influencing change in fan behaviour
- Embedding knowledge and confidence through learning and development programmes
- Reviewing and measuring progress

The PLEDIS is ambitious in its aim to create Club-wide change and covers all areas of a Club's activities, including its role as an employer, its match day operations, its academy, first team, CCO and fans. As Clubs work through each level, they will be developing and implementing actions, setting and working towards aspirational targets, measuring progress, demonstrating and assessing impact and ultimately, moving towards being exemplars in EDI delivery and impact.



Levels of Achievement

The PLEDIS is a progressively challenging framework. As Clubs advance through the levels they demonstrate how they meet the overarching EDI outcomes and capture the progress they are making against each one.

There are three levels of achievement: Preliminary, Intermediate and Advanced (which includes retention of the Award through an Advanced Health Check).

These levels include key indicators that must be met to attain an award. Policy and process, while critical, are only part of the PLEDIS; as Clubs progress there is a shift in assessment focus from *compliance* through *policy and practice* to showing the *impact* of EDI work across all areas of the business. This shift is reflected in the assessment approach at Advanced Health Check, which concentrates on the impact of a Club's EDI work, evidenced through key reports and feedback.

All Premier League Clubs engage with the PLEDIS. It is a mandatory process (see Premier League Rule J4).

Clubs promoted to the Premier League have one season to work towards and achieve the Preliminary level. If they are relegated at the end of that one season, they are still encouraged to complete the assessment process and attend the Panel meeting. Similarly, having been relegated to the EFL, Clubs can remain on the PLEDIS pathway and work towards the next level. They will receive the same level of support and guidance as Premier League Clubs.

Certification for each level varies. Clubs holding the Preliminary and Intermediate levels are certificated for two seasons, whilst those holding the Advanced or Advanced Health Check levels are certificated for three seasons. The Premier League requires all Clubs on the pathway to be continually working towards a level of the PLEDIS.



Themes, Outcomes and Key Indicators

The PLEDIS is set around four themes. These are designed to foster improvements in policy and practice in addition to behavioural and culture change across all areas of the Club.

Preliminary, Intermediate and Advanced	
Theme	Outcomes
1. Leadership and Commitment	Effective leadership actively promotes and demonstrates accountability for and commitment to EDI, including mental health and wellbeing.
	EDI is embedded in Club policies and procedures; EDI reviews inform Club decision-making and risk management.
2. Promoting EDI; Challenging and Preventing Discrimination	Increased awareness of work to promote EDI and challenge and prevent discrimination, harassment and abuse.
	Increased confidence in, and more effective, incident management systems.
3. Data, Insight and Delivery	EDI Delivery Plan, Strategy and actions are informed by data and insight. Clear progress is being made towards EDI targets.
4. Learning and Development	Improved EDI knowledge and understanding and application of this in people's roles.



Theme 1 Leadership and Commitment



Embedding EDI in any setting requires effective leadership, accountability and commitment. The actions leaders take and what they say matters. Senior leaders are accountable for setting strategy and play a critical role in a Club's progress. The PLEDIS requires senior Club leaders to actively champion the short, medium and long-term change, alongside policy and process development, which creates an inclusive culture across their Club.

As Clubs move through the PLEDIS, the key indicators around leadership become progressively more challenging. While overall leadership and accountability for the EDI and MH&W agenda remains with senior leaders, Advanced Clubs are required to demonstrate how they enable all staff to positively contribute to EDI outcomes.

Financial growth, an inclusive culture, the ability to recruit and retain talent, a motivated and engaged high performing workforce, and the flexibility to adapt and modernise, are just some of the benefits of inclusive organisations. With effective leadership and commitment, Clubs can be world class on and off the pitch.

Theme 2 Promoting EDI; Challenging and Preventing Discrimination



Promoting EDI; challenging and preventing discrimination has a significant, positive impact on how people feel and think about their Club – and ultimately on their wellbeing – whether they are a staff member, a player or a fan.

Football takes promoting EDI and preventing and challenging discrimination seriously. Collectively and individually the Premier League, its Clubs and Partner organisations are working hard to address these issues, while readily acknowledging that more can be done.

Theme two focuses on Clubs demonstrating that they have high expectations of behaviour for everyone associated with them, including staff and fans. It requires that everyone associated with a Premier League Club to be fully aware of its robust stance against any form of discrimination, harassment and abuse, and that they have confidence that their Club will act when these expectations are not met.

Fundamentally it requires Clubs to demonstrate a fair and consistent approach to dealing with incidents, wherever they occur across the business.

Theme 3 Data, Insight and Delivery



Data and insight are invaluable in enabling Clubs to better understand the profile of their workforce, fans and job applicants. They provide Clubs with the evidence base on which to identify their priorities and shape their action planning, aspirational targets and strategies to increase representation. Data and insight are critical in measuring progress and are central to informed decision-making.

This theme requires Clubs to demonstrate that they have a clear understanding of their EDI profile and that they have an equally clear plan to address under-representation and champion diversity. As Clubs work through this theme, the PLEDIS indicators become more challenging, including, for example, an expectation that data is segmented, and that the Club draws on independent advice and scrutiny.

Setting and measuring progress against aspirational targets is an established mechanism to drive change, tackle under-representation and increase accountability. In many cases, addressing under-representation can take time; therefore, the PLEDIS requires Clubs to set long-term incremental EDI targets against their key priorities.

At every submission level, Clubs are required to draw on their data and insight in order to produce an EDI Monitoring Report.

Theme 4 Learning and Development



Embedding EDI into learning and development is a critical element in enabling Clubs to make meaningful and sustainable change. Ongoing, effective learning and development provides the framework through which staff are confident to embed EDI into their own work areas – whatever their level of seniority – and work collaboratively to drive change.

While senior leadership is accountable overall for leading EDI, in a truly inclusive business every member of staff should 'own', engage and advance the Club's EDI agenda and priorities, its values and culture.

Theme four requires Clubs to demonstrate that they have a focus on enhancing EDI through learning and development and that they have a clear understanding of, and are responding to, different training needs across the Club to support the many varied roles within professional football.

Working to create a culture in which staff continually improve and are confident to scrutinise and challenge – and where such challenge is encouraged – will drive Clubs forward to become leaders in this area.



PLEDIS – by Level

Theme 1 Leadership and Commitment



Outcomes	1.1 Effective leadership actively promotes and demonstrates accountability for and commitment to EDI, including MH&W ¹
	1.2 EDI is embedded in Club policies and procedures; EDI reviews inform Club decision-making and risk management.
Preliminary level The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:	1.1.1 Accountability and responsibility for EDI, including MH&W, sits with the Board ² and CEO. Board and senior staff understand the relevance of EDI to their roles.
	1.1.2 The leadership’s commitment to EDI, including MH&W, is communicated internally and externally.
	1.1.3 An annual achievements report showcases the Club’s EDI work.
	1.2.1 It has an EDI Policy, an MH&W Policy, Recruitment and Selection Policy ³ , Social Media Policy, Hate Crime Policy, and key HR policies and procedures. These have been discussed by the Board and shared with all staff ⁴ .

Intermediate and Advanced levels are continued on the next page.

¹ For the purposes of PLEDIS, EDI includes mental health and wellbeing (MH&W).

² Club structures differ and the PLEDIS requires Clubs to set accountability at the highest level. In some Clubs this may be the Board. In others it will be an operational equivalent made up of Directors, Heads of Department and the CEO.

³ As well as good practice principles, the Recruitment and Selection Policy should meet the FLDC principles.

⁴ Staff definition: Club’s Board, permanent and casual staff, and players; Foundation staff and Trustees.





<p>Intermediate level</p> <p>Practice from Preliminary level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>1.1.1 The Board, CEO and senior staff demonstrate accountability and leadership for EDI⁵ and have aligned their departmental activities with the Club’s EDI outcomes.</p> <p>1.1.2 The leadership’s commitment to EDI continues to be communicated internally and externally.</p> <p>1.1.3 An annual achievements report showcases the Club’s EDI work.</p>
	<p>1.2.1 The EDI Policy, MH&W Policy, Recruitment and Selection Policy, and HR policies have been reviewed and updated.</p> <p>1.2.2 An initial programme of EDI reviews has been introduced for key HR policies and Club activities; the Club can demonstrate changes made as a result of the EDI review findings.</p>
<p>Advanced level</p> <p>Practice from Intermediate level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>1.1.1 The Board, CEO and senior staff demonstrate accountability and leadership for EDI across the Club.</p> <p>1.1.2 All staff contribute to the Club’s EDI outcomes.</p> <p>1.1.3 An annual achievements report showcases the Club’s EDI work.</p>
	<p>1.2.1 EDI review findings influence corporate decision-making and risk management across all the business.</p> <p>1.2.2 EDI is embedded in all corporate processes.</p>

⁵ Including MH&W.



Theme 2

Promoting EDI; Challenging and Preventing Discrimination



Outcomes	2.1 Increased awareness of work to promote EDI and challenge and prevent discrimination, harassment and abuse.
	2.2 Increased confidence in more effective incident management systems.
Preliminary level The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:	2.1.1 The EDI statement of commitment and the Club's robust stance against any form of discrimination, harassment and abuse, is promoted internally and externally to cover all areas of the business ⁶ .
	2.2.1 A match day Incident Management Procedure reports, records, deals with and analyses incidents of discrimination, harassment and abuse ⁷ .
	2.2.2 Expectations of fans' match day behaviour are widely publicised and fans know how to report EDI incidents.
	2.2.3 The Club match day incidents are regularly reviewed; actions and emerging trends inform the EDI Delivery Plan.
	2.2.4 All stewards receive match day briefings on all forms of discrimination, harassment and abuse and are confident to manage EDI incidents.
	2.2.5 The process by which internal EDI concerns and incidents are raised, recorded and addressed is clear. Recorded incidents are reviewed to identify trends. This insight informs the EDI Delivery Plan.
	2.2.6 All staff are aware of how to report EDI concerns.

Intermediate and Advanced levels are continued on the next page.

⁶ This should include Board, staff, players, match day staff, fans, outreach participants, and Partners or Partnerships.

⁷ This covers inappropriate behaviour of anyone associated with a match day and includes social media and hate crime incidents.



Theme 2 (continued)

Promoting EDI; Challenging and Preventing Discrimination



<p>Intermediate level</p> <p>Practice from Preliminary level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>2.1.1 Season-long campaigns raise awareness of the Club’s work to promote EDI and challenge and prevent discrimination and abuse. The campaigns are promoted internally and externally.</p>
	<p>2.2.1 The match day Incident Management Procedure is reviewed to ensure that it is being effectively implemented.</p>
	<p>2.2.2 Expectations of fans’ match day behaviour are widely publicised and fans know how to report EDI incidents.</p>
	<p>2.2.3 Action has been taken to address emerging trends from match days and social media. Annual reviews of incidents are completed to identify trends.</p>
	<p>2.2.4 All stewards receive match day briefings on all forms of discrimination, harassment and abuse and are confident to manage EDI incidents.</p> <p>2.2.5 The process by which internal EDI concerns and incidents are raised, recorded and addressed is updated. Recorded incidents are reviewed annually to identify trends which require further action in the EDI Delivery Plan.</p>
	<p>2.2.6 All staff are confident to report EDI concerns and know how to report them.</p>
<p>Advanced level</p> <p>Practice from Intermediate level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>2.1.1 Season-long campaigns are revised annually to take account of emerging trends.</p>
	<p>2.1.2 The impact of the season-long campaigns can be demonstrated.</p>
	<p>2.2.1 Match day fans are confident to report incidents of discrimination, harassment and abuse and consider the Club manages these effectively.</p>
	<p>2.2.2 Stewards’ confidence levels in dealing with all forms of discrimination have increased. This insight informs the EDI Delivery Plan.</p>
	<p>2.2.3 Club has developed an education programme for fan rehabilitation or to mitigate away from a ban.</p>
	<p>2.2.4 Fans are confident to report EDI concerns to challenge peers’ inappropriate language and behaviour.</p>
<p>2.2.5 Internally recorded incidents are reviewed annually to identify trends which require further action in the EDI Delivery Plan.</p>	
<p>2.2.6 All staff are confident to raise EDI concerns and know how to report them.</p>	





Outcomes	3.1 EDI Delivery Plan, Strategy and actions are informed by data and insight.
	3.2 Clear progress is being made towards EDI targets.
Preliminary level The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:	3.1.1 An agreed approach to EDI data collection that includes data segmentation within audited groups has been developed.
	3.1.2 An EDI data audit of all people ⁸ against all relevant protected characteristics is undertaken every season.
	3.1.3 An EDI Monitoring Report is produced every season from the data. It includes analysis of audit findings ⁹ , segmented data ¹⁰ , conclusions and clear recommendations for change. Audit findings are discussed by the Board and used to inform the EDI Delivery Plan.
	3.1.4 A current access statement, stadium access audit and an inclusive communications review are in place.
	3.2.1 An EDI Delivery Plan based on audit data and insight, which is effectively resourced and covers three seasons, is created. It addresses under-representation for EDI priority groups, and actions on MH&W. The Plan is discussed and approved by the Board. The EDI Delivery Plan covers all areas of the Club, including the football workforce and players.
	3.2.2 An internal EDI Working Group, which includes senior leaders, supports the development and implementation of the EDI Delivery Plan.

Intermediate and Advanced levels are continued on the following pages.

⁸ Audit data to include: Board, permanent and casual staff, all players, academy staff, Foundation staff and Trustees, job applicants.

⁹ Including FLDC recruitment reporting requirements.

¹⁰ Segmented data for ethnicity and gender (women and men) for senior staff, team operations staff, and coaches in line with FLDC requirements.





<p>Intermediate level</p> <p>Practice from Preliminary level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>3.1.1 EDI data audits are undertaken every season. These demonstrate increased return rates, and decreased rates of non-disclosure.</p> <p>3.1.2 An EDI Monitoring Report is produced every season. It includes analysis of the audit findings, segmented data¹¹, comparisons against previous audits and relevant external benchmarking data, conclusions and clear recommendations for change. Audit findings are discussed by the Board and used to inform the EDI Delivery Plan and annual departmental plans.</p> <p>3.1.3 Progress against the stadium access audit actions.</p> <p>3.1.4 An Inclusive Communications Policy is developed and implemented.</p>
	<p>3.2.1 The EDI Delivery Plan has been reviewed. The revised Plan includes measurable actions and incremental long-term targets to address under-representation for EDI priority groups and actions on MH&W. The Plan is discussed and approved by the Board. The EDI Delivery Plan covers all areas of the Club including the football workforce and players.</p> <p>3.2.2 An external EDI Advisory Group is established to support implementation of the EDI Delivery Plan.</p>

Advanced level is continued on the next page.

¹¹ Segmented data for ethnicity and gender (women and men) for senior staff, team operations staff, and coaches in line with FLDC requirements. Segmented data for EDI priorities across the workforce.





<p>Advanced level</p> <p>Practice from Intermediate level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>3.1.1 EDI data audits are undertaken every season¹². These continue to demonstrate increased return rates and decreased rates of non-disclosure.</p> <p>3.1.2 An EDI Monitoring Report is produced every season. It includes analysis of the audit findings, segmented data¹³, comparisons against previous audits and relevant external benchmarking data, conclusions and clear recommendations for change. Audit findings are discussed by the Board and used to inform the EDI Strategy and/or Delivery Plan or annual departmental plans.</p> <p>3.1.3 Actions from the stadium access audit are completed and accessibility audits of the Club’s offices and other Club facilities have been undertaken.</p> <p>3.1.4 The Inclusive Communications Policy has been revised and is implemented effectively.</p>
	<p>3.2.1 A long-term EDI Strategy to address under-representation (with strategic objectives, key deliverables and incremental long-term targets covering all business areas) has been developed. This is based on segmented data, insight and progress made to date against the Club’s EDI targets and MH&W actions. The Strategy is discussed and approved by the Board.</p> <p>3.2.2 Consultation through the EDI Advisory Group and other stakeholders is used to shape the Strategy.</p> <p>3.2.3 External frameworks, benchmarks and/or standards are used to inform and enhance the Club’s EDI work.</p>

¹² Audit data is collected once every two seasons for match day fans, attending men’s or women’s first team games, against all relevant protected characteristics.

¹³ Segmented data for the ethnicity and gender (women and men) for senior staff, team operations staff and coaches in line with FLDC requirements. Segmented data for EDI priorities across the workforce and match day fans.





Outcomes	<p>4.1 Improved EDI knowledge and understanding and application of this in people's roles.</p>
<p>Preliminary level</p> <p>The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>4.1.1 EDI learning and development opportunities¹⁴ have been delivered to Board, senior staff, stewards and players. This includes general EDI and MH&W awareness and using social media responsibly.</p> <p>4.1.2 A Club-wide EDI Learning and Development (L&D) Plan covering all staff¹⁵ has been developed.</p>
<p>Intermediate level</p> <p>Practice from Preliminary level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>4.1.1 A rolling programme of EDI L&D is underway for Board, all staff, stewards and players.</p> <p>4.1.2 Relevant departmental-specific EDI L&D is delivered for staff to support them in their role and improve customer experience.</p> <p>4.1.3 The EDI L&D Plan is updated based on confidence and awareness levels of Board, staff, stewards and players.</p>
<p>Advanced level</p> <p>Practice from Intermediate level is embedded. The Club can demonstrate the following key indicators:</p>	<p>4.1.1 EDI L&D is embedded in corporate processes.</p> <p>4.1.2 The EDI L&D Plan continues to evolve to meet the needs of different groups of people within the Club.</p> <p>4.1.3 There are increased confidence levels amongst Board, staff, stewards and players to embed their EDI knowledge within their roles.</p>

¹⁴ EDI L&D opportunities are more than face-to-face training or online modules. It can be educational communications by email or at team meetings, guest speakers talking about their lived experiences, knowledge seminars etc. More details can be found in PLEDIS Guidance and Templates.

¹⁵ Board, permanent and casual staff, all players, academy staff, Foundation staff and Trustees.



Club Support

Assessor Consultants

Each Club will be supported by an Assessor Consultant who will work closely with them throughout their PLEDIS journey. They combine the previous Assessor and Support functions into one and will work in a 'guiding and assessing' capacity, ensuring consistency of advice and support. The Assessor Consultant team is appointed and led by Plan4Sport (P4S), an independent sports EDI Consultancy.

During a submission, the Assessor Consultant will:

- Conduct an induction session for senior Club staff and the designated EDI Lead, providing further briefings as required
- Review the evidence requirements against the Club's existing EDI work, discuss the relevant evidence base and agree a timeline with milestones through to submission
- Provide advice, guidance and signposting against the PLEDIS themes and outcomes as Clubs develop their EDI work
- Share good practice EDI examples from across football, sport and business more broadly
- Provide verbal feedback during 'check point' meetings and written feedback a maximum of seven working days thereafter. Written feedback will record progress, confirm where outcomes have been met and will also highlight evidence requiring further development in advance of the final submission
- Capture qualitative information by conducting interviews, discussions and focus groups, which will test, validate and support written evidence. This triangulation approach to assessment will be more in-depth at Advanced and Advanced Health Check submissions with the intention of limiting the volume of evidence submitted by Clubs



Further Support

The assessor team will also facilitate networking sessions for EDI Lead Officers and Club staff to share ideas, showcase good practice and build a community of confident EDI staff across Clubs. The team will also identify and develop, in consultation with EDI Leads, additional learning opportunities such as subject-specific training workshops and insight sessions from other sectors.

In addition, the PLEDIS offers Clubs access to a range of templates and guidance notes to support their EDI work. Clubs may wish to use these in full or adapt them to meet their needs.

The PLEDIS portal will be further developed to showcase Club work, provide regular updates on forthcoming League-wide EDI activity and collate resources and information.

Submission Evidence

In common with other standards and benchmarking mechanisms, the PLEDIS is an evidence-based process. The PLEDIS framework requires Clubs to develop and collate relevant, written information, such as an Equality Delivery Plan or EDI Strategy, EDI Monitoring Reports, examples of specific areas of policy and practice, as well as an annual achievements report, in a format that suits the Club's needs.

Following induction, the Assessor Consultant and Club will agree the evidence requirements for the level, ensuring that written submission information is not excessive and centres on limited, but highly relevant, documentation and qualitative discussion. One-to-one interviews and focus group discussions with Club staff and stakeholders will be undertaken by the Assessor Consultant and will add a valuable dimension to the submission process.



PLEDIS Assessment Cycle and Timelines

Level	Season 1	Season 2	Season 3
Preliminary	Induction		
	Meeting 1		
	Meeting 2		
	Meeting 3		
	Meeting 4		
	Panel meeting		
Intermediate	Induction	Meeting 4	
	Meeting 1	Meeting 5	
	Meeting 2	Meeting 6	
	Meeting 3	Panel meeting	
Advanced	Induction	Meeting 4	Meeting 7
	Meeting 1	Meeting 5	Meeting 8
	Meeting 2	Meeting 6	Panel meeting
	Meeting 3		
Advanced Health Check	Induction	Meeting 3	Meeting 5
	Meeting 1	Meeting 4	Meeting 6
	Meeting 2		Panel meeting



Clubs will be supported through assessment meetings and ongoing remote support from their Assessor Consultant. There will be flexibility within the number of meetings set out, as in practice these may vary depending on the level which the Club is working towards and the support needs identified. As a baseline, Clubs will have a minimum of one in-depth assessment meeting with a written feedback report per season.

Average length of submission timelines

Preliminary	Intermediate
One full season from induction to Panel meeting	Two full seasons from induction to Panel meeting
Advanced	Advanced Health Check (retaining the Advanced level)
Three full seasons from induction to Panel meeting	Three full seasons from induction to Panel meeting

Based on other industry standards, we believe the assessment cycle provides sufficient time to embed EDI and meet the Standard's criteria. It also provides Clubs with an opportunity to demonstrate outcomes and impact from their EDI work and to accommodate the shift in focus, at the higher levels, from compliance to impact.



The Verification Process

Submission

At the conclusion of a submission period, the Assessor Consultant will evaluate the Club's evidence base and compile an assessment report of their progress against the relevant PLEDIS level and criteria. The Assessor Consultant will draw on the written information submitted and their discussions with Club staff and stakeholders to compile the report. Reports will be RAG (Red-Amber-Green) rated and will indicate where Clubs have demonstrated that they fully meet the indicators for the level, or where additional time may be required to embed practice and develop further evidence.

Following submission, the Assessor Consultant will liaise with a Club to provide a short, time-bound window to clarify evidence against an area that is considered partly or not met, and to enable the Club to address this. If the Club is unable to provide the additional evidence prior to the Panel meeting, then the Panel will discuss the gaps and confirm the next steps. In all cases the Assessor Consultant will confirm their initial evaluation of the submission to the Club prior to attending the Panel meeting.

The PLEDIS Panel

The Panel's role is to verify that the requirements of the PLEDIS have been met and to provide advice and high-level recommendations to help Clubs further develop their EDI work. It is made up of independent experts from a range of disciplines and backgrounds, all of whom have significant experience at a senior, strategic level in progressing EDI within organisations.

Before the Panel meeting

The Panel will receive the following information before any session:

- The Assessor Consultant's Report
- The Club's EDI Monitoring Report
- The Club's most recent annual achievements report
- The Club's EDI Delivery Plan (Preliminary and Intermediate level) or EDI Strategy (Advanced level)



During the Panel meeting

The Panel meeting is made up of two key elements:

1. A 30-minute¹⁶ presentation, led by senior Club representatives
2. A 60-minute Q&A session between Panel Members and Club staff

The presentation enables Clubs to:

- Bring their work to life and provide further context on their submission
- Showcase their Club's EDI work, highlighting progress to date
- Identify and set out areas of challenge, EDI priorities and next steps

The Panel and Club representatives' Q&A:

- Panel Members will pose a series of relevant probing questions which align with the requirements of the PLEDIS level and explore the progress the Club is making

After the Panel meeting

Once Club representatives have left the meeting the Panel will:

- Consider the Club's progress
- Identify strengths in the Club's EDI work and areas to develop further
- Make an objective decision as to whether it can verify and recommend that the Club has met the requirements of a PLEDIS level, or whether they should retain the Advanced award for 'Advanced Health Check' submissions

¹⁶ If the meeting is held remotely the time will be extended to a maximum of 40 minutes.



Notification of an Award

Following their Panel meeting, a final Assessment Report will be produced and shared with the Club within ten working days. This will be sent to the Club with a confirmatory letter signed by the Panel Chair and the Premier League. The letter and final Assessment Report will reflect the recommendations of, and feedback from, the Panel, including:

- Strengths and areas for development for the Club within the evidence submitted
- A recommendation, along with a justification, as to whether the Club has successfully met the requirements of a level of the PLEDIS

Submission debrief and action planning

Following a Club's receipt of their report, the Assessor Consultant will arrange a debrief on the Panel's recommendations with the Club's EDI Lead Officer and/or EDI Working Group or senior management team/Board.

If the recommendation is that *the Club continues to work towards the level*, and the Panel has deferred its decision pending further information, the Assessor Consultant will facilitate an action planning session with the Club.

This will include:

- A de-brief on the report's findings (including strengths identified by the Panel)
- Close consideration of the action required to meet any outstanding area
- Agreement on what additional evidence is required
- Agreement on the timeframe for the evidence to be submitted





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Premier League

Brunel Building
57 North Wharf Road
London W2 1HQ
premierleague.com

T +44 (0) 20 7864 9000

E pledis@premierleague.com