

Queensland Rugby League

MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

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1 Purpose

The Queensland Rugby League (**QRL**) Member Protection Policy (**Policy**) outlines QRL's commitment to ensuring rugby league is a safe, fair, inclusive and respectful environment for everyone involved in the game. This Policy sets clear expectations for behaviour and conduct across all levels of rugby league in Queensland. It aims to prevent Harm, promote positive and respectful relationships and support a culture where people feel safe to participate, speak up and be treated with dignity.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- I. Protect the safety, wellbeing and rights of all Participants, with a strong focus on Children, Young People and others who may be vulnerable to Harm;
- II. Prevent Bullying, Discrimination, Vilification, Harassment, Abuse and other inappropriate or unlawful conduct;
- III. Promote proactive and responsible action to identify risks and prevent Harm before it occurs;
- IV. Support positive behaviour that reflects QRL's values: Positive, United, Inclusive and Discipline; and
- V. Provide a clear and fair framework for raising concerns, making Complaints and responding to breaches of this Policy.

The QRL is committed to Child safety and safeguarding. This Policy supports the Australian National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the Queensland Child Safe Standards and operates alongside the QRL Children and Youth Risk Management Strategy. The safety of Children is a shared responsibility, and all persons involved in rugby league are expected to prioritise Child safety at all times.

This Policy has been developed in line with relevant Queensland and Commonwealth Legislation, including Child protection, human rights and anti-discrimination laws and reflects contemporary best practice in sport integrity and safeguarding.

The Policy applies to behaviour both on and off the field, including during training, games, events and in online or digital environments. It applies to individuals and organisations involved in rugby league under the auspices of the QRL.

This Policy works together with the QRL Constitution, By-Laws and other relevant QRL and National Rugby League (**NRL**) policies and procedures. Where concerns arise, QRL will respond in a way that prioritises safety, fairness and legal obligations and will refer matters to external authorities where required.



2 Legislative Alignment and Guiding Frameworks

This Policy is informed by and operates in accordance with relevant Queensland and Commonwealth legislation, as well as recognised and international principles that support safe, fair and inclusive participation in sport.

The QRL is committed to meeting its legal and regulatory obligations and to applying contemporary best practice in safeguarding, integrity and member protection. This includes a strong focus on Child safety, human rights, and the prevention of Discrimination, Harassment and Abuse.

In particular, this Policy aligns with:

- I. Queensland Child Safeguarding legislation and standards, including the Queensland Child Safe Standards and the Australian National Principles for Child Safe Organisations;
- II. Child protection, screening and reporting obligations that apply to organisations working with Children and Young People;
- III. Human rights and anti-discrimination legislation that protects the dignity, equality and rights of all individuals; and
- IV. National and international sport integrity frameworks relevant to rugby league.

This Policy has been developed to support a Positive Duty approach, requiring proactive, reasonable and proportionate action to identify risks, prevent Harm and respond appropriately when concerns arise.

Detailed information about the legislation, conventions, standards and governing frameworks that inform this Policy is provided in Appendix A – Legislative and Guiding Frameworks. These instruments should be read alongside this Policy and are subject to change over time. Where legislative or regulatory requirements change, the QRL will apply this Policy in a manner that remains compliant with the law and consistent with its safeguarding and integrity obligations.



3 Scope

This Policy applies to all individuals and organisations involved in rugby league activities conducted under the auspices of the QRL.

This includes but is not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members and Participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referees, match officials and volunteers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players and athletes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical and Support Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, guardians and carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support squad members and Member Protection Information Officers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectators and supporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board, committee and sub-committee members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches, assistant coaches and managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affiliated clubs, leagues, associations, sponsors and partner organisations.

This Policy applies to conduct that occurs:

- During games, training, events, meetings and official activities;
- At QRL-sanctioned venues, events and competitions, and
- In online and digital environments, including social media, messaging platforms and other forms of electronic communication where there is a connection to rugby league activities or Participants.

3.1 Application to QRL Paid Staff

QRL paid staff are primarily governed by internal employment policies and procedures. However, where QRL staff interact with members, Participants, volunteers or Children and Young People in the course of their duties, they are also expected to comply with behavioural standards, safeguarding obligations and values outlined in this Policy.

Nothing in this Policy limits or replaces any statutory obligations of QRL staff, including Child protection reporting requirements or the application of internal disciplinary processes.

3.2 Ongoing Application

Individuals remain bound by this Policy where disciplinary action or an investigation has commenced, even if they cease to be affiliated with, employed by or involved in rugby league activities prior to the matter being finalised. Once all matters are concluded, the individual is released from obligations under this Policy.



4 Policy Interaction and Precedence

This Policy operates as part of the QRL's broader governance framework and should be read and applied in conjunction with the QRL Constitution, Rules, By-Laws, affiliation arrangements and other relevant QRL and NRL policies and frameworks.

Where matters engage multiple governance instruments, QRL will apply this Policy in a manner that is consistent with legislative obligations and prioritises safety, fairness and integrity.

4.1 Governance hierarchy

For the avoidance of doubt;

- The QRL Constitution and QRL Rules prevail over this Policy to the extent of any inconsistency.
- This Policy operates alongside, and does not replace the QRL Rules, including disciplinary processes under Part 5 of the Rules.
- Matters involving Child Safeguarding are to be managed in accordance with this Policy, the QRL Child Youth Risk Management Strategy and relevant Child protection legislation. Where inconsistencies arise, statutory Child protection obligations prevail.
- Integrity Matters may also engage NRL integrity frameworks, registration terms and conditions and external regulatory bodies. Where applicable, those instruments will be applied concurrently.
- Supporting procedures developed under this Policy provide operational guidance and must be applied consistently with this Policy and the QRL Rules.

Where there is any uncertainty regarding the interaction or application of governance documents, QRL will determine the appropriate framework to apply, having regard to risk, legislative obligations and the best interests of Participant safety and the game.



5 Positive Duty and Prevention of Harm

QRL recognises its obligation and the shared responsibility of clubs, leagues and individuals to take proactive and reasonable and proportionate measures to prevent Harm, Discrimination, Abuse and other inappropriate conduct in rugby league environments.

This Positive Duty requires action to be taken before Harm occurs, not only in response to Complaints or incidents.

In meeting this obligation, QRL, clubs and leagues will take reasonable and proportionate steps to:

- Identify foreseeable risks to the safety, dignity and wellbeing of Participants;
- Implement measures to reduce or eliminate those risks;
- Promote safe, respectful and inclusive behaviours across all levels of the game;
- Ensure appropriate education, training, screening and support mechanisms are in place;
- Regularly review environments, practices and controls to address emerging risks; and
- Respond promptly and appropriately when concerns are identified.

What is considered reasonable and proportionate will depend on factors such as the nature of the activity, the level of risk, the vulnerability of Participants and the resources and responsibilities of the relevant organisation or individual.

This obligation applies to conduct occurring both on and off the field, including online and digital environments, and operates alongside all Child Safeguarding, human rights and anti-discrimination obligations under relevant legislation.



6 Responsibilities

Creating a safe, fair and inclusive rugby league environment is a shared responsibility. Everyone involved in rugby league under the auspices of QRL has a role to play in upholding the standards set out in this Policy.

6.1 Responsibilities of all persons bound by this Policy

All individuals and organisations covered by this Policy must:

- I. Act in a manner that is safe, respectful and inclusive at all times;
- II. Comply with this Policy, the Code of Conduct and any other relevant QRL or NRL policies;
- III. Treat others with dignity and respect, free from Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment, Vilification or Abuse;
- IV. Take reasonable steps to prevent Harm and to promote positive behaviour;
- V. Report concerns, Complaints or suspected breaches of this Policy, particularly where Child safety is involved; and
- VI. Cooperate with any processes, investigations or actions undertaken under this Policy.

6.2 Child Safeguarding Responsibilities

All persons bound by this Policy share responsibility for safeguarding Children and Young People. This includes an obligation to:

- I. Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of Children above all other considerations;
- II. Comply with Child protection and reporting obligations under relevant legislation;
- III. Report any concerns suspicions or disclosures of Harm in line with legislated requirements and QRL policies;
- IV. Participate in required screening, training and risk management processes; and
- V. Support environments that reduce the risk of Harm to Children, including physical, online and digital settings.

6.3 Responsibilities of clubs, leagues and affiliated organisations

Clubs, leagues and affiliated organisations must:

- I. Provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all Participants;
- II. Promote and communicate this Policy so it is understood and accessible;
- III. Implement appropriate safeguarding, risk management and integrity measures;
- IV. Appoint and support suitably trained MPIOs or equivalent support roles;
- V. Ensure required screening, training and record keeping obligations are met;



- VI. Respond to concerns or breaches in a timely, fair and confidential manner; and
- VII. Cooperate with QRL in managing Complaints, investigations and outcomes.

6.4 Responsibilities of leaders and persons in positions of authority

Individuals in leadership or decision-making roles, including board members, committee members, coaches, officials and team managers have additional responsibilities to:

- I. Model behaviour consistent with this Policy and QRL values;
- II. Actively promote safe, respectful and inclusive environments;
- III. Identify and address risks within their area of responsibility;
- IV. Take appropriate action when concerns or breaches are identified; and
- V. Support a culture where people feel safe to raise concerns without fear of reprisal.

6.5 Responsibilities of the QRL

As the governing body, the QRL is responsible for:

- I. Providing leadership in safeguarding, integrity and member protection;
- II. Maintaining and reviewing this Policy and related frameworks;
- III. Supporting education, training and resources across the game;
- IV. Receiving, triaging and managing concerns and Complaints;
- V. Applying this Policy fairly and consistently; and
- VI. Referring matters to external authorities where required by law or where safety concerns arise.



7 Member Protection Support

QRL is committed to ensuring that people know where to go for help, feel safe to raise concerns and are supported appropriately when issues arise. Member protection support is a key part of QRL's approach to preventing Harm, promoting positive behaviour and responding early to concerns.

7.1 Accessing support

Support for member protection and safeguarding matters is available across the game through a combination of:

- local league representatives;
- QRL's Support Squad model;
- MPIOs; and
- QRL regional and state staff.

Individuals are encouraged to raise concerns with a trusted and appropriate person, depending on the nature of the issue. This may include:

- A Support Squad member or nominated club representative;
- A MPIO;
- A club or league official; and
- QRL staff at regional or state level.

Support may be sought for advice, information, guidance on options or assistance in making a report or Complaint.

7.2 Role of MPIOs and Support Personnel

MPIOs, Support Squad members and other nominated representatives are trained to:

- Provide information about this Policy and related safeguarding and integrity frameworks;
- Support individuals to understand their options and reporting pathways;
- Promote safe, respectful and inclusive environments; and
- Assist in directing concerns to the appropriate person or process.

These roles are support and information based. They do not investigate Complaints or make determinations.



7.3 Child Safeguarding and Mandatory Reporting

Where concerns relate to safety or wellbeing of a Child or Young Person, safeguarding obligations apply. All persons involved in providing member protection support must prioritise Child safety and ensure concerns are managed in line with legislative requirements and QRL Child Safeguarding policies.

This includes escalation to the QRL Integrity Officer or State Integrity Manager and referral to external authorities where required.

7.4 Confidentiality and wellbeing

QRL recognises the importance of privacy and confidentiality when concerns are raised. Information will be handled sensitively and shared only where necessary, including where disclosure is required by law or to protect the safety and wellbeing of individuals.

Support is provided in a manner that is respectful, trauma-informed and proportionate to the nature of the concern.

7.5 Training and Awareness

QRL provides training, resources and guidance to support those performing member protection and safeguarding roles across the game. Clubs and league are encouraged to ensure members are aware of:

- I. This Policy;
- II. Who they can speak to about member protection and safeguarding matters; and
- III. How to raise concerns safely and appropriately.



8 Integrity, Oversight and Organisational Responsibility

QRL is responsible for ensuring that concerns raised under this Policy are managed in a consistent, fair and lawful manner. To support this responsibility, QRL has established integrity and safeguarding oversight roles with clear authority at both regional and state levels.

These roles provide accountability, oversight and leadership in the management of member protection, safeguarding and Integrity Matters across the game.

8.1 Integrity Officers – Regional

QRL Integrity Officers operate at a regional level, including Central, Northern and South-East Queensland. Integrity Officers are responsible for managing member protection, safeguarding and Integrity Matters that arise within their region. This includes:

- I. Receiving and triaging concerns, reports and potential breaches of this Policy;
- II. Assessing matters based on risk, complexity and impact;
- III. Managing appropriate responses to lower-risk or localised matters;
- IV. Ensuring Child Safeguarding concerns are identified early and escalated where required;
- V. Supporting clubs and league to respond appropriately and consistently; and
- VI. Referring matters to the State Integrity Manager where escalation is required.

Integrity Officers play a key role in supporting early intervention, consistency and community-based responses, while ensuring matters are managed in line with QRL policies and legal obligations.

8.2 State Integrity Manager – Statewide oversight

The State Integrity Manager has statewide responsibility for oversight of member protection, safeguarding and Integrity Matters.

The State Integrity Manager is responsible for managing matters that are:

- I. Complex in nature;
- II. Of higher risk to individuals, Children or the broader community;
- III. Likely to have significant reputational impact for QRL or the game; or
- IV. Otherwise assessed as requiring state-level oversight or coordination.

In fulfilling this role, the State Integrity Manager is responsible for:

- I. Determining appropriate response pathways for escalated matters;
- II. Implementing and overseeing risk controls and interim safeguards;



- III. Coordinating referrals to external authorities where required by law;
- IV. Ensuring consistency and proportionality in decision making across regions; and
- V. Maintaining appropriate records and oversight of integrity outcomes.

8.3 Safeguarding and external reporting

Where concerns relate to the safety or wellbeing of a Child or Young Person, QRL prioritise Child safety above all other considerations.

Integrity Officers and the State Integrity Manager will ensure that Child Safeguarding Concerns are managed in line with legislative requirements and QRL Child Safeguarding policies, including escalation and referral to external authorities such as the Queensland Police Service or Child protection agencies where required.

QRL will cooperate fully with external authorities and regulatory bodies.

8.4 Procedural fairness and accountability

In managing concerns and potential breaches of this Policy, QRL is committed to principles of natural justice and Procedural Fairness. Matters will be handled respectfully, confidentially and without bias and decisions will be informed by assessed risk and available information.

This section outlines QRL's organisational responsibility, authority and oversight. Detailed processes for reporting, investigation, resolution and outcomes are address in supporting procedures and frameworks.



9 Reporting, Complaints and Response

QRL encourages anyone involved in rugby league to raise concerns early where behaviour, decisions or practices do not align with this Policy, the QRL values or expected standards of governance and integrity.

Concerns will be managed in a way that prioritises safety, supports fairness and applies appropriate oversight based on the nature, seriousness and risk of the matter raised.

9.1 Types of concerns covered by this Policy

Concerns raised under this Policy may include but are not limited to:

1. Behavioural and conduct concerns – including conduct that is:
 - i. Bullying, harassing, abusive or discriminatory;
 - ii. Unsafe or inappropriate;
 - iii. Inconsistent with this Policy or the Code of Conduct; or
 - iv. Occurring in person, online or in digital environments.
2. Child Safeguarding Concerns – including:
 - i. Concerns, suspicions or disclosures of Harm to a Child or Young Person;
 - ii. Grooming or boundary-crossing behaviour; or
 - iii. Failures to meet Child Safeguarding obligations.

Child Safeguarding Concerns are prioritised and managed in accordance with legislative requirements and QRL Child Safeguarding Frameworks.

Administrative and governance concerns (e.g. financial, team selection, governance issues) are managed under the QRL Complaints, Reporting and Response Procedure and relevant Rules.

9.2 Tiered approach to raising concerns

QRL supports a tiered approach to raising and resolving concerns, recognising the important role of clubs and leagues in managing local matters while ensuring appropriate oversight and escalation where required.

9.3 Club-level resolution (where appropriate)

Where a matter relates primarily to an Administrative or Governance Concern, and does not involve safeguarding, serious misconduct or integrity risk, individuals are encouraged to consider raising the matter through relevant club's grievance or dispute resolution process in the first instance.

This may include matters such as:



- Coach or team selection decisions;
- Internal governance or committee issues;
- Disputes between members or volunteers; or
- Local administrative decision-making concerns.

Clubs are expected to manage such matters in accordance with their constitutions, governance obligations and principles of Procedural Fairness.

9.4 Regional Integrity Oversight

QRL Integrity Officers operate at a regional level (Central, Northern and South-East Queensland) and provide oversight for concerns arising within their respective regions.

Concerns may be raised directly with a regional Integrity Officer where:

- I. A matter cannot be resolved at a club level;
- II. A club lacks capacity, independence or appropriate processes;
- III. There is a perceived conflict of interest at club level; or
- IV. The nature of the concern requires independent oversight.

Regional Integrity Officers are responsible for assessing concerns, providing guidance, managing appropriate responses to lower-risk or localised matters and determining whether escalation is required.

9.5 State-level Integrity Oversight

The State Integrity Manager has state-wide responsibility for oversight of member protection, safeguarding and Integrity Matters.

Concerns will be managed by or escalated to the State Integrity Manager where matters are:

- I. Complex or systemic;
- II. Of higher risk to individuals, Children or the broader community;
- III. Related to serious governance or financial integrity issues;
- IV. Likely to have significant reputational impact for QRL or the game; or
- V. Otherwise assessed as requiring state-level coordination or oversight.

9.6 Immediate escalation to QRL

Concerns do not need to be raised through club grievance processes and may be reported directly to QRL where:

- I. The concern involves the safety or wellbeing of a Child or Young Person;
- II. There is an allegation of serious misconduct, Abuse or Discrimination;



- III. There are concerns about financial misappropriation, fraud or significant governance failure;
- IV. The matter presents a reputational or community risk;
- V. There is a real or perceived conflict of interest at club or league level; or
- VI. A person does not feel safe or comfortable raising the concern locally.

9.7 How to raise a concern

Concerns may be raised through:

- Member protection support pathways for information and guidance;
- Electronic reporting forms;
- A QRL Integrity Officer (regional); or
- The State Integrity Manager.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Where required, QRL may request concerns to be confirmed in writing to support accurate assessment, record-keeping and response. Detailed reporting requirements are set out in the QRL Complaints, Reporting and Response Procedure.

9.8 How QRL responds to concerns

All concerns received by QRL are assessed and triaged to determine the most appropriate response pathway. Depending on the nature of the matter, this may include:

- I. Support, guidance or early intervention;
- II. Referral to appropriate club, league or governance processes;
- III. Regional or state-level integrity management;
- IV. Implementation of interim safeguards or risk controls;
- V. Referral to external authorities where required by law; or
- VI. Referral to disciplinary processes under the QRL Rules where applicable.

Responses are proportionate to the nature of the concern and the risks identified.

9.9 Relationship to QRL Rules

This Policy explains expectations, reporting options and organisational responsibilities for member protection, safeguarding and Integrity Matters.

Where a concern is assessed as a disciplinary matter that falls within the scope of the QRL Rules, including Part 5, the matter will be managed in accordance with those Rules and associated procedures.



This Policy does not replace, duplicate or override the QRL Rules. It supports appropriate identification, triage and referral of matters to the correct governance framework.

9.10 Confidentiality, fairness and protection from Victimisation

QRL recognises the importance of confidentiality and privacy when concerns are raised. Information will be handled sensitively and shared only where necessary, including where disclosure is required by law or to protect safety and wellbeing.

QRL is committed to principles of natural justice and Procedural Fairness. Individuals are encouraged to raise concerns in good faith and will not be discouraged or retaliated against for doing so.

9.11 Supporting Procedures

Detailed steps for reporting, assessment, triage, response, escalation and communication are set out in the QRL Reporting, Complaints and Response Procedure, which operates alongside this Policy and the QRL Rules.



10 Policy Review, Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

QRL is committed to ensuring this Policy remains effective, relevant and responsive to the needs of the rugby league community.

This Policy is supported by ongoing monitoring, review and continuous improvement to promote safe, fair and inclusive environments and to meet legislative, regulatory and governance obligations.

10.1 Monitoring and oversight

QRL will monitor the application of this Policy across the game, including through:

- I. Oversight of concerns, Complaints and trends identified through integrity and safeguarding pathways;
- II. Engagement with clubs, leagues and regions on governance, member protection and safeguarding matters;
- III. Review of incidents, near-misses and emerging risks; and
- IV. Consideration of feedback from members, Participants, parents, volunteers and stakeholders.

Monitoring activities are intended to support learning, consistency and early identification of risks, rather than to assign fault.

10.2 Review of the Policy

This Policy, and any associated procedures and supporting documents will be reviewed:

- I. At least annually; and
- II. Earlier where required due to:
 - a. Changes in legislation or regulatory requirements;
 - b. Significant incidents or emerging risks;
 - c. Organisational or governance changes; or
 - d. Recommendations arising from reviews, audits or external advice.

Reviews will consider whether the Policy continues to reflect contemporary best practice in safeguarding, integrity and member protection.

10.3 Continuous Improvement

QRL is committed to continuous improvement in the way member protection, safeguarding and Integrity Matters are managed. This may include:



- I. Updating policies, procedures and guidance materials;
- II. Strengthening education, training and communication across the game;
- III. Improving reporting pathways and support mechanisms; and
- IV. Implementing learning from incidents, reviews and stakeholder feedback.

Where improvements are identified, QRL will take reasonable and proportionate steps to implement changes and communicate updates to relevant stakeholders.

10.4 Governance alignment

This Policy operates alongside the QRL Constitution, Rules, By-Laws and other governance documents. Any review or amendment to this Policy will be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with those instruments and with QRL's governance framework.



11 Member Protection Standards

This section sets out the behavioural and safeguarding standards that apply to all persons by this Policy. These standards reflect QRL's commitment to safety, fairness, integrity and respect across all levels of rugby league. A person bound by this Policy commits a breach of this Policy when they (either alone or in conjunction with another or others) engage in Prohibited Conduct or fail to meet Expected Standards, that are listed below.

11.1 Child Safeguarding

Policy Position
QRL has ZERO tolerance for any form of Harm, Abuse, neglect or exploitation of Children and Young People. The safety and wellbeing of Children is prioritised above all other considerations.
Expected Standards
All persons bound by this Policy must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act in the best interests of Children and Young People at all times; • Comply with Child protection and mandatory reporting obligations; • Maintain appropriate professional boundaries; • Participate in required screening, training and safeguarding processes.
Prohibited Conduct
Any behaviour that places a Child or Young Person at risk of Harm, including Abuse, Grooming, neglect or exploitation is strictly prohibited.
Related Frameworks
This standard operates alongside: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The QRL Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy; • Relevant Child protection legislation; and • Applicable NRL Safeguarding Frameworks.
Raising Concerns
All Child Safeguarding Concerns must be reported and will be managed in accordance with the Children and Youth Risk Management Strategy and the Reporting, Complaints and Response section of this Policy.

11.2 Conduct, Behaviour and Respect

Policy Position
QRL is committed to promoting respectful, safe and positive behaviour across all rugby league environments.
Expected Standards
All persons bound by this Policy must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behave in a manner that is respectful, responsible and appropriate; • Treat others with dignity and fairness; • Comply with the QRL and NRL Codes of Conduct; and • Avoid conduct that may cause Harm or bring the game into disrepute.
Related Frameworks



This standard operates alongside:

- The QRL and NRL Codes of Conduct;
- QRL Rules, including Part 5 disciplinary processes.

Raising Concerns

Concerns relating to conduct, behaviour and respect are managed in accordance with the Reporting, Complaints and Response section of this Policy.

11.3 Culture, Inclusion and Diversity

Policy Position

QRL is committed to fostering a culture that is inclusive, respectful and welcoming to all people, regardless of background or personal characteristics.

Expected Standards

All persons bound by this Policy must:

- Promote inclusion, equity and respect;
- Recognise and value diversity;
- Ensure participation is free from Discrimination; and
- Support environments where people feel safe to be themselves.

Prohibited Conduct

Discrimination, Vilification or exclusion on the basis of protected attributes, including sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, race, age or cultural background is not acceptable.

Related Frameworks

This standard operates alongside:

- Human rights and anti-discrimination legislation;
- QRL inclusion and diversity initiatives; and
- Applicable NRL policies.

Raising Concerns

Concerns relating to culture, inclusion or Discrimination are managed in accordance with the Reporting, Complaints and Response section of this Policy.

11.4 Integrity, Fair Play and Ethics

Policy Position

QRL is committed to protecting the integrity of the game and ensuring rugby league is conducted honestly, fairly and ethically.

Expected Standards

All persons bound by this Policy must:

- Act with honesty and integrity;
- Comply with anti-doping, match integrity and competition rules;
- Avoid conflicts of interest; and
- Uphold the reputation of the game.

Prohibited Conduct

Unacceptable conduct includes:

- Match fixing or manipulation;



- Use of prohibited substances or methods;
- Bribery, inducements or corruption; and
- Serious breaches of integrity frameworks.

Related Frameworks

This standard operates alongside:

- QRL Rules and integrity frameworks;
- NRL integrity, anti-doping and registration requirements; and
- Sport Integrity Australia requirements where applicable.

Raising Concerns

Integrity concerns must be reported and will be managed in accordance with the Reporting, Complaints and Response section of this Policy.

11.5 Safe Environments (Including Online and Digital Environments)

Policy Position

QRL is committed to providing rugby league environments that are physically, emotionally and digitally safe.

Expected Standards

All persons bound by this Policy must:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure environments are safe and appropriate;
- Use alcohol responsibly where permitted;
- Refrain from illegal drug use; and
- Engage responsibly online and digital environments connected to rugby league.

Prohibited Conduct

Unacceptable conduct includes:

- Unsafe or reckless behaviour;
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs in rugby league contexts;
- Online Harassment, Abuse or intimidation; and
- Inappropriate digital communication.

Related Frameworks

This standard operates alongside:

- QRL safety and risk management frameworks;
- Codes of Conduct; and
- Applicable laws and digital safety obligations.

Raising Concerns

Concerns relating to safety or online conduct are managed in accordance with the Reporting, Complaints and Response section of this Policy.



12 Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply.

Where a term is defined in applicable legislation, the QRL Constitution, the QRL Rules or a referenced external framework that definition applies unless stated otherwise.

Abuse	Has the meaning given in relevant Child protection legislation and includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, exposure to family violence and other forms of Harm.
Administrative or Governance Concern	A concern relating to club, league or organisational governance or administration, including (but not limited to) financial management, conflicts of interest, failure to follow constitutions or affiliation requirements, or selection and decision-making processes, where the matter does not primarily involve safeguarding or disciplinary issues.
Bullying	Means a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or action, or the inappropriate use of power, against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing.
Child or Children or Young Person or Young People	A person under the age of 18 years.
Child Safeguarding	The measures taken to protect Children and Young People from Harm, Abuse, neglect and exploitation, and to promote their safety, wellbeing and participation.
Child Safeguarding Concern	Any concern, suspicion, allegation or disclosure of actual or potential Harm to a Child or Young Person, including Grooming or boundary-crossing behaviour, whether the Harm is alleged to have occurred within or outside of rugby league activities.
Code of Conduct	The QRL Code of Conduct and/or the relevant NRL Code of Conduct, as applicable.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction or concern made under this Policy regarding conduct, safeguarding, integrity or administrative matters that require assessment or response.
Discrimination	Has the meaning given in applicable anti-discrimination and human rights legislation and includes unfavourable treatment or behaviour based on protected attributes such as sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, race, religion, cultural background or other protected characteristics.
Grooming	Behaviour by a person that seeks to establish trust, emotional connection or influence over a Child or Young Person for the purpose of sexual abuse, exploitation or Harm, whether occurring in person, online or through digital communication.
Harassment	Means any type of behaviour towards a person that they do not that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening and



	is reasonably likely to cause Harm to the person who is the subject of the harassment.
Harm	Any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing, whether caused intentionally or unintentionally.
Integrity Matter	A concern relating to conduct that may impact the honesty, fairness or reputation of the game, including match fixing, anti-doping violations, serious misconduct, corruption or breaches of integrity frameworks.
Member Protection Information Officer or MPIO	A person appointed by a club, league or the QRL to provide information, guidance and support in relation to member protection and safeguarding matters. An MPIO does not investigate Complaints or make determinations.
Member Protection Standards	The behavioural, safeguarding and integrity expectations set out in the <i>Member Protection Standards</i> section of this Policy.
Online and Digital Environments	Online platforms, digital services and communication technologies, including social media, messaging applications, online forums, email and other electronic communication channels.
Participant	Any person involved in rugby league activities, including players, coaches, officials, referees, volunteers, Support Personnel, parents, carers, spectators and administrators.
Policy	The Queensland Rugby League Member Protection Policy.
Positive Duty	The obligation to take proactive, reasonable and proportionate measures to prevent Harm, Discrimination, Abuse and other inappropriate conduct before it occurs, as described in this Policy.
Procedural Fairness	The obligation to act fairly and without bias in decision-making, including providing reasonable opportunity for affected persons to be heard and ensuring decisions are informed by relevant information.
QRL	Queensland Rugby League Ltd.
QRL Rules	The Rules of the Queensland Rugby League, as amended from time to time, including disciplinary processes under Part 5.
Safeguarding Frameworks	Policies, procedures and documents that support Child Safeguarding and integrity obligations, including the QRL Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy and relevant NRL safeguarding materials.
State Integrity Manager	The QRL officer responsible for statewide oversight of member protection, safeguarding and Integrity Matters.
Support Personnel	Individuals who provide welfare, support or information roles, including Support Squad members, MPIOs and other nominated representatives.
Victimisation	Means subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, to any unfair treatment because the person has made, or intends to pursue their right to make, a Complaint or lawful disclosure, including under applicable legislation or this Policy, or for supporting another person to take such action.



Vilification

Means a public act, conduct or behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, a person or group of people because of a particular characteristic they hold, as covered by applicable legislation, including their race or religion, or homosexuality, transgender, or HIV/AIDS status.



13 Appendix A – Legislative and Guiding Frameworks

This Policy operates within and is informed by the following legislative, regulatory and governance frameworks. These instruments apply as amended from time to time.

13.1 Queensland Legislation

- [Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 \(Old\)](#)
- [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Old\)](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000 \(Old\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Old\)](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Old\)](#)
- [Criminal Code \(Old\)](#) – including offences and duties relating to child protection and failure to report child sexual offences

13.2 National Principles and Frameworks

- Australian National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- National sport integrity principles and frameworks relevant to rugby league.

13.3 Queensland Rugby League Governance Instruments

- QRL Constitution
- QRL Rules (including Part 5 – Disciplinary Processes)
- QRL Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy
- QRL policies and procedures made under this Policy, including the Complaints, Reporting and Response Procedure

13.4 National Rugby League Frameworks

- NRL Code of Conduct (Community Rugby League and Employees, as applicable)
- NRL safeguarding and integrity frameworks adopted or applied by QRL.