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EQUALITY POLICY

Introduction

Scottish Swimming is the governing body for Swimming, Diving, Water Polo, Synchronised Swimming, Masters and Open Water activity in Scotland. It has been selected by **sportscotland**, along with 12 other governing bodies, to pilot the UK Sport's 'Equality Standard – a Framework for Sport.'

The Equality Standard is a framework that organisations can use to help take steps towards achieving Equality, making sure all policies, procedures and decisions are fair. It is also a process that encourages sports organisations to identify under-privileged or under-represented groups within the community and to attempt to eliminate the barriers that may be affecting their ability to take part in sport. Based on a four tier system, Scottish Swimming has recently been awarded the intermediate standard.

Scottish Swimming, through achieving the Equality standard, is hoping to help its membership, be that coaches, swimmers, officials, volunteers or staff.

The purpose of this document is to outline the proposed Scottish Swimming Equality policy.

Key Definitions

Protected Characteristics are outlined in the Equality Act 2010 of which there are nine in total, sex, race, disability, age, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief.

Equality is fairness. All people are respected and treated without discrimination and there is access for all. *Equality* is treating people equally or making sure equal numbers (members) from all community groups are offered and participate in the same opportunities.

Equal Opportunity is the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people because of their protected characteristic.

Direct Discrimination. This means treating someone less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances because of a Protected Characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination. Where a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging people with a protected attribute, and that is not reasonable.

Harassment is described as inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that is objectionable or causes offence to the recipient. It may be directed towards people because of their gender, appearance, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, age, sexual preference, a disability or some other characteristic.

Victimisation is defined as when someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action against Scottish Swimming under one of the relevant Acts/regulations or the governing body.

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Disability Discrimination includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Purpose of the Policy

Scottish Swimming recognises that certain sections of the community have been affected by past discrimination and may have been, or may still be denied the opportunity to participate equally and fully in sport at all levels.

Scottish Swimming has adopted this policy to prevent/tackle any potential/current discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against employees and members in aquatic disciplines under its jurisdiction.

Other Scottish Swimming policies, such as employment and recruitment, complaints and disciplinary, will address Equality and this policy will provide the overall framework for this to happen.

Statement of Commitment

Scottish Swimming is fully committed to the principles of Equality and equal opportunities and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee or member receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

Scottish Swimming's vision is "to ensure that every single person in Scotland has access to quality swimming programmes, regardless of age or ability".¹ To this end Scottish Swimming will endeavour to provide open access to all those who wish to participate in swimming within the competitive environment through its organisation of affiliated clubs and it will work closely with key partners and local authorities to help influence other organisations do the same within different aspects of the sport.

All staff, Board, Council and Committee members are required to sign an Equality code of conduct, committing them to act equitably.

Scottish Swimming will work towards the various levels of the Equality Standard for Sport in a manner, and at a pace, that will ensure Equality is embedded within the organisation itself and all services it provides.

Actions

Scottish Swimming will produce and maintain an action plan to ensure the commitments made within this policy are delivered.

All areas of the organisation will be affected by this action plan, which will be incorporated into the overall corporate plan and annual business delivery plans, reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Scottish Swimming recognises that, in some cases, to achieve the principles of equality, unequal effort is required and, if appropriate, will consider positive action to tackle underrepresentation.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person where possible.

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- In line with the policy, the following statements will be adhered to in practice:
- We adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies
- All applicants who apply for jobs with us receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
- They will not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.
- Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature
- Selection decisions for employment or promotion are not influenced by any perceived prejudices of other employees
- As required by law, we will ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality.

Disabilities

A person is defined for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 as being disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This would be, if the physical impairment affects one or more of the following: mobility, manual dexterity, co-ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects, speech, hearing, eyesight (not corrected by glasses), memory, ability to concentrate, learn or understand or perception of risk or physical danger.

A disability will be deemed to have a long-term effect if it has or is likely to have a substantial effect for a period of at least 12 months or the rest of the affected person's life. This would include someone suffering from a severe disfigurement.

Discrimination arising from a disability

If an employee is disabled or becomes disabled, they are encouraged to tell us about their condition so that we can support them as appropriate.

The Equality Act 2010 allows for employees to be protected where an individual is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability. When dealing with recruitment, promotion, transfer requests, training requests, redundancy situations, re-deployment and access to benefits or services, Scottish Swimming will always have regard to the particular requirements that those suffering from disability may have and in particular to the need on occasion to make appropriate adjustments to eradicate any discriminatory effect, where reasonable managers are required to:

- Make reasonable adjustments to place of work, training, provision of special equipment or flexible/reduced working hours
- Allocate some of the disabled person's duties to another person
- Transfer the disabled person, if appropriate, to fill an existing vacancy
- Allow absences for treatment or rehabilitation
- Modify instruction or reference manuals
- Modify procedures for testing or assessment
- Provide a reader or interpreter
- Provide supervision

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Responsibility, Implementation and Communication

The following responsibilities will apply:

The Board and CEO are publicly accountable for Equality and will receive regular updates on the Equality Standard and the implementation of the Equality Policy from a member of staff. It is their role to deal with any actual or potential breaches of the policy.

Scottish Swimming will ensure that it has a staff member responsible for Equality within the organisation. The staff member will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Equality Policy. They will have overall responsibility for overseeing the delivery of an Equality action plan and the overall progress and status of Equality within Scottish Swimming reporting regularly to the CEO, Board and Council.

All employees and members have responsibilities to respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of the policy and, where appropriate, individual work programmes will be amended to include Equality related tasks.

Scottish Swimming will take measures to ensure that its employment practices continue to be non-discriminatory.

A planned approach will be adopted to eliminate existing barriers which prevent anyone accessing Scottish Swimming information, services, and professional or voluntary positions.

Consultants and advisers used by Scottish Swimming will need to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of Equality and that they abide by this policy.

The policy will be communicated in the following ways:

It will be part of the staff handbook and reference will be made to it in all Codes of Conduct.

It will be covered in all staff and volunteer induction training.

All clubs will be made aware of the policy's existence and will be required to adopt and implement an Equality Policy of their own under the direction of Scottish Swimming.

It will be available as a download on the Scottish Swimming Web site.

Scottish Swimming will make sure all partners understand the commitment to Equality, via this policy, and the commitment to working toward the Equality Standard.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy will be updated continually in line with any changes to legislation rather than restrict yourself to this period of time?

The implementation of the Equality Policy will be monitored by a member of staff.

An annual monitoring report will be produced by a staff member for the CEO, Board and Council. This will be published internally and, where appropriate, externally, to show the impact of this policy.

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

To safeguard individual rights under the policy a member who believes that he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy, may raise the matter through the Scottish Swimming Complaints and Grievances Procedure. An employee,

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who believes that he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy, may raise the matter through their line manager. If they feel the matter has not been resolved to their satisfaction, they should raise a formal complaint in line with Scottish Swimming's Grievance procedure.

Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee or member who ***is deemed to have violated*** Scottish Swimming's Equality Policy.

Further Information

For further information on the Scottish Swimming Equality Policy please contact Scottish Swimming.

This policy/function will have no impact on people from any of the equality groups and an Equality Impact Assessment is not required