



What is Sports Equality?

Sports Equality is about fairness in sport; equality of access; recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It involves changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to all members of society and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to realise their talent and full potential.

Equality Policy Statement

The British Canoe Union (BCU), in this context, includes the divisions of GB Canoeing and Canoe England. The BCU is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that everyone has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in Paddlesport at all levels and in all roles of the sport, irrespective of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. In addition, the BCU will endeavour to ensure that all are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic background. This includes members, volunteers, participants, supporters, coaches, officials, job applicants and employees (together known as Stakeholders).

The BCU recognises that unlawful discrimination is unacceptable and will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination.

The BCU will take, or support, positive action to eliminate individual and institutional discrimination:

- ✓ The BCU will display its commitment to Sports Equality through the implementation of its Equality Action plan;
- ✓ The Equality Action Plan will be reviewed annually and is open to consultation from all members and employees of the BCU;
- ✓ The BCU are committed to the Equality Standard having achieved the Preliminary level in 2008 and are now working towards the Intermediate level;
- ✓ The BCU will provide appropriate training to all of its employees and key volunteers to raise awareness of individual responsibilities;
- ✓ The BCU will work towards the equitable provision of its services to all sections of the community and avoid disadvantaging any person by conditions or requirements that cannot be reasonably justified;
- ✓ The BCU will embed Equal Opportunities into all policies, plans and strategies.
- ✓ The BCU will publicise this policy and equality action plan to all employees, members, and volunteers through its website, magazine and club mailings. The policy is also publicised to employees through the staff handbook and to all new members of staff through an induction.

Legal Responsibilities

The BCU is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its Stakeholders and recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of, the Equality Act 2010, and any equivalent legislation (as amended) in any UK jurisdiction, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to the BCU. The BCU will seek advice each time this Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

The BCU considers that canoeing is a gender affected sport under the Equality Act 2010. No policy in relation to participation by transgender athletes is currently in place however any queries should be directed to the Lead Officer for Equality in the first instance.

Reasonable Adjustments

The BCU recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. The BCU will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled Stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully in all BCU activity.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The BCU will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and Equality Action Plan regularly and will review the policy annually. All staff, members, and volunteers will have an opportunity to contribute to the review process.

Implementation

A copy of the policy is available to all employees and volunteers working for the BCU and subsequently distributed to all staff, BCU Board, English Council and key volunteers. The policy will be integrated into the induction of staff and key volunteers. The policy will also be made available on the BCU website. Consultants and advisors (and where appropriate suppliers) to the BCU will be required to abide by this Policy and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by the BCU.

All persons shall respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy. Amendments to the policy will be implemented immediately after approval has been received from the relevant Board.

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

The BCU regards any form of unlawful discrimination as serious misconduct and any employee, volunteer or member who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action. Unlawful discrimination can take the following forms:

Direct Discrimination

- treating a person less favourably than others would be treated in the same circumstances on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

Indirect Discrimination

- occurs when a job requirement or condition is applied equally to all, which has a disproportionate and detrimental effect on one sector of society, because fewer from that sector can comply with it and the requirement cannot be justified in relation to the job.

Harassment

- described as inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that are objectionable or cause offence to the recipient or any other individual affected by such conduct.

Bullying

- described as the misuse of power, the act of criticising persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.

Victimisation

- described as when one person is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action under one of the relevant Acts / Regulations or provided information about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.

Complaints and Disciplinary

To safeguard an individual's rights under the policy, an employee, member, volunteer or official who believes that he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member, volunteer, affiliate club or official who violates the association's equality policy. Where the violation of the equality policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amounts to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.

Responsibility

The Board of Directors of the BCU will endorse and be responsible for ensuring this Equality Policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches. The Chief Executive of the British Canoe Union has overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy while the Lead Equality Officer has responsibility for managing the implementation of the Equality Action Plan.

All employees, volunteers and members of BCU have responsibilities to respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of the policy.