

GreaterSport Equal Opportunities Policy

Date of last review	2011
Date of this review	January 2013
Approval required by board?	Yes
Reviewed by	Alex Bielecki
Date of next review	January 2014

Equal Opportunities Policy

GreaterSport is fully committed to a policy of treating all its employees, job applicants and volunteers equally. No employee or potential employee shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration nor be unlawfully treated on the ground of race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, sex, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnerships (together known as the Protected Characteristics) or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment that cannot be justified as necessary on legal grounds.

GreaterSport recognises that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.

GreaterSport will encourage the board, partner organisations (including sponsors and suppliers) and the network of clubs and organisations that we work with, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this Equality Policy.

GreaterSport will ensure that, where externally funded programmes are being delivered by partner organisations they meet the minimum standards of deployment (sports coach UK) and/or the GreaterSport Equality Policy.

1. Principles

- 1.1 There should be no discrimination on the account of race, religion or belief, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, gender (sex), pregnancy and maternity, age, disability, nationality or marriage and civil partnerships. (Protected Characteristics)
- 1.2 All employees have the right to work in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- 1.3 GreaterSport will appoint, train, develop, reward and promote on the basis of merit and ability.
- 1.4 All employees have personal responsibility for the practical application of GreaterSport's equal opportunities policy which extends to the treatment of job applicants, employees, volunteers, service users and visitors.
- 1.5 Special responsibility for the practical application of GreaterSport's equal opportunities policy falls upon the designated Equality Officer, managers and officers involved in the recruitment selection, promotion and training of employees.
- 1.6 It is GreaterSport's policy that the discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation of any of its employees is unacceptable behaviour and is regarded as serious

misconduct. Anyone found to be in breach of this policy will be liable to disciplinary action which could result in their dismissal.

- 1.7 All allegations will be dealt with seriously, promptly and in confidence. Employees who feel that they have been subject to harassment must not hesitate in using the grievance procedure, nor fear victimisation. Employees will not be victimised in any way from making such a complaint in good faith. Complaints of this nature will be dealt with seriously, in confidence and as soon as possible. Retaliation against an employee who brings the complaint of harassment is a serious disciplinary offence which may constitute gross misconduct.
- 1.8 Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination. Serious breaches of this policy and serious incidents of harassment will be treated as gross misconduct. Allegations of discrimination which are not made in good faith will also be considered as a disciplinary matter. Confidential records of ongoing matters dealt with in accordance with this policy will be kept.
- 1.9 In the case of any doubt or concern about the application of this policy in any particular instance, please consult the lead Equality Officer in the first instance.
- 1.10 GreaterSport will keep under regular review its policy procedures and practices on equal opportunities in line with legislation and recognised good practice.

2. Legal Requirements

- 2.1 GreaterSport 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 and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to GreaterSport.
- 2.2 GreaterSport will seek advice each time this Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

3. Equal Opportunities Code

3.1 Objective

- 3.1.1 GreaterSport regards this policy as a commitment to make use of the talents and resource of all its employees and to provide a healthy environment which will encourage good and productive working operations within the organisations. This code of practice describes how the policy is to be applied throughout the Company.

- 3.1.2 GreaterSport recognises that individuals (and/or certain groups in our society who share one or more Protected Characteristics) may not have been able to participate equally and fully in sport and physical activity related activities in the past. In some instances this may have been as a result of unlawful discrimination.
- 3.1.3 This policy has been produced to try and prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against Stakeholders that may preclude them from participating fully in sport and physical activity related activity.

3.2 Code of Practice

- 3.2.1 A copy of this policy is available on GreaterSport's Shared Documents folder or from the Compliance & Governance Manager/Equality Officer.
- 3.2.2 GreaterSport will ensure that all managers with the responsibility for any of the areas within this policy (i.e. the Protected Characteristics) are provided with the appropriate equal opportunities training when necessary. Up to date literature on equal opportunities is always available from the Compliance & Governance Manager/Equality Officer.
- 3.2.3 The Compliance & Governance Manager/Equality Officer will regularly monitor the effectiveness of this policy to ensure that it is working in practice and review and update this policy as and when necessary.

3.3 Recruitment and Selection

The following principles shall apply whenever recruitment or selection for positions takes place:

- 3.3.1 Individuals will be assessed according to their personal capability to carry out a given job;
- 3.3.2 Assumptions that only certain types of person will be able to perform certain types of work must not be made;
- 3.3.3 Any qualifications or requirements applied to a job which have or may have the effect of inhibiting applications from certain types of person should only be retained if they can be justified in terms of the job to be done;
- 3.3.4 Any age limits applied to a job shall only be retained if they can be justified in terms of the job to be done;

- 3.3.5 Recruitment solely or primarily by word of mouth should be avoided if its effect is or may be to prevent certain types of person from applying;
- 3.3.6 Selection tests should be specifically related to job requirements and measure the person's actual or inherent ability to do the work;
- 3.3.7 Selection tests should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and free from any unjustifiable bias;
- 3.3.8 Applications from different types of person should be processed in the same way;
- 3.3.9 Written records of interviews and reasons for appointment and non-appointment should be kept (for a minimum of 2 years);
- 3.3.10 Questions should relate to the requirements of the job if it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances may affect job performance. This should be done objectively, without questions or assumptions being made which are based on stereotype beliefs about certain types of person;
- 3.3.11 Where GreaterSport's arrangement for recruitment and selection puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage due to a reason connected with a disability, reasonable adjustments to the arrangements should be made to eliminate or if that is not reasonably practicable, reduce the disadvantage unless objectively justified;
- 3.3.12 No decisions regarding recruitment or selection should be made by a person who has not read and understood this policy.

3.4 Grievances, Disciplinary Procedures, Dismissals and Redundancies

The following principles shall apply to the conduct of grievance and disciplinary procedures:

- 3.4.1 Workers who in good faith bring a grievance (or assist another to do so) under this policy or otherwise in relation to an equal opportunities matter will not be disciplined, dismissed or otherwise victimised for having done so;
- 3.4.2 Any group of workers will not be disciplined or dismissed for performance or behaviour which would be overlooked or condoned in another group unless there is a genuine and lawful justification for this;
- 3.4.3 Redundancy criteria and procedures will be carefully examined to ensure that they do not operate in an unlawfully discriminatory manner;

- 3.4.4 The provision of voluntary redundancy benefits will be equally available to all workers concerned unless there is some genuine and lawful justification for doing so or otherwise.

4. Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation

GreaterSport recognises the following as being unacceptable:

4.1 Unlawful discrimination which can take the following forms:

4.1.1 *Direct Discrimination:* treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic.

4.1.2 *Indirect Discrimination:* applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.

4.2 *Harassment:* engaging in unwanted conduct relating to a relevant Protected Characteristic or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct. GreaterSport is committed to ensuring that its Stakeholders are able to conduct their activities free from harassment.

4.3 *Bullying:* the misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.

4.4 *Victimisation:* subjecting someone to a detriment because he or she has in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).

4.5 GreaterSport regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any Stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

5. Responsibility, Implementation and Communication

The following responsibilities will apply:

- 5.1 The GreaterSport Board is responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.
- 5.2 A member of the Board has been appointed as the "Equality Champion" and will ensure that equality is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality issues into consideration when making decisions.
- 5.3 The Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy.
- 5.4 A member of staff has been designated as the Equality Officer by the Chief Executive, and has the overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy and for achieving any equality related actions resulting from it. The Equality Officer's work programme will be amended to reflect this.
- 5.5 All Stakeholders have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intentions of this Equality Policy. Individual work programmes for GreaterSport staff will be amended, where appropriate, to include equality related tasks.
- 5.6 This Equality Policy will be implemented immediately following Board approval. Implementation requires the following actions:
 - 5.6.1 GreaterSport will regularly review its employment practices to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, and where possible good practice. All job packs sent out by GreaterSport will contain a policy statement similar to the following:

"GreaterSport is committed to providing equal opportunities for all [and is committed to following best practice in the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults]. For further information please consult GreaterSport's Equality Officer"
 - 5.6.2 No applicant for any post (including job applicants, consultant advisers, trainers and suppliers) will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute unlawful discrimination.

5.6.3 Consultants, trainers and advisers (and where appropriate suppliers) to GreaterSport will be required to abide by this Equality Policy and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by GreaterSport.

5.7 This Equality Policy will be communicated in the following ways:

5.7.1 The Policy is included in the employee handbook. Reference will be made to this Equality Policy in any code of conduct. This Equality Policy is for guidance only and will not form part of any contract of employment with any employees of GreaterSport;

5.7.2 The Policy is highlighted in all staff and volunteer inductions;

5.7.3 A copy of this Equality Policy is available on the GreaterSport website and copies in other formats are available from GreaterSport.

5.7.4 Each time this Policy is reviewed, GreaterSport employees and Board members will be consulted.

5.7.5 GreaterSport will promote continuing professional development for all employees and volunteers to support equal opportunities within the organisation and, where appropriate, provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.

5.7.6 Reference to this policy will be made to all parties through all parties/delivery agents through SLA's for the direct delivery of any funded programmes

6. Actions

6.1 GreaterSport will produce, maintain and monitor an Equality Action Plan to ensure the objectives of this Equality Policy are consistently delivered throughout all areas of the organisation.

6.2 GreaterSport recognises that, in some cases, to further the principle of equality, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. If appropriate and proportionate, GreaterSport will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a Protected Characteristic which is currently underrepresented within any group of Stakeholders.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 This Equality Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn. A review of this Equality Policy will take place as and when required, but not less than once every three years.

- 7.2 The Equality Action Plan, created to ensure the objectives of this Equality Policy are delivered, will be reviewed by the Chief Executive and the Equality Officer regularly, but in any event not less than once every 12 months.
- 7.3 On an annual basis a report will be produced by the Chief Executive for the Board. Once approved by the Board the report will be published internally and externally, to show the impact of this Equality Policy and progress towards achieving the Equality Action Plan.

8. Complaints Procedures

- 8.1 To safeguard individual rights under this Equality Policy, any Stakeholder who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this Equality Policy may raise the matter through the appropriate procedure (i.e. the employee grievance procedure for employees or the complaints procedure for Stakeholders who are not employees).
- 8.2 An individual raising an employee grievance will not be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.
- 8.3 As with all grievance and disciplinary procedures, the final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Board appeals committee.