

SCOTTISH SWIMMING

Equity Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Scottish Swimming is the governing body for Swimming, Diving, Water Polo, Synchronized 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 'Equity Standard – a Framework for Sport.'
- 1.2 The Equity Standard is a framework that organisations can use to help take steps towards achieving equity, 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 is currently working towards the foundation level of the equity standard.
- 1.3 Scottish Swimming, through achieving the equity standard, is hoping to help its membership, be that coaches, swimmers, officials, volunteers or staff.
- 1.4 The purpose of this document is to outline the proposed Scottish Swimming equity policy.

2 Key Definitions

- 2.1 *Equity* is fairness. All people are respected and treated without discrimination and there is access for all.
- 2.2 *Equality* is treating people equally or making sure equal numbers (members) from all community groups are offered and participate in the same opportunities.
- 2.3 *Equal Opportunity* is the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people because of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin.....religious or political beliefs (Scotland Act 1998)..
- 2.4 *Direct Discrimination*. This means treating someone less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances.
- 2.5 *Indirect Discrimination*. This occurs when a job requirement or condition is applied equally to all, which has a disproportionate and detrimental affect 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.

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- 2.6 *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.
- 2.7 *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.

3 Purpose of the Policy

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Other Scottish Swimming policies, such as employment and recruitment, complaints and disciplinary, will address equity and this policy will provide the overall framework for this to happen.

4 Statement of Commitment

- 4.1 Scottish Swimming is fully committed to the principles of equity and equal opportunities and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee or member receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religious belief, class or social background, sexual preference or political belief.
- 4.2 Scottish Swimming 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.
- 4.3 All staff, Board, Council and Committee members are required to sign an equity code of conduct, committing them to act equitably.
- 4.4 Scottish Swimming will work towards the various levels of the Equity Standard for Sport in a manner, and at a pace, that will ensure equity is embedded within the organisation itself and all services it provides.

¹ *Everyone Can Swim Scottish Swimming Vision for the Future 2012*, November 2005

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5 **Actions**

- 5.1 Scottish Swimming will produce and maintain an action plan to ensure the commitments made within this policy are delivered.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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.

6 **Legal Requirements**

- 6.1 Scottish Swimming is required by law not to discriminate against its current, or potential, employees and recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of, the following:
 - Equal Pay Act 1970.
 - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
 - Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended in 1986& 1999).
 - Race Relations Act 1976 (as Amended in 2000).
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (along with elements implemented in 1999 and 2004).
 - Human Rights Act 1998.
 - The Scotland Act 1998.
 - Children Act 2004.
 - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003.
 - Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003.
 - Gender Recognition Act 2004.
 - Civil Partnership Act 2004.
 - Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.
 - Any later amendments to the above Acts/regulations, or future Acts/regulations that are relevant to Scottish Swimming.
- 6.2 Scottish Swimming will seek legal advice each time the policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to comply with all legislation requirements.

7 **Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation**

- 7.1 Scottish Swimming is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from the threat of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, intimidation and abuse.

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- 7.2 When decisions are made about an individual, the only personal characteristics taken into account will be those which, as well as being consistent with relevant legislation, are necessary to the proper performance of the work involved.
- 7.3 Scottish Swimming will not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religious belief, class or social background, sexual preference or political belief.
- 7.4 Scottish Swimming regards discrimination, harassment, victimisation, intimidation or abuse as serious misconduct. Any member who discriminates against, harasses, victimises, intimidates or abuses any other person will be liable to action under Scottish Swimming's Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure. Any employee who discriminates against, harasses, victimises, intimidates or abuses any other person will be liable to action under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

8 Responsibility, Implementation and Communication

8.1 The following responsibilities will apply:

- 8.1.1 The Board and CEO are publicly accountable for equity and will receive regular updates on the Equity Standard and the implementation of the Equity Policy from a member of staff. It is their role to deal with any actual or potential breaches of the policy.
- 8.1.2 Scottish Swimming will ensure that it has a staff member responsible for Equity within the organisation. The staff member will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Equity Policy. They will have overall responsibility for overseeing the delivery of an equity action plan and the overall progress and status of equity within Scottish Swimming reporting regularly to the CEO, Board and Council.
- 8.1.3 Scottish Swimming will continue to employ officers with responsibility for specific areas of equity, such as a Swimming Youth Development Manager, a Disability Swimming Development Officer/Coach and a Volunteer Development Manager. Scottish Swimming will also look to develop posts which can focus on other areas of equity, if funding permits.
- 8.1.4 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 equity related tasks.

8.2 The new/amended policy will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and, at a corporate level, will result in the following:

- 8.2.1 A copy of this document will be available to all staff (both permanent and contract) and members of Scottish Swimming.

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

8.2.3 No job applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute unfair discrimination.

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

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

8.3 The new/revised policy will be communicated in the following ways:

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

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

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

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

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

8.3.6 A mechanism will be put in place to allow all staff, members, and partners to be part of the consultation process when reviewing this Equity Policy.

9 **Monitoring and Evaluation**

9.1 Once approved, the policy will apply until 2008, and any amended version thereafter will apply for 2 years before a formal review takes place, unless any proposal to the Board, or legislation change, requires an interim review and/or amendment.

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

9.3 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.

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10 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

- 10.1 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, who believes that he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy, may raise the matter through their line manager.
- 10.2 Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee or member who ***is deemed to have violated*** Scottish Swimming's Equity Policy.

11 Further Information

- 11.1 For further information on the Scottish Swimming Equity Policy please contact Youth Development Manager, Jemima Coates at Scottish Swimming, National Swimming Academy, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA. Email j.coates@scottishswimming.com or call 01786 466520.

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