Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

We recognise that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal opportunity. We are therefore engaged and committed to promoting a best-practice environment, where all individuals and groups are treated with respect and dignity. All staff/associate workforce and any related third party are required to adhere to this policy and to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

No one should feel threatened, degraded or experience discrimination on the grounds of the following nine protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010: *age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation*. Furthermore, we seek to ensure that people are provided with equal opportunity and do not face discrimination based on training or caring status or economic background. This policy is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination as well as taking positive action.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Ensure equality, fairness, and respect for all employees, regardless of their employment status (temporary, part-time, or full-time) and increase the awareness amongst staff/associates, apprentices, learners and any other related third party on the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and how Sport Structures upholds them.

2. Prohibit unlawful discrimination based on the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, including:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation

3 Actively oppose and prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination, including in areas such as:

- Pay and benefits
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Dealing with grievances and disciplinaries
- Cases of dismissal
- Redundancy processes
- Parental or dependant leave
- Recruitment
- Requests for flexible working arrangements
- Selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.
- Access to our products and services

4. Improve current practices and ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion are embedded through the company's policies, procedures, values and practices.

5. Fulfil our obligations by adopting legal, national and local guidelines to ensure equality of opportunity in terms of employment.

Our Commitment

Through our behaviours, we will champion diversity, take action to tackle inequalities and create inclusive environments.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, including the associate workforce. It covers conduct:

- whilst staff are working in the Sport Structures office and working from home
- whilst they are using Sport Structures IT systems
- for the delivery of learning
- in any non-working situation where they are identifiable as an employee/associate of Sport Structures

The policy covers both in-person and online conduct.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Director of Development has overall responsibility for this policy including reviewing this once a year. This will then be reviewed and approved by the Board
- Managers are responsible for setting an inclusive tone and promoting a diverse culture
- All staff are responsible for following this policy.

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead is:
Kath Percival Email: Katherine.percival@sportstructures.com

Legal Requirements

In order to fulfil its legal obligations, Sport Structures' Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy comply with all relevant equality legislation including The Equality Act 2010. Sport Structures will ensure that any future amendments to any relevant legislation are followed and adhered to.

Sport Structures regard discrimination, victimization, and harassment as serious misconduct. Any member of staff who discriminates against, harasses or victimizes any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

Implementation

Effective implementation of this policy ensures that we promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination, eradicate harassment, and proactively ensure access for all. This is achieved by:

- Ensuring all staff, learners and any related third parties are made aware of this policy.
- Any related responsibilities ensuring all staff are trained in equality, diversity, and inclusion regularly to implement this policy and promote it.
- Ensuring apprenticeship employers will receive training on equality, diversity, and inclusion at induction.
- Ensuring apprentices and learners will receive training on equality, diversity and inclusion, which will be embedded and delivered within their apprenticeship/programme.
- Ensuring all teaching, learning and assessment materials embed good practice principles on equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure apprentices and learners benefit from this enrichment during their apprenticeship/programme.
- Ensuring apprenticeship delivery, teaching, learning, and assessment practice is observed and monitored for all staff with clear objectives set for embedding and delivering high-quality equality, diversity and inclusion principles, including Fundamental British Values.
- Ensuring that we review all employment practices and procedures, when necessary, to ensure they are fair and equal to all staff.
- Ensuring this policy is read in conjunction with other policies and procedures such as Recruitment and Selection Policy, Grievance and Disciplinary Policy, Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Quality Assurance Policy.
- Monitoring and addressing any imbalances concerning recruitment, attendance and success rate by a wide range of equality and diversity characteristics.

- Ensuring that equality, diversity, and inclusion is a frequent agenda items across the company and that insights gathered from monitoring are discussed.
- Ensuring zero tolerance on any acts of discrimination on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics outlined within the Equality Act 2010.

The workforce

Sport Structures will continually review the workforce to encourage equality and diversity within the company by using information on:

- Age
- Sex
- Ethnic background
- Religion and beliefs
- Disability

Equal Opportunities

Sport Structures is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all staff throughout the course of their employment. Below, we have set out how we encourage equal opportunities within the workforce.

Recruitment, selection and promotion

With regards to recruitment, selection and internal promotions, it is our intention to appoint the most skilled, capable and competent candidate for each role.

To achieve this during recruitment:

- the requirements of each job are identified, and
- all applicants are assessed against the same criteria at each stage of the selection process

All candidates for promotion with appropriate skills, knowledge and experience are given the same degree of consideration.

Training

Educational and vocational courses leading to relevant qualifications are available to all staff equally.

Conditions of employment and provision of benefits and services

All conditions of employment, employee benefits and services apply to all staff equally. Accommodation and facilities are provided, as far as it is practicable to do so, with proper regard for the needs of those with disabilities.

Consequences of not following this policy

If an individual experiences unfavourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead should be contacted.

If a member of staff breaches this policy, and we have sufficient evidence that they've done so, they will face disciplinary action. We will take this action in line with our disciplinary procedure.

A member of staff with a grievance about how this policy is applied should follow the company grievance procedure.

Monitoring of the policy

We will monitor and continuously review the operation of this policy. We expect all staff to co-operate by providing relevant information, where necessary. All such information will be treated as strictly confidential and used solely for this purpose.

Definitions

Equality	Equality is about having a society where everyone is free from assumptions and discrimination based on factors such as gender, race or disability[1]. Equality refers to creating equality of opportunity, which does not necessarily mean treating everyone the same. Equality is not just about equal numbers or reasonable representation based on the sector or society being measured. Instead, it involves treating people in such a way as to ensure overall fairness and prevent discrimination[2].
Direct discrimination	Where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.
Associative discrimination	Direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
Discrimination by perception	Direct discrimination against someone because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just be perceived to.

[1] Equal Opportunities Commission
[2] UK Sport & sportscotland: Equalities Legislation: A guidance for Governing Bodies of Sport

Indirect discrimination	Occurs when there is a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic.
Harassment	Behaviour that is deemed offensive by the recipient. Employees can now complain about the behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.
Harassment by a third party	Employers are potentially liable for the harassment of their staff or customers by people they don't themselves employ, i.e. a contractor.
Victimisation	Occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under this legislation.
Diversity	Considering the unique differences in people and groups. Respecting, valuing, and celebrating these differences.
Inclusion	Positive action and steps are taken to proactively include people. Individuals feel welcomed and included and have a sense of belonging. Their voices are heard, and their needs are met.