

Policy prepared by:	Kate Longworth/Paul Brivio
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Equalities Statement

Equality and Diversity are essential to Active Oxfordshire's mission. We strive to create an environment that is free from discrimination and exploitation, and to challenge action that contravenes this ethos.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion form central values of our organisation. They are a key pillar of our strategy and advocacy, and we seek to ensure all our services and activities are accessible and inclusive. We endeavour to uphold both the right of individuals to feel valued and respected, and the responsibility of individuals to act without prejudice. We are committed to consulting with others – staff, volunteers, all our partners and local communities – in our working methods.

The practical implications of this Policy are outlined in this document.

What is Sports Equality?

Active Oxfordshire is committed to supporting the engagement, involvement, promotion and development of people from a diverse range of backgrounds as participants, coaches, officials, administrators and leaders in physical activity and sport.

As part of our dedication to widening access and reducing inequalities in physical activity and sport from under-represented individuals, groups and communities, we are working towards the Equality Standard for Sport. This Standard is owned by the 5 UK Sports Councils through the Sports Councils Equality Group (SCEG) which is currently under review. It is regularly updated by SCEG to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects the latest equality legislation.

Why a Policy?

Active Oxfordshire recognises that barriers exist for certain people to access and participate in physical activity and sport. This Policy has been developed to increase access to all forms of opportunity by working to eliminate inequalities, prejudice, stereotypes and promote access for all.

Policy Statement

The aim of the Active Oxfordshire Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is to promote our own equality and diversity objectives and in doing so, help to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. All Active Oxfordshire representatives should abide and adhere to this Policy and to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. In doing so, we are ensuring best practice and continuous improvement in relation to equality legislation.

The Active Oxfordshire commitment is to promote inclusion, encourage equal opportunities and to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership race, nationality, ethnicity (race), religion or belief, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity. These are known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010.

We want to be seen as an organisation that is explicitly anti-racism and to adopt a similar approach with other forms of prejudice and discrimination. We believe in physical activity and sport for all people.

This Policy is fully supported by the Board of Trustees of Active Oxfordshire and the Chief Executive is responsible for the implementation of this Policy.

Active Oxfordshire will ensure that we treat everyone fairly and with respect. We will continually strive to ensure that all members of the community can take part in, and enjoy, the physical activity and sport opportunities that Oxfordshire has to offer,

Every staff member, Board member, participant, competitor, coach, official, supplier or other delivery partner can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to work and to participate in sport and physical activity in an environment without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

Positive Action and Training

Active Oxfordshire will commit to a pro-active programme of work that

- helps to raise awareness,
- provides education and training,
- campaigns for equality and equity,
- widens diversity through representation and the promotion of positive diverse role models,
- investigates concerns and applies relevant and proportionate sanctions where necessary,

These are the types of actions which we believe will promote inclusion and eradicate discrimination within sport and physical activity. This Equality & Diversity Policy will be reviewed and updated, if required, on an annual basis.

Complaints and compliance

Active Oxfordshire regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour as unacceptable, and is concerned in all of our policies and procedures to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, partner, member or volunteer who is found, after a full investigation, to have violated the Equality & Diversity Policy.

To safeguard individual rights under this Policy any partner, employee or end user who believes that they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the Policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.

If you have any queries regarding this Policy please contact:

Active Oxfordshire
C/o Marlborough House
69 High Street, Kidlington, OX5 2DN
info@activeoxfordshire.org; Tel: 07741733775

APPENDIX – Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination

Legal rights

Discrimination has been legally defined through a series of legislative acts, including the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act 2006.

In April 2010, the Equality Act 2010 received Royal Assent. The Equality Act 2010 is a new law which harmonises where possible, and in some cases extends, protection from discrimination. It applies throughout the UK and came into force in October 2010.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the ‘protected characteristics’. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as age (employment only until 2012), disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination ‘on grounds of’ a protected characteristic.¹ This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Discrimination arising from disability

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.

¹ The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.