



## **Welsh Rowing Equality Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Welsh Rowing endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in rowing, whether as beginners, participants, performers, volunteers, coaches, manager, employees, job applicants, administrators or officials or those within Welsh Rowing:

- has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation or political belief; and
- can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

### **Legal obligations**

Welsh Rowing is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind in rowing, and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero tolerance approach to harassment. Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours in question are given in the Appendix.

### **Positive action**

The principle of Sports Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully.

Welsh Rowing will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to rowing and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in the sport or has difficulty accessing it.

### **Implementation**

The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote sports equality in rowing:

- A copy of this document will be published on the Welsh Rowing website and through club mailings and in the newsletter.
- The Welsh Rowing Chairman will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed.
- The Board will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of Welsh Rowing.
- An action plan will be developed to ensure all actions take place and equality is embedded throughout the organisation
- Welsh Rowing will collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in rowing and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in rowing.
- Welsh Rowing will provide access to appropriate equality and diversity training for all of its Board members, employees, Executive, Council and key volunteers individual responsibilities.
- It will be a condition of Welsh Rowing membership that member clubs:

- formally adopt this policy, or produce their own equality and diversity policy in terms that are consistent with it; and
  - take steps to ensure that their Committees, members, selection committees and volunteers behave in accordance with the policy, including where appropriate taking disciplinary action under the Club's constitution; and
  - ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive
  - support such measures and initiatives that Welsh Rowing may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.
- It will be a condition of Welsh Rowing membership that individual and corporate members
    - commit to act in accordance with this policy; and
    - support such measures and initiatives that Welsh Rowing may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

### **Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Board will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy. On a day-to-day basis this will be delegated to the Senior Employed Leadership position within Welsh Rowing. They will review all Welsh Rowing activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis, and the Chairman will report formally on this issue at the AGM.

The Board, or where appropriate a designated project leader, will review any measures or initiatives that Welsh Rowing may institute or take part in to promote and enhance sports equality in rowing, and will report their findings formally to the AGM.

The Board will review the policy itself at intervals of no more than three years, (or when necessary due to changes in legislation) and will report with recommendations to the AGM.

### **Complaints and compliance**

Welsh Rowing regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable, and is concerned 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, member or volunteer who violates the Welsh Rowing Equality Policy.

Any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this policy by a member club, individual member or corporate member of Welsh Rowing, should first complain to that person or organisation. If this does not resolve the matter, or in the case of allegations of discriminatory behaviour against Welsh Rowing itself, the person may raise the matter by writing directly to the Chairman. Contact details are available through the website.

The Chairman will investigate the complaint personally or appoint a Board or Executive member to do so. The investigation will be conducted impartially, confidentially, and without avoidable delay. Any person or organisation against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter.

The outcome of the investigation will be notified to the parties in writing and reported to the Welsh Rowing Board. If the investigation reveals unacceptable discriminatory behaviour on the part of an individual member, corporate member, or member club the Board may impose sanctions on that person or organisation in line with the Welsh Rowing Articles. Sanctions may range from a written reminder concerning future conduct up to and including temporary or permanent expulsion from Welsh Rowing membership. In deciding what sanction is appropriate in a particular case the Board will consider the severity of the matter and take account of any mitigating circumstances.

Where the violation of the Equality Policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.

In the event that an individual or organisation associated with Welsh Rowing is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the Welsh Rowing Board will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action as above in relation to the matter concerned.

END

Welsh Rowing Board

20/05/14

## **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, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination ‘on grounds of’ a protected characteristic<sup>1</sup>. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## **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.