

TEES VALLEY SPORT

EQUITY POLICY

AUGUST 2006

Introduction and Overview

Tees Valley Sport is one of forty nine County Sports Partnerships in England. The Partnership is made up of the 5 local authorities, Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees, National Governing Bodies of Sport, Sport England, sports coach UK, equity partners and further and higher education.

The Partnership has set out a vision for the development of sport and physical activity based around 4 distinct core areas of work

- Player Pathway
- Club Development
- Workforce Development
- Supporting the Wider Agenda

The Tees Valley Sport Vision is to

“improve the quality of life of all residents in the Tees Valley by increasing participation in sport and physical activity”

This vision is supported and developed by our core values which are to;

- Promote the principles of child welfare
- Provide leadership and action to address inequalities and promote inclusion
- Value our workforce and partners
- Celebrate the value of sport and physical activity as an enjoyable and positive life choice

The University of Teesside act as host for Tees Valley Sport and as such provide the framework in which we work. The University has a distinct 'Equal Opportunities Policy' which can be found in Appendix 1. The Tees Valley Sport Equity Policy and Equality Action Plan are embedded in this Equal Opportunities Policy.

The Tees Valley Sport Equity Policy and Equality Action Plan demonstrate the Partnership's commitment to deliver, influence and advocate positive change in sport and physical activity in the Tees Valley.

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 Tees Valley Sport is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer 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.

- 1.2 Tees Valley Sport will ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in all aspects of sport and physical activity and that they are treated fairly.

2. Purpose of the Tees Valley Sport Equity Policy

- 2.1 Tees Valley Sport recognise that certain sections of the community have been affected by past discrimination and may be denied the opportunity to participate equally and fully in sport at all levels.
- 2.2 This policy has been produced to prevent / tackle any potential / current discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against its employees, members and volunteers.

3. Actions

- 3.1 Tees Valley Sport will produce and maintain an action plan to ensure the intent of this policy is delivered.
- 3.2 All areas of the organisation will be affected by this action plan, which will be incorporated into the overall business delivery plan, itself reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- 3.3 Tees Valley Sport recognises that, in some cases, to achieve the principle of equality, unequal effort is required and, if appropriate, will consider positive action to tackle under representation.

University of Teesside Equal Opportunities and Tees Valley Sport Equity Policy

4. Legal Requirements

- 4.1 The University of Teesside acting as Tees Valley Sport's host agency is required by law not to discriminate against its employees and recognises its obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of the following:
 - Equal Pay Act 1970.
 - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
 - Sex Discrimination Acts 1975, 1986 & 1999
 - Race relationships Act 1976 and the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
 - Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
 - Any later amendments to the above Acts/regulations, or future Acts/regulations that are relevant to the University of Teesside.

- 4.2 The University of Teesside will seek legal advice each time the policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to comply with all legislation requirements.

5. Discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- 5.1 Discrimination can take the following forms:

5.1.1 *Direct Discrimination.* This means treating someone less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances.

5.1.2 *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.

5.1.3 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.

5.2 *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. The University of Teesside is committed to ensuring that its employees, members, participants and volunteers are able to conduct their activities free from harassment or intimidation.

6. Tees Valley Sport –Equity Policy

6.1 Tees Valley Sport regards discrimination, harassment or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct and any employee, volunteer or member who discriminates against, harasses or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

7. Responsibility, implementation and communication

- 7.1 The following responsibilities will apply:

7.1.1 The Partnership Board is responsible for ensuring that this Equity Policy is followed and to deal with any actual or potential breaches.

7.1.2 The Executive Director has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equity Policy.

7.1.3 A specific member of staff, designated by the Executive Director, has the overall responsibility for achieving the equity action plan as this will form part of their work programme.

- 7.1.4 All employees, volunteers 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.
- 7.2 The new / amended policy will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and at a corporate level will result in the following:
- 7.2.1 A copy of this document will be available to all staff (both permanent and contract) members and volunteers of Tees Valley Sport.
- 7.2.2 The University of Teesside will take measures to ensure that its employment practices are non-discriminatory.
- 7.2.3 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.
- 7.2.4 A planned approach will be adopted to eliminate barriers which discriminate.
- 7.2.5 Ensure that consultants and advisers used by Tees Valley Sport can demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equity and that they abide by this policy.
- 7.2.6 The new / revised policy will be communicated in the following ways:
It will be part of the staff handbook and reference will be made to it in any codes of conduct.
It will be covered in all staff and volunteer induction training.
All members will be made aware of the policy's existence when they join and a summary of any revisions will be published in Tees Valley Sport quarterly newsletter.
It will be available on the Tees Valley Sport website.
At time of review, a mechanism will be put into place to allow all staff, members and volunteers to be part of the process.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.1 Once approved the policy will apply for 3 years before a formal review takes place, unless any proposal to the Board or legislation changes, requires an interim review and/or amendment.
- 8.2 The Equity Action Plan, created to ensure the intent of the policy is delivered, will be reviewed by the Executive Director and the member of staff with the responsibility for its implementation on a quarterly basis.
- 8.3 As part of the overall business delivery plan, the equity action plan will be reviewed by the Board on a six monthly basis.

- 8.4 On an annual basis statistical information will be produced by the Executive Director for the Board, and will be published internally and externally to show the impact of this policy.

9. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

- 9.1 To safeguard individual rights under the policy an employee, volunteer or member who believes he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.
- 9.2 Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, volunteer or member who violates Tees Valley Sport's Equity Policy.
- 9.3 An individual may raise any grievance and no employee, volunteer or member will be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.
- 9.4 As with all grievance procedures the final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Vice-Chancellor.