**TEES VALLEY SPORT**

 

**EQUITY POLICY**

**JULY 2017**

1. **Statement of Intent**
   1. Tees Valley Sport is fully committed to the principles and practice of equality of opportunity in all of its functions. In line with the host organisation Teesside University, Tees Valley Sport is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer, service user, member or person within its jurisdiction (together referred to as ‘*stakeholders*’) are unlawfully discriminated against on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the ‘*protected characteristics*’ under the Equality Act 2010) or any other relevant characteristic.
   2. In addition, Tees Valley Sport recognises that that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their protected characteristics and/or socio-economic backgrounds.
   3. 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 delivered by the partnership and that they are treated fairly.
   4. Tees Valley Sport aims to be a caring, fair and supportive institution which seeks to optimise and enhance the experience if its staff, partners and external clients. It aims to build a culture that values being open, transparent, honest and reflective.
   5. To that end all employees, volunteers, clients, members, suppliers and contractors whether permanent or temporary are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this Equality Policy. Tees Valley Sport will also encourage partner organisations to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this Equality Policy and in line with the Equality Act 2010.
2. **Purpose of the Policy**
   1. Tees Valley Sport recognises that individuals and/or certain groups in our society who share one or more protected characteristics may not have been able to participate equally and fully in sports related activities in the past. This policy has been produced to address and prevent any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against stakeholders that may preclude them from participating fully in Tees Valley Sport’s activities.
   2. Tees Valley Sport recognises the diversity of provision that is required in order to ensure that all people regardless of their protected characteristics, social or economic background can access sport at all levels from grass roots to elite.
   3. Tees Valley Sport recognises the need to provide different and diverse opportunities as a means of creating entitlement and access.
   4. Internally, Tees Valley Sport is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination and values the differences that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation. This policy has been produced to try to prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against the workforce. Tees Valley Sport shall also promote dignity in the workplace in line with host organisation Teesside University’s aim of ‘*building and maintaining an inclusive organisation that recognises and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person’*. Other related but separate HR policies shall also be implemented and/or maintained to further the objectives of Equality and Diversity generally and reflect changes in legislation in particular the Equality Act 2010.
3. **Legal Requirements**
   1. Teesside University acting as Tees Valley Sport’s host organisation is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its stakeholders and recognises its legal obligations under and will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and any equivalent legislation (as amended) in any UK jurisdiction and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to Teesside University and Tees Valley Sport.
   2. Teesside University and Tees Valley Sport recognises the following as being unacceptable:

“**Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation”**

* 1. Unlawful discrimination which can take the following forms:
     1. *Direct Discrimination:* treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a protected characteristic.
     2. *Indirect Discrimination: a*pplying a provision, criterion or practice which on the face of it, applies equally to all but which in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular protected characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.
     3. *Harassment:* engaging in unwanted conduct relating to a relevant protected characteristic or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct. Teesside University acting as Tees Valley Sport’s host organisation is committed to ensuring that its stakeholders are able to conduct their activities free from harassment.
     4. *Bullying:* the misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.
     5. *Victimisation:* subjecting someone to a detriment because he or she has in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).
  2. Teesside University acting as Tees Valley Sport’s host organisation regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation as described above as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

**“Reasonable Adjustments”**

* 1. When any decision is made about an individual, the only personal characteristics that may be taken into account are those that are consistent with any relevant legislation and are relevant to the substance of the decision being made.
  2. Tees Valley Sport recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.
  3. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, when acting as a service provider, Tees Valley Sport has an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing its service.
  4. Tees Valley Sport will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully.

**“Transgender Athletes”**

* 1. Any transgender athlete looking to participate in Tees Valley Sport activity is requested to contact the Equality Officer who will work with the relevant National Governing Body of sport to formulate a policy. Any such request will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.
  2. Tees Valley Sport will seek advice each time this policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legislative requirements and good practice.

1. **Responsibility, implementation and communication**
   1. The following responsibilities will apply:
      1. The Tees Valley Sport Partnership Board is responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The Tees Valley Sport Partnership Board is also responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.
      2. The Equality Champion on the Tees Valley Sport Partnership Board will ensure that equality is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality issues into consideration when making decisions.
      3. The Executive Director of Tees Valley Sport has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy.
      4. A member of staff will be designated by the Executive Director in conjunction with the Equality Champion as an officer with responsibility for equality (referred to for the purposes of this Policy as the ‘*Equality Officer’)*. The Equality Officer shall work in conjunction with the Equality Champion and will have the overall day to day responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy and for achieving any equality related actions resulting from it.
      5. All Stakeholders have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intentions of this Equality Policy. Individual work programmes for Tees Valley Sport staff will be amended to include equality related tasks where appropriate.
   2. This Equality Policy will be implemented immediately following Board approval. Implementation requires the following actions:
      1. Teesside University acting as Tees Valley Sport’s host organisation will regularly review its employment practises to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation and where possible good practise.
      2. All job packs sent out by Teesside University acting as Tees Valley Sport’s host organisation will continue to contain a policy statement similar to the following:

“*Teesside University is committed to providing equal opportunities for all and is committed to following best practice in the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults. For further information please consult:*

<http://www.tees.ac.uk/depts/hr/equalopportunities.cfm>*“*

* + 1. No job applicant for any post (including job applicants, consultant advisers and suppliers) 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.
    2. Consultants and advisers (and where appropriate suppliers) to Tees Valley Sport will be required to abide by this Equality Policy and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by Tees Valley Sport.
    3. A copy of this document will be available to all staff (both permanent and contract), members and volunteers of Tees Valley Sport.
  1. This Equality Policy will be communicated in the following ways:
     1. The Policy will be included in any staff handbook (or equivalent paper or electronic document) and reference will be made to it in any codes of conduct. This Equality Policy is for guidance only and will not form part of any contract of employment with any employees of Tees Valley Sport
     2. The policy will be highlighted in all staff and volunteer inductions

A copy of this Equality Policy will be publicly available on Tees Valley Sport’s website and copies in other formats will also be available from the Tees Valley Sport office. All members will be made aware of the policy when they join.

* + 1. All members will be made aware of the policy’s existence when they join and a summary of any revisions will be published on the Tees Valley Sport website and newsletter circular.
    2. Each time the policy is reviewed, Tees Valley Sport’s stakeholders will be consulted. Following consultation, a notice of the changes being made will be publicly available and a direct communication will be sent to all those who contributed to the consultation process (subject to Data Protection provisions).
    3. Tees Valley Sport will promote continuing professional development for all employees and volunteers to support equal opportunities within the organisation and where appropriate, provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.

1. **Actions**
   1. Tees Valley Sport will produce, maintain and monitor an Equality Action Plan to ensure the objectives of this Equality Policy are consistently delivered throughout all areas of the organisation.
   2. Tees Valley Sport recognises that, in some cases, to further the principle of equality, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. If appropriate and proportionate and to the extent that is lawful, Tees Valley Sport will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a protected characteristic which is currently underrepresented within any group of stakeholders.
2. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
   1. This Equality Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn. A review of this Equality Policy will take place as and when required, but not less than once every three years.
   2. The Equality Action Plan, created to ensure the objectives of this Equality Policy are delivered, will be reviewed by the Executive Director and Equality Champion regularly, but in any event not less than once every 12 months.
   3. On an annual basis, statistical and if appropriate, qualitative information will be collated and a report will be produced by the Executive Director and presented to the Board to debate progress and review the policy status. Once approved by the Board, a report will be published internally and externally (with due regard to the sensitivity of the information) to show the impact of this Equality Policy and progress towards achieving the Equality Action Plan.
3. **Complaints Procedure**
   1. To safeguard individual rights under this Equality Policy, any stakeholder who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this Equality Policy may raise the matter through the appropriate procedure.
   2. Where assistance is needed in identifying the appropriate procedure, the Equality Officer may assist in the first instance (without comment on the merits of the complaint).
   3. Appropriate action may be taken against any Tees Valley Sport stakeholder who is found to have violated this Equality Policy.
   4. An individual raising an employee grievance will not be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.
   5. As with all grievance and disciplinary procedures, the final point of appealing related to this policy is the Vice Chancellor of Teesside University.

**Annex**

Teesside University’s Equality and Diversity directory has 76 documents:

<http://www.tees.ac.uk//docs/index.cfm?folder=Equality%20and%20Diversity>

* A Guide to Promoting a Mutually Respectful University Community
* Accessing Disability Support
* Annual Report 2015
* Applicant 2011
* Bullying and Harassment Policy
* Car Parking for Disabled Staff
* Car Parking Guidelines for Disabled Staff and Students
* Disability Services Registration Form
* Disability Terms of Reference
* DISC gender support
* Diversity Calendar 2014
* Diversity Events 2012-13
* Diversity Events
* Diversity
* Diversity Calendar
* Employee Data 2016
* Equal Opportunities Committee 2009
* Equal Opportunities Executive Committee 2009
* Equal Opportunity Policy
* Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2012
* Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2013
* Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2014
* Equality and Diversity Learning and Development Framework
* Equality and Diversity Objectives
* Equality and Diversity Revised Objectives 2016
* Equality and Diversity Revised Objectives 2016
* Equality Data
* Equality Diversity Leaflet
* Equality Objectives
* Equality Report 2011
* Equality Diversity Report Student Data 2011
* Equality Objectives
* Essentials of 18 more Religions and Beliefs
* Essentials of Buddhism
* Essentials of Christianity
* Essentials of Hinduism
* Essentials of Islam
* Essentials of Jainism
* Essentials of Judaism
* Essentials of Sikhism
* Essentials of the Bahai Faith
* Ethnicity Terms of Reference
* Factsheet 1
* Factsheet 2
* Factsheet 3
* Factsheet 4
* Gender Terms of Reference
* Guidance for Providing Staff with Reasonable Adjustments
* Guidance for Staff with Dyslexia
* Harassment Advisors
* LGBT Terms of Reference
* MAP Project
* Maternity 2012
* Meeting and visiting
* MenQual Charter
* Middlesbrough Pride
* Mindful Employer Charter
* Monitoring
* Mutually Respectful University Community
* Open Door
* Positive About Disability
* Pride
* R&B Terms of Reference
* Refugee Week
* RIES Mentoring Project
* RIES Mentoring Project
* Some Thoughts on Prayer
* Specialist Mentoring Service information booklet
* Specialist Study Skills booklet Aug 14
* Staff 2012
* Stonewall
* Student Data 2016
* Support Document
* Tackling Harassment and Bullying
* Terms of Reference
* Wheelchair Access and Facilities