

## DCC Equality Policy

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Sports Equality is about fairness in sport; equality of access; recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It involves changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to all members of society and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to realise their talent and full potential.

### Equality Policy Statement

The Club is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that everyone has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in paddlesport at all levels and in all roles of the sport. The Club adopts the principles of Paddle England's Equality Policy (2022) and believes that everyone should be treated equally regardless of; age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation ("Protected Characteristics").

In addition, the Club will endeavour to ensure that all are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic background. This includes members, volunteers, participants, supporters, coaches, officials, job applicants, employees and anyone else involved in the Club's activities (hereinafter referred to collectively as Stakeholders).

The Club recognises that unlawful discrimination is unacceptable and will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional. The Club recognises its responsibility to act on the commitments outlined in this policy, and will ensure the policy is adhered to by:

- respecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treating everyone equally within the context of their sport.
- committing to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment and abuse.
- raising awareness of individual responsibilities; all members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity and the club's management committee is responsible for implementing, maintaining and dealing with any breaches of this policy.
- regarding any incidence of discriminatory behaviour as serious misconduct and dealing with this according to club disciplinary procedures.
- providing appropriate training to all of its volunteers, coaches and committee members.
- making this policy available to all stakeholders through its website, newsletters and other club communications.
- committing to working towards equitable and accessible paddling opportunities for all sections of the Club's local community and avoiding disadvantaging any person by conditions or requirements that cannot be reasonably justified.

- embedding equal opportunities into all Club policies and plans and assessing the impact of this work on various communities, including protected characteristic groups.

## Types of Unlawful Discrimination

The Club regards any form of unlawful discrimination as serious misconduct and any Stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action. Unlawful discrimination can take the following forms:

- **Direct Discrimination:**  
treating a person less favourably than others would be treated in the same circumstances on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic they possess.
- **Indirect Discrimination:**  
occurs when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies in the same way for everybody but has a disproportionate and detrimental effect or particularly disadvantages people with a certain Protected Characteristic. In such circumstances the person with the Protected Characteristic will be indirectly discriminated against if they are put at that disadvantage, unless the person applying the practice, policy or rule can objectively justify it.
- **Discrimination by perception:**  
occurs when a person is discriminated against because they are thought to have a particular Protected Characteristic.
- **Discrimination by association:**  
occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they are linked or associated with a Protected Characteristic.
- **Harassment:**  
described as inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that are objectionable or cause offence to the recipient or any other individual affected by such conduct.

## Legal Responsibilities

The Club 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, amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to the Club. The Club will seek advice each time this Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

In line with Paddle UK, the Club considers that paddlesport is a gender affected activity under the Equality Act 2010. In this regard, the Equality Act 2010 permits the separation of competitors, or the imposition of entry restrictions upon paddlers on the basis of age, sex, disability or nationality. This is permitted where it is necessary to do so to ensure;

- fair competition, or
- the safety of competitors, or
- compliance with the rules of a national or international competition, or
- selection can be made to represent a country, place or area or a related association.

Whilst there are instances where it is necessary and proportionate for certain restrictions to be imposed within competitive sport, the Club and Paddle England strive to ensure a fair balance at all times between this need to uphold the safe and equitable delivery of sport and the principle of equal access for all, as well as its legal and moral responsibility to avoid unlawful discrimination.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

The Club recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities and long-term health conditions. The Club will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with Stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully in all Club activities.

### **Implementation**

A copy of this policy will be available to all stakeholders and made available on the Club's website and media channels.

### **Complaints and Disciplinary**

The Club takes any breach of this policy by any person very seriously, with any breach being dealt with in accordance with the Club's disciplinary, complaint or grievance procedure, and referred to Paddle UK when appropriate. Where any violation of this equality policy amounts to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed. If any Stakeholder believes they have suffered discrimination or other inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy, they can raise their concerns via the Club in the first instance. Referrals can also be made via email to [equality@paddleuk.org.uk](mailto:equality@paddleuk.org.uk). Any concerns will be treated in the strictest confidence and investigated as appropriate.