



Equality Policy

Making Sport Accessible for All

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sportessex.com

Equality Policy

Foreword

sportessex is committed to engaging, involving, promoting and developing people from a diverse range of backgrounds as participants, volunteers, coaches, officials, administrators and leaders in sport. As part of our continued dedication to equality in sport we are working towards the Equality Standard which will enable us to check and challenge current practices and ensure we are engaging all members of the community; embedding equality within the culture of **sportessex**, partners and within the wider sporting community.

Equality Statement

sportessex will strive to ensure that sporting and physical activity opportunities are available to all irrespective of gender, ethnic origins, age, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status or disability. **sportessex** will ensure that sports equity is and remains a fundamental and integral part of its work and will adopt and maintain policies and action plans to maintain this principle.

This statement underpins the vision, outcomes and values of the partnership as identified in the **sportessex** Business Plans, Operational Plans and Strategy for Sport in Essex. It has been developed and will be further developed in consultation with the **sportessex** core team, key partners, representatives from National and Regional Equity partners and representatives from the targeted groups.

Specifically **sportessex** will allocate resources and budget to actively raise participation levels in sport among the target groups within all of its programmes and activities.

To help with this work **sportessex** has signed up to achieve the 'Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport'. The Equality Standard is a framework and vehicle for widening access and increasing the participation and involvement in sport and physical activity from under-represented individuals, groups and communities, especially women and girls, ethnic minority groups and disabled people. It will assist the organisation in developing equality-proofed policies, structures and processes and will allow for performance to be assessed, ensuring continuous improvement in equality.

What is Sports Equality?

Sports equality is about fairness in sport, having regard for diversity, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them.

Sports Equality is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to all members of society in respect of their race, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation or economic status.

Sports Equality is about making sure that all people can realise their talent and fulfil their potential, at what ever level they aspire to, including health and social reasons.

Sports Equality is about an individual's and organisation's responsibility to challenge discriminatory practice and promote inclusion.

Legal Framework

sportessex recognises through this policy its legal obligations in relation to the following Acts and any future amendments:

Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended 1983)
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Asylum and Immigration Act 1996
Protection from Harassment Act 1997
Human Rights Act 1998
Data Protection Act 1998
Sex Discrimination Act 1975, 1986, 1999
Employment Act 2003
Disability Discrimination Act 1995, 2005
Race Relations Act 1976(Amendment 2000)
Gender Recognition Act 2004
Equality Act 2006
Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of the Equality Policy will continue to be monitored and evaluated annually to ensure that it is kept relevant and up to date, and progress will be assessed against the annual action plan and other action plans within **sportessex**. The process for this will be through the lead member

of staff with responsibility for Equality who will be supported by every member of the **sportessex** team as common objectives within their job roles.

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

sportessex is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in employment. This policy aims to ensure that no employee or job applicant is:

- (i) Directly or indirectly discriminated against on the grounds of disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, gender, age, HIV status, mental health, political or religious belief, or social background.
- (ii) Disadvantaged by conditions or requirements, which cannot be shown to be justified.

Any employee who believes they have experienced inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through the Essex Development and Regeneration Agency (ExDRA) Grievance Procedure.

Discriminatory language and behaviour which offends or threatens colleagues or customers is not tolerated. Where it is necessary, action to deal with such instances will be taken under the ExDRA Grievance and Disciplinary Policy.

Any partner, volunteer, participant or spectator involved in a **sportessex** event or programme who believes he/she has experienced inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through the ExDRA Complaints Procedure.

Implementation

The process for implementation in the first instance will be through the **sportessex** lead member of staff with responsibility for Equality. It is also the responsibility of all members of staff to contribute to the effectiveness and the implementation of the policy with the ultimate responsibility residing with the Director of **sportessex**.

Overall responsibility for the policy's implementation and development will lie with the Board of Management; a six monthly progress report will be presented to the Board by the Director and relevant member(s) of staff to contribute and endorse. The Policy will be subject to an annual monitoring and review process conducted by the Director and relevant member of staff with the Board to contribute and endorse. Equality Standards will also be included as part of the standard Board agenda.

Implementation will be through clear targets incorporated into the following delivery plans from the relevant members of staff of **sportessex**.

National Governing Bodies of Sport
Workforce Development
Marketing and Communications
Information and Research
Young People's Pathways
Business Development
Community Sports Networks

sportessex will:

- Agree an annual action plan within which specific roles, responsibilities and resources are allocated and targets set to ensure equity is fully embraced within **sportessex**. This will be part of the **sportessex** annual delivery plan which is agreed by the Board.
- Achieve the required levels of the Equality Standards within reasonable timescales.
- Act as a central coordinating agency that will work with and support our partners to adopt a similar Equality Policy and statements and to reach defined Equality Standards.
- Ensure that the training needs of all employees, Board of Management, Executive Board members in relation to this policy and sport equity are identified and addressed.
- Ensure that this policy is circulated to and is understood by all employees, volunteers, partners and Boards and this will form part of any recruitment and subsequent induction, training and education process.
- Take positive action to ensure that our employment practices are non discriminatory and if any employee practices discrimination they must be sure that they will be liable to disciplinary action by **sportessex**.
- Ensure that no job applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job.
- Take positive action through advocacy, training and mentoring to develop the skills of individuals from under-represented groups so they can better develop their careers in sport.

- Ensure that all appointed consultants demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practices of equality.
- Regularly liaise with key equality and community organisations in the region, county and districts on the service we are and should be offering.
- Work with these organisations to target specific groups.
- Strive to ensure that the facilities we use are accessible to all.
- Support, influence and work with the local based network groups e.g. Community Sports Networks to address equality issues within their own action plans.
- Communicate and check understanding of this policy as widely as possible.
- Promote positive images and text relating to under-represented groups across a wide range of publications and formats.
- Strive to offer a wide range of communication methods and formats to meet the different needs of the community.
- Ensure that an individual's financial circumstances do not prevent them accessing the services of the programme.
- Carry out rigorous and systematic monitoring regarding access to sports activities by people of different ethnicities, genders, ages, religions, physical abilities, mental capabilities, sexual orientations and economic status and allocate resources to develop opportunities where gaps are identified.
- Carry out rigorous and systematic equality impact assessments into the effects of this and other policies, practices and procedures as may be required.
- Review the Equality Policy annually to ensure that it is relevant and up to date.