



## **THE BRITISH EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY POLICY**

### **1. Statement of Intent**

- 1.1** The British Equestrian Federation (the "BEF") is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or participant in or with the BEF receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, language, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religious belief, class or social background, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or political belief.
- 1.2** The BEF will take all reasonable steps to ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in all aspects of BEF equestrian activities and ensure that they are treated fairly.
- 1.3** The BEF will continue to work with and encourage partner organisations to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality.

### **2. Definitions**

For the purpose of clarification the BEF is working to the following definitions:

#### ***Equal Opportunities***

Treating people as individuals and providing them with opportunities on the basis of their skills, talents and qualifications so that they are neither disadvantaged nor denied access on the grounds stated in section 1.1.

#### ***Equality***

The state of being equal – treating individuals equally, which is not necessarily the same as treating them the same. In some cases the need for equality may require unequal effort to ensure the principle is achieved.

#### ***Equity***

In its simplest sense, a general condition characterised by justice, fairness and impartiality in the treatment of others and respect for divergent views and cultures the process of allocating (or re-allocating) resources and entitlements, including power, fairly and without discrimination. It includes fairness in opportunities and the upholding of individual human rights through social justice.

### **3. Purpose of the Policy**

- 3.1** The BEF recognises that ours is a diverse society and is committed to taking reasonable steps to provide equal opportunities for people from all communities to take part in equestrian sport.
- 3.2** The BEF recognises that members of some communities may have additional requirements for taking part in horse sport and that some barriers do exist. Therefore the BEF, when appropriate, will consider positive action to tackle under-representation and to ensure that the sport is accessible for everyone.
- 3.3** This policy has been produced to identify and eradicate barriers, tackle discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, which may preclude some people from participating fully in horse sport.

### **4. Actions**

- 4.1** The BEF will produce, maintain and monitor an action plan to ensure the intent of this policy is consistently delivered.

### **5. Gender**

- 5.1** The BEF recognises the gender imbalance of participants within our sport, is positive about the contribution that equestrianism makes to the participation of women and girls in sport, but will continue to work to tackle areas where females are underrepresented.
- 5.2** Men and boys have an important role to play in equestrianism and the BEF's position in relation to gender is summarised below:
- The BEF encourages the involvement of men as participants, volunteers, coaches, officials and administrators and employees.
  - In the next 2-5 years the BEF will look to encourage growth in men and boys participation and recognise the governance of the sport appropriately.
  - If appropriate the BEF will carry out research as to how other countries manage to encourage male participation.

## 6. Legal Requirements

**6.1** The BEF is required by law not to discriminate against its employees or service users and recognises its legal 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 Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Equality Act 2006
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Any later amendments to the above Acts/regulations or future Acts/regulations that are relevant to the BEF.

**6.2** The BEF will seek advice each time the policy is reviewed to ensure that it continues to comply with all legislation requirements.

## 7. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation

The BEF recognises the following:

**7.1** Discrimination can take the following forms.

**7.1.1** *Direct Discrimination.*

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

**7.1.2** *Indirect Discrimination.*

Imposing requirements or conditions, which on the face of it, apply equally to all but which, in practice can be met only by certain sections of the population. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.

**7.1.3** 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.

- 7.2** *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 orientation, a disability or some other characteristic. The BEF is committed to ensuring that its employees, members, participants and volunteers are able to conduct their activities free from harassment or intimidation.
- 7.3** *Bullying:* Bullying is one form of personal harassment. It is the misuse of power or position to persistently criticise or to humiliate and undermine an Individual's confidence.
- 7.4** *Victimisation is defined as* when someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action against the BEF under one of the relevant Acts/regulations (as previously outlined) or provided information about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour
- 7.5** The BEF 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.

## **8. Responsibility, implementation and communication**

- 8.1** The following responsibilities will apply:

**8.1.1** The Board of Directors of the BEF will endorse and be responsible for ensuring that this Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches.

**8.1.2** The BEF Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy.

**8.1.3** An appropriate, specific member of staff has the overall responsibility of managing and monitoring the implementation of the Equity Action Plan and this will form a key part of their work programme.

**8.1.4** All employees, volunteers, and participants 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.

- 8.2** The new/revised policy will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and, at a corporate level, will result in the following:

**8.2.1** A copy of this document will be given to all staff (both permanent and contract).

**8.2.2** The BEF will take measures to ensure that its employment practices are non-discriminatory, including ensuring that job packs contain at least the policy statement.

**8.2.3** No job applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job or constitute unfair discrimination.

**8.2.4** A planned approach will be adopted to eliminate barriers that discriminate.

**8.2.5** The policy will be referenced in Service Level Agreements/contracts and partner organisations, consultants and advisers used by the BEF will be encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equity.

**8.2.6** Member organisations will be encouraged to adopt this policy, or create their own version inline with the spirit of this policy.

**8.3** The new/revised policy will be communicated in the following ways:

**8.3.1** It will be part of staff handbooks and reference will be made to it in any codes of conduct.

**8.3.2** It will be covered in all staff and volunteer induction training, with evidence that it has been read and understood.

**8.3.3** The BEF will promote continual personal development for all employees and volunteers to support equal opportunities and equity within the organisation and, where appropriate, provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.

**8.3.4** All member organisations will be made aware of the policy's existence when they join and a summary of any revisions will be published in the BEF year book.

**8.3.5** The policy will be available on the BEF website and member organisations will be encouraged to make reference to it, as appropriate to each organisation, on their own Websites.

**8.3.6** At the time of review, a mechanism will be put in place to allow all staff, members and volunteers to be part of the process.

**8.3.7** A direct communication will be sent to all those that responded during the policy development consultation process.

**8.3.8** A summary of this document will be integrated into new and revised publications, where appropriate.

## **9. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 9.1** Once approved, the policy will apply for a maximum of 3 years before a formal review takes place, unless any proposal to the Board, or legislation change, requires an interim change and/or amendment.
- 9.2** The Equity Action Plan, created to ensure the intent of the policy is delivered, will be reviewed by the Chief Executive and the BEF Equity and Child Protection Steering Group, which is responsible for leading its implementation, on a six monthly basis.
- 9.3** On an annual basis, statistical information will be produced for the Board, and this will be published internally and externally, to show the impact of this policy.

## **10. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

- 10.1** To safeguard individual rights under the policy, a job applicant, employee, volunteer or participant who believes he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate BEF grievance procedure.
- 10.2** Appropriate action will be taken against any employee, volunteer or member who violates the BEF's Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy.
- 10.3** An individual may raise any grievance and no employee, volunteer or participant will be penalised if their complaint is made in good faith and they reasonably believe it to be true.
- 10.4** As with all BEF grievance procedures, the final point of appeal relating to this policy is via the BEF appeals committee.

**Dated: August 2008**