



DeaflympicsGB



UK Deaf Sport

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

The Issue Status

The Issue Status is indicated by the version number in the footer of this document. It identifies the Issue Status of the 'UK Deaf Sport Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy'.

When any part of this document is amended, a record is made in the Amendment Log shown below.

The 'UK Deaf Sport Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy' can be fully revised and re-issued at the discretion of the UK Deaf Sport Board.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Recruiting, developing and retaining individuals with different cultures, perspectives, experiences and characteristics are at the heart of the way UK Deaf Sport (UKDS) works. UKDS is committed to promoting equality and diversity and a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the organisation and enhance the way we work.
- 1.2 UKDS is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its Employees, Board Directors, Advisory Group and Committee Members, Volunteers and Members and any other individuals connected to UKDS.
- 1.3 UKDS 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, any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to UKDS.
- 1.4 It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of:
 - age
 - disability
 - sex
 - race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
 - gender
 - gender reassignment (see *Annex 1: Gender Identity and Reassignment*)
 - religion or belief (including philosophical belief)
 - sexual orientation
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity

These are known as "protected characteristics".

- 1.5 It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. 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.
- 1.6 UKDS recognise that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that Employees, Board Directors, Advisory Group and Committee Members, Volunteers and Members are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds. Consequently, UKDS will also treat socio-economic background as a protected characteristic.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy sets out UKDS's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. It supports our aim to be an inclusive organisation, that is committed to providing equal opportunities including in the recruitment, training

and the development of Employees, Board Directors, Advisory Group and Committee Members, Volunteers and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating discrimination.

- 2.2 The UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy underpins the organisation's zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation, and unacceptable behaviour. It underlines the requirement for everyone in UKDS to contribute to creating a culture and environment that exemplifies dignity, courtesy, respect, and consideration for all.
- 2.3 This policy applies to all conduct within the scope of UKDS's work and also to conduct outside of the immediate UKDS environment that is related to the work of UKDS (e.g. at meetings, personal interactions with colleagues and representatives of other organisations) or which may impact on UKDS's reputation.

3. Commitments

- 3.1 At UKDS we recognise that being a diverse and inclusive organisation helps us fulfil our responsibility to provide an environment that delivers the objects of the organisation as set out in our Articles of Association.
- 3.2 UKDS has the vision: *"Every Deaf Person Active and Inspired by Sport"*. UKDS use the term deaf¹ to represent all people who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a hearing loss, whether this is acquired or from birth. In this context UKDS is particularly aware of the need for, and is committed to, appropriate representation of the deaf community at all levels of the organisation. This includes Employees and a Board that is representative of those it serves, with an appropriate gender balance and strong representation from both disabled people and ethnically diverse communities with a Lead Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- 3.3 UKDS promote the inclusion of the deaf community in all sports and physical activities. We will work with our key stakeholders to address any barriers that may impede deaf people from accessing any sport or activity.
- 3.4 UKDS understands that some characteristics are not visible such as people experiencing mental health issues and will not make assumptions or discriminate based on the perception of people's moods. UKDS will recognise people experiencing mental health issues within their approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 3.5 The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all Employees, Board Directors, Advisory Group and Committee Members, Volunteers and Members and those with whom we work in partnership. We expect all to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

¹ The term 'deaf' covers a range of definitions of deafness, including those who are profoundly deaf, have severe, moderate or mild hearing loss or are hard of hearing whether acquired or from birth. This includes the use of the terms Deaf and deaf whereby the use of a capital D in Deaf may denote those who identify as having a cultural and shared experience of being Deaf.

- 3.6 As an employer, UKDS is committed to valuing diversity in the workplace, by creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our Employees are recognised and valued.
- 3.7 UKDS is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and will ensure that no Employees, Directors, Committee and Advisory Group Members Volunteers or job applicants are unlawfully discriminated against in recruitment, selection and employment because of a Protected Characteristic.
- 3.8 UKDS will ensure every Employee, Director, Committee or Advisory Group Member and all Volunteers are provided with access to a copy of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- 3.9 UKDS will eliminate any unlawful or unfair discrimination including direct or indirect discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination linked to a perceived characteristic, harassment, and victimisation (as defined in *Annex 2: Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation*).
- 3.10 UKDS will strive to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect. UKDS has a Bullying and Harassment Policy (within the Employee Handbook) which deals with these issues. UKDS will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by Employees, Directors, Committee and Advisory Group Members, Volunteers and any others in the course of the organisation's activities.
- 3.11 UKDS is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion (as defined in *Annex 3: Definitions*) in all our activities promoting inclusive processes, practices, and culture in line with the equality principles set out in the Equality Act 2010. This includes ensuring our policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation (as explained in *Annex 4: Equality Impact Assessments*).
- 3.12 UKDS will use the Moving to Inclusion Framework² Self Diagnostic Toolkit to reflect on our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and implementation of this policy. We will use the framework and suggestions as guidance for change annually creating a continuous improvement plan that is realistic and appropriate to the outcome of the self-diagnosis. This includes carrying out a formal review using the self-reflection diagnostic tool every 4 years to reflect on learning. Reviewing and learning from progress made will allow UKDS to add new ambitions to the continuous improvement plan to further drive the organisation forward.
- 3.13 Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is supported by our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

4. Recruitment

- 4.1 UKDS will review its recruitment and employment practices for each recruitment exercise to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, and where possible good practice. All Employee, Director, Committee and Advisory Group

² <https://movingtoinclusion.co.uk/>

Member and Volunteer recruitment advertisements and Role Descriptions will contain information about UKDS's commitment to championing equality and diversity in all aspects of our work and in the services that we provide.

- 4.2 No applicant for any post (including job applicants, Director, Committee and Advisory Board and Volunteer 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/role, or which constitute unlawful discrimination.
- 4.3 Person Specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job/role. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.
- 4.4 UKDS will consider any possible indirect discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done. When considering requests for variations to standard working practices we will refuse such requests only if UKDS considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so.
- 4.5 UKDS will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. UKDS will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The UKDS Board is responsible for ensuring that the UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is implemented, followed, reviewed and enforced and that any breaches are dealt with appropriately.
- 5.2 A Director of the Board will be the Lead Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and will ensure that equality is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality and diversity issues into consideration when making decisions.
- 5.3 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on a day-to-day basis and for the implementation of any actions resulting from the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).
- 5.4 All UKDS Employees, Board, Advisory Group and Committee Members and Volunteers have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intentions of the UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Individual work programmes for UKDS Employees will be amended to include equality and diversity related tasks where appropriate.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be implemented immediately following Board approval. The CEO and Lead Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion have overall responsibility for its implementation. All Employees, Board, Advisory Group or Committee Members and Volunteers will be given a copy of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- 6.2 Every Board Director and Employee is required to assist UKDS to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation (as described in Annex 2) against UKDS Employees, Board, Advisory Group or Committee Members are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under UKDS's disciplinary procedure.
- 6.2.1 Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice or removal from the Board. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, UKDS for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.
- 6.3 UKDS recognises that, in some cases, to further the principle of equality, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. For example, targeting funding for sports activities focused on helping deaf women and girls to access a sport or activity.
- 6.4 If appropriate and proportionate, UKDS will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a Protected Characteristic which is currently underrepresented.
- 6.5 Consultants and advisers (and where appropriate suppliers) to UKDS will be required to abide by the UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and they will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by UKDS.
- 6.6 UKDS recognises its selection of Deaf Athletes for the Deaflympics³ will be based solely on the eligibility and performance standard required and will then not discriminate against any Protected Characteristics.

7. Communication

- 7.1 This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be provided to all Employees, Directors, Committee and Advisory Board Members and Volunteers as part of their induction process and will be publicly available on the UKDS website.

³ International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD) (who govern the Deaflympics) set their own criteria for eligibility which is a hearing loss of at least 55dB in the better ear (3 tone frequency average of 500, 1,000 and 2,000 Hertz, ANSI 1969 standard). Deaflympics GB athletes will meet this standard.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.1 A review of the UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will take place at least every two years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or guidance that impacts on the policy.
- 8.2 As part of the review process UKDS will consider whether:
- The organisation is living the policy.
 - The policy aligns to UKDS's other policies and procedures.
 - UKDS have delivered against our commitments.
 - The policy is working and what within the policy is not, and why.
 - What can be improved upon and amended.
- 8.3 Each time the UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is reviewed, UKDS Board Members will be consulted and will need to approve any changes to the policy.
- 8.4 UKDS will produce, maintain, and monitor the delivery of a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to ensure the objectives of the UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are consistently delivered throughout all areas of the organisation.
- 8.5 The Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will be reviewed by the CEO and the Lead Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion regularly, but in any event not less than once every 12 months.

9. Complaints

- 9.1 To safeguard individual rights under the UKDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, any Employee, Board, Advisory Group or Committee Member or Volunteer who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through the appropriate procedure.
- 9.2 If an Employee considers they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, they should use the UKDS grievance procedure as detailed in the Employee Handbook, to make a complaint. UKDS will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds.
- 9.2.1 Use of the UKDS's grievance procedure does not affect an Employee's right to make a complaint to an employment tribunal. Complaints to an employment tribunal must normally be made within three months from the date of the act of discrimination.
- 9.3 The UKDS Complaints Policy and Procedure should be followed for Board, Advisory Group or Committee Members or Volunteers and anyone external to UKDS who feels they have suffered inequitable treatment during their interactions with UKDS.
- 9.4 UKDS regards breaches of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy as misconduct. Proportionate disciplinary action (under the relevant UKDS disciplinary procedures) may be taken against any UKDS Employee, Board, Advisory Group or Committee Member or Volunteer who breaches it.

9.5 An individual raising a grievance or complaint will not be penalised for doing so unless it is both untrue and not made in good faith.

Annex 1: Gender Identity and Reassignment

1. Gender Identity

- 1.1 Gender identity refers to an individual's "personal sense of their gender" or inner sense of being a man or woman, regardless of biological sex.
- 1.2 Some people experience a gender identity that is somewhat, or completely, inconsistent with their sex appearance or they may regard themselves as gender neutral, or non-gender, or as embracing aspects of both man and woman and, possibly, falling on a spectrum between the two. People have the right to self-identify, and many people reject the whole idea of binary tick-boxes, and describe themselves in non-binary, more wide-ranging, open terms such as pan-gender, poly-gender, third gender, gender queer, neutrois and so on.
- 1.3 Gender reassignment is the process of transitioning from one gender to another. This is a personal process, not a medical process. This means that someone does not need to have undergone surgery or be under any kind of medical supervision to be classed and protected as transgender. When an individual decides to live openly in their acquired gender, they have made a social transition.
- 1.4 The Equality Act 2010 outlaws' discrimination in employment and vocational training on the grounds of gender reassignment. Harassment or bullying on the grounds that a person is proposing to transition, is transitioning or has transitioned is unlawful discrimination and will not be tolerated at UKDS. Gender reassignment is one of the nine protected characteristics protected by the Act.
- 1.5 There is no requirement for a transgender person to tell UKDS about their gender reassignment status and questions about a possible transgender status should not be asked. It is unlawful to refuse to work with someone with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.
- 1.6 UKDS will only identify a person's transgender status if we have permission to do so. 'Outing' a person as transgender is classed as direct discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 and could result in criminal charges under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Disclosure of the fact that an employee has obtained a gender recognition certificate is a criminal act subject to a fine.
- 1.7 If during the recruitment process information is disclosed about a job applicant's gender history, for example, because certain documents are in a previous name, UKDS will keep the applicant's gender history confidential and will not take this into account in the selection process, unless an occupational requirement makes this relevant.

2. Gender Reassignment

- 2.1 UKDS will be supportive of any employee who expresses an intention to transition and will work with them to try to ensure as smooth a transition at work as possible. Matters to be addressed may include the following:

- *The employees' job:* consideration will be given to whether the employee wishes to stay in the same job and location or, if possible, to move post and/or location. In the rare cases where an occupational requirement applies to the post, a change of job may be required.
- *Time off:* the employee may require time off for medical or other treatment. Time off for these purposes will be treated no less favourably than time off for illness or other medical appointments.
- *Change of social gender:* consideration will be given to:
 - when the employee expects to change name and to start presenting at work in the new gender;
 - how work colleagues and clients are to be informed of the change;
 - whether the employee wishes to inform colleagues and clients of the change or have someone from the organisation do this;
 - what information or training is to be given to managers and work colleagues;
 - the point at which the employee will start to use any single-sex facilities, such as toilets, in their new gender.
- *Dress codes:* if there is a dress code applying to the job done by the employee consideration will be given to what, if any, flexibility may be required to accommodate the transition.
- *Records:* after an employee has transitioned, records relating to the transition will be destroyed. The organisation will create a new personnel record to ensure confidentiality.

Annex 2: Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation

1. UKDS recognises the following as being unacceptable:

- i. *Direct Discrimination*: when a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- ii. *Indirect discrimination*: where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage and is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by direct sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- iii. *Harassment*: where a person suffers unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or unwanted conduct related to one of the protected characteristics that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct. UKDS is committed to ensuring that its stakeholders are able to conduct their activities free from harassment.
- iv. *Associative discrimination*: where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- v. *Perceptive discrimination*: where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.
- vi. *Bullying*: an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.
- vii. Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).
 - a. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.
- viii. *Victimisation*: where a person is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a

complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010, or because he or she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare their treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments and is then systematically excluded from meetings such behaviour could amount to victimisation.

- ix. *Reasonable Adjustments*: failure to make reasonable adjustments occurs where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.
 - a. When any decision is made about an individual, the only personal characteristics that may be considered are those that are consistent with any relevant legislation and are relevant to the substance of the decision being made.
 - b. UKDS recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons. UKDS 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 in our activities.

Annex 3: Definitions

1. *Equality*: at its core, equality means fairness. Equality ensures that every individual has equal opportunities, regardless of their background, identity or experience. Equality means making sure that everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect, ensuring that individuals, or groups of individuals, are not treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics. Equality means providing equality of opportunity, challenging discrimination and removing barriers, so that everyone has opportunities to achieve their desired outcomes, ensuring that those who may be disadvantaged are given the tools they need to access the same, fair opportunities as their peers.
2. *Diversity*: diversity recognises that, though people have things in common with each other, they are also different many ways. Diversity is about recognising the benefits of different values, abilities, and perspectives, and respecting and celebrating people's differences. Diversity means promoting a diverse environment that welcomes and values diverse backgrounds, thinking, skills and experience. A diverse environment includes people from a wide range of backgrounds and mindsets and allows for an empowered culture of creativity and innovation.
3. *Inclusion*: inclusion means creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. Inclusion is where people's differences are seen as a benefit, and where perspectives and differences are shared, leading to better decisions. Inclusion means providing a space where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources, and where everyone feels valued and accepted. An inclusive environment can only be created once we are more aware of our unconscious biases and have learned how to manage them. Everyone should be able to contribute and have a voice. This may mean making reasonable adjustments to facilitate participation.

Annex 2: Equality Impact Assessments

1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based approach designed to help public organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.
2. The Public Sector Equality Duty came into force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010). The Public Sector Equality Duty is a duty on Public Authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act through completing EIAs. Other organisations and individuals do not have to comply with the duty.
3. Although UKDS is not required to carry out EIAs, we will apply the principles of the Public Sector Equality Duty to our work. UKDS recognise that if you do not consider how a function or decision can affect different groups in different ways, it is unlikely to have the intended effect. This in turn can contribute to greater inequality and poor outcomes.
4. UKDS will always consider the impact on equality whenever we make a decision, develop or review a policy, or implement a new strategy or service that will have an impact on different groups within UKDS including Employees, Board, Committee and Advisory Group Members, Volunteers and Members as well as participants of deaf sports and activities.
5. These may be people from different ethnic groups, different age groups, different religions, different genders, disabled people and people with different sexual orientations. We will consider how we treat other people and reflect on whether we are being fair in all we do.
6. In the exercise of our functions UKDS will have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Encourage people from protected groups to participate in UKDS activities, especially where their participation is disproportionately low.
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.