

West of England Sport Trust (Wesport) Equality Policy

This is the equality policy for the West of England Sport Trust (Wesport).

1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 WESPORT is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicants, staff, volunteers or participants are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together known as the 'Protected Characteristics')
- 1.2 Within the organisation Wesport aims to build a culture that values openness, fairness, respect and transparency. This is in keeping with Wesport's values of passion, respect, integrity, diversity and excellence.
- 1.3 Wesport will encourage all staff, volunteers or participants to be responsible for the adoption of and promotion of Wesport's Equality Policy.
- 1.4 Wesport will encourage partner organisations to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of Equality as set out in the Equality Policy.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

2.1 Wesport recognises that individuals and / or certain groups in society who share one or more of the protected characteristics may not have been able to participate equally and fully in sports related activities in the past. In some cases this may have been as a result of unlawful discrimination

2.2 This policy has been produced to try to prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against stakeholders that may preclude them from participating fully in sports related activities.

2.3 Wesport recognises the need to provide different and diverse opportunities when putting programmes and projects in place, creating entitlement and access.

2.4 Wesport will endeavour to ensure that all commissioned organisations, partners or organisations are given the same opportunities regardless of their protected characteristics and or socio – economic backgrounds.

2.5 The Wesport Equality Statement is:

WESPORT is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and takes responsibility to ensure that no member of staff, volunteer or participant is unlawfully discriminated against because of one of the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation). Wesport will also ensure that stakeholders and commissioned partners are given the same opportunities to be involved where appropriate regardless of their socio – economic background and will encourage all partners to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality.

WESPORT will ensure that equality is at the centre of its mission 'Inspiring People, Creating Opportunities and Empowering Organisations'

WESPORT will ensure that Equality is integral to its values 'Passion, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Excellence.

3. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 WESPORT recognises its legal obligation under, and will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and any equivalent legislation that is amended in any UK jurisdiction which is relevant to Wesport.

3.2 This includes any later amendments to the above Acts / Regulations, or future Acts / Regulations that are relevant to WESPORT.

3.3 WESPORT will seek legal advice each time the policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to comply with all legislation requirements.

4. DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND VICTIMISATION

Wesport recognises the following as being unacceptable:

4.1 Unlawful Discrimination which can take the following forms:

- Direct Discrimination. This means treating someone less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances.
- Indirect Discrimination. This occurs when a job requirement or condition is applied equally to all, which has a disproportionate and detrimental effect on one sector of society, because fewer from that sector can comply with it and the requirement cannot be justified in relation to the job.

4.2 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 preference, a disability or some other characteristic. Wesport is committed to ensuring that its employees, participants and volunteers are able to conduct their activities free from harassment or intimidation.

4.3 Bullying: the misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.

4.4 Victimisation is defined as when someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action against Wesport under one of the relevant Acts / Regulations (as previously outlined) or provided information about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.

4.5 Wesport regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct and any member of staff, volunteer or participant who discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

5. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

5.1 When a 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.

5.2 Wesport recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons. All requests for adjustments will be considered and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests.

6. TRANSGENDER ATHLETES

Wesport does not currently have in place a policy in relation to transgender members of staff, volunteers or participants. However any transgender member of staff, volunteer or participant looking to be involved in

Wesport is requested to contact the Equality Officer, who will then ensure that a policy is formulated and in place. Any such request will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT

All members of staff, volunteers and participants will be expected to sign up to and adhere to a Code of Conduct and Ethical Behaviour.

7.1 Good practice guidelines to follow are detailed below:-

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of them taking part in activities regardless of age, ability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social / economic status. Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Ensure neutrality in all activities
- Discriminatory, Offensive and violent behaviour will not be tolerated and complaints will be acted upon.

7.2 Practice to be avoided:

- Allowing children to use inappropriate, sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-disability language unchallenged

8. COMPLAINTS DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Wesport will follow their Complaints and Disciplinary procedures if they receive any information relating to this area. Situations in which the policy is alleged to have been breached will be resolved as outlined below.

8.1 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

8.2 To safeguard individual rights under the policy, an 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 grievance procedure.

8.3 Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, volunteer or participant who violates the Wesport Equity Policy.

8.4 An individual may raise any grievance and no employee, volunteer or participant will be penalised for doing so unless it is without foundation and not made in good faith.

8.5 As with all grievance procedures, the final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Discipline Standing Commission.

9. RESPONSIBILITY, IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION

9.1 The following responsibilities will apply:

- The Board is responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is followed and to deal with any actual or potential breaches.
- The Chief Executive and the Chair of the Trust Board have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equality Policy.
- The Core Business Manager, designated by the Chief Executive, has the overall responsibility for implementing, monitoring and achieving the equality action plan as this will form part of their work programme.
- All staff, 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 staff work programmes will be amended to include equality related tasks.

- 9.2 Any amendments to the policy will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and will result in the following:
- A copy of the document will be available to all staff (both permanent and contract), board members and volunteers of WESPORT.
 - WESPORT will take measures to ensure that its employment practices are non-discriminatory.
 - No job applicant 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.
 - A planned approach will be adopted to eliminate barriers which discriminate.
 - Ensure that organisations / individuals commissioned by WESPORT can demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality and that they abide by this policy.
- 9.3 An amendments to the policy will be communicated in the following ways:
- It will be part of the staff handbook and reference will be made to it in any codes of conduct.
 - It will be covered in all staff and volunteer induction training
 - All participants will be made aware of the policy's existence through the WESPORT website and a summary of any revisions will also be published there www.wesport.org.uk
 - At time of review as per the delegations policy of the trust, a mechanism will be put in place to allow all staff, members, participants and volunteers to be part of the process.

10. ACTION

Wesport will produce, maintain and monitor an equality action plan to ensure that the objectives of the Equality Policy are consistently delivered throughout all areas of the Trust.

11. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

11.1 The Equality Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn. The Equality policy will be reviewed as part of the delegations policy adopted by the Trust.

11.2 The Equality Action Plan, created to ensure the objectives of the equality policy are delivered will be reviewed by the Chief Executive and the Equality Officer regularly, but in any event not less than once every 12 months.