

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Statement

The Scottish Orienteering Association (SOA) endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in orienteering, whether as individual orienteers, professional staff, team members, volunteers, coaches or office-bearers in clubs or the SOA:

- Has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, socioeconomic status or sexual orientation; and
- Can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

Legal obligations

The SOA is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind in orienteering, and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero tolerance approach to harassment. Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours in question are given in the Appendix.

Positive action

The principle of Sports Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers - whether real or perceived - that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully.

The SOA will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to orienteering and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in the sport or has difficulty accessing it.

Implementation

The following steps will be taken to publicize this policy and promote sports equality in orienteering: -

- A copy of this document will be published on the SOA Website
- The SOA President will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed.
- The SOA Board will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of the SOA.
- The SOA will collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in orienteering and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in orienteering.
- The SOA will provide guidance to all of its Board Members and Professional Staff to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities. All SOA licensed coaches will be equality and diversity trained.

It will be a condition of SOA membership that member clubs:

- formally adopt this policy, or produce their own equality and diversity policy in terms that are consistent with it; and
 - take steps to ensure that their Committees, members and volunteers behave in accordance with the policy, including where appropriate taking disciplinary action under the Club's constitution; and
 - ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive
 - support such measures and initiatives that the SOA may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.
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- It will be a condition of SOA membership that individual members
 - commit to act in accordance with this policy; and
 - support such measures and initiatives that the SOA may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy.

The Board will review all SOA activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis, and the President will report formally on this issue at the AGM.

The Board, or where appropriate a designated project leader, will review any measures or initiatives that the SOA may institute or take part in to promote and enhance sports equality in orienteering, and will report their findings formally to the AGM.

The Board will review the policy itself at intervals of no more than three years, (or when necessary due to changes in legislation) and will report with recommendations to the AGM.

Complaints and compliance

The SOA regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable, and is concerned to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member or volunteer who violates the SOA Equality and Diversity Policy.

Any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this policy by a member club, individual member or employees of the SOA, should first complain to that person or organisation. If this does not resolve the matter, or in the case of allegations of discriminatory behaviour against the SOA itself, the person may raise the matter by writing directly to the President. Contact details are available through the SOA website

The President will investigate the complaint personally or appoint a Board member to do so. The investigation will be conducted impartially, confidentially, and without avoidable delay. Any person or organisation against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter. The outcome of the investigation will be notified to the parties in writing and reported to the SOA Board. If the investigation reveals unacceptable discriminatory behaviour on the part of an individual member, employee, or member club the Committee may impose sanctions on that person or organisation in line with the SOA Constitution. Sanctions may range from a written reminder concerning future conduct up to and including temporary

or permanent expulsion from SOA membership. In deciding what sanction is appropriate in a particular case the Board will consider the severity of the matter and take account of any mitigating circumstances.

Where the violation of the Equality Policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed. In the event that an individual or organisation associated with the SOA is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the SOA Board will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action as above in relation to the matter concerned.

Further policies:

We are also adapting to the British Orienteering's "Transsexual People Participating in Orienteering Activities"