



Introduction

North Shields Polytechnic Club (North Shields Poly) is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that all present and potential members, coaches, competitors, officials and volunteers are treated fairly and are able to fulfil their potential within athletics. We want to ensure that our organisation is promoting diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities, promote sport which is free from discrimination, harassment and prejudice, and is representative of all sections of society.

1. Policy Statement

We are committed to fully implementing the Equality Act 2010 and associated legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Human Rights Act 1998, Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999, Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, as well as Codes of Practice issued by the Equality & Human Rights Commission.

To this end we are committed to:

- **Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation; by implementing clear policies across all aspects of our provision, and promoting behaviours which actively oppose all forms of discrimination and unfair practices.
- **Advancing equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by removing or minimise disadvantages, taking steps to meet their needs where these are different from the needs of others, and taking positive action where necessary to encourage participation of under-represented groups in our activities.
- **Fostering good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding to create a harmonious and respectful workplace and society.

In our day-to-day activities, we will take steps to value and harness the diversity of our members, coaches, competitors, officials and volunteers, partner organisations and local communities; and create an environment in which all individuals are treated with fairness and respect.

2. Challenging Discriminatory Behaviour - Definitions

North Shields Poly is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of discrimination, intimidation, harassment and abuse. All Club members have a responsibility to challenge discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity. We will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to our disciplinary procedures.

Discrimination can come several forms:

Direct discrimination - is deliberately treating an individual less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination - the result of a provision, criterion or practice being applied to everyone, which has a disproportionately adverse effect on people from a particular group, AND cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Positive discrimination - preferential treatment of members of a minority group over members of a majority group. Preferential treatment is unlawful unless it is part of a positive action process, or there is a Genuine Occupational Requirement.

Harassment - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates an individual's dignity or creating and intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. The focus is on the perception of the complainant not the intent of the perpetrator. Harassment includes physical, verbal and/or non-verbal conduct and may include assault, physical threats, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive comments, jokes and banter.



Victimisation - treating someone less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint of discrimination, or intends to bring a case under equality legislation.

Discrimination by association - discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by perception - discrimination against someone because of the belief that someone possesses a protected characteristic.

Other unacceptable behaviours include:

Bullying - action which undermines the competence, effectiveness, confidence and integrity of the person on the receiving end. It may involve misuse of power, position or knowledge to criticise, humiliate and belittle a person. This could include shouting at someone, regularly and deliberately ignoring a person, excluding someone from activities, or setting someone up to fail by giving them impossible tasks.

3. Our Commitments

North Shields Poly will:

- Take positive actions as an organisation to promote a change in attitudes and perceptions and to improve opportunities for everyone to participate in athletics.
- Actively identify and reduce barriers to participation for under-represented groups.
- Look to facilitate inclusive practices and remove barriers to participation.
- Ensure under-represented groups are given the opportunity to participate in all aspects of our activities.
- Provide opportunities for all in coaching, officiating and other volunteer positions.
- Listen to the feedback from relevant groups and individuals about their needs and requirements.
- Demonstrate that every effort has been made to enable everyone to participate and that inclusion has been the priority.
- Encourage people to contact us to discuss their needs and requirements to facilitate inclusion.

North Shields Poly commits to:

- Ensure that our training and development policies, procedures and practices comply with this policy and do not discriminate intentionally or unintentionally against any group or individual.
- Monitor our processes in terms of the protected characteristics and take action to address any inequalities including encouraging equality and diversity.
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to progressing towards achieving gender parity and greater diversity generally in our membership.
- To create a culture where all present and future members, coaches, competitors, officials, volunteers, spectators, and trustees feel comfortable raising concerns of any forms of discrimination and that action and support will be provided in line with this policy.
- Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff and volunteers are recognised and valued and take seriously complaints about these in the course of the organisations activities.
- Ensure relevant people undergo appropriate equality training for their role.

4. Reporting

To safeguard individual rights under this policy, any party within the North Shields Poly community who believes they have suffered any form of discrimination or inequitable treatment may report the matter, anonymously if necessary, to any trustee or coach at the club, or to one of our welfare officers (Holly Mansfield and Graham Lewis-Dale – contactable on welfare@nspoly.org). All allegations of unacceptable behaviour or working practices will be investigated thoroughly and dealt with appropriately.

We are committed to ensuring that individuals feel able to raise any grievance, and no party will be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.



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5. Disciplinary Proceedings

If the Board of Trustees is satisfied that a misconduct has been committed by a volunteer, official, member, or Trustee of NSP, then it may impose one or more of the following sanctions:

- 1) Note the misconduct but take no further action.
- 2) Formally warn the volunteer, official, member, or Trustee of NSP, concerned as to future conduct.
- 3) Suspend or disqualify the volunteer, member, or Trustee of NSP, from club athletic competitions, club coaching and/or administration and/or use of the club's premises for a definite or indefinite period.
- 4) Recommend to the relevant governing body that the member be disqualified from any involvement in athletics for a definite or indefinite period.
- 5) Subject to following the procedure at clause 9(e)ii of NSP's constitution, terminate the volunteer, member, or Trustee of North Shields Polytechnic Club's club membership.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is owned by our charity trustees, who are responsible for ensuring its effective implementation.

The policy will be reviewed annually, unless any proposal to the trustees, emerging best practice or legislation change, requires an interim review and/or amendment.

Policy Ratified by: North Shields Polytechnic Club Chair

Date: June 2021

Date for review: June 2022