



# Equity Policy

## Statement of Intent

The Scottish Sub Aqua Club (SSAC) is fully committed to the principles of equity of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or member receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, disability, age, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religious belief, class or social background, sexual preference or political belief.

SSAC will work to ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in all aspects of diving activities and that they will be treated fairly.

## Purpose of the Policy

SSAC recognises that certain sections of the community may have been affected by past discrimination and may be denied the opportunity to participate equally and fully in diving at all levels. This policy has been produced to prevent/tackle any potential/current discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against its employees, members and volunteers.

## Actions

SSAC will produce and maintain an action plan to ensure the intent of this policy is delivered. All areas of the organisation will be affected by this action plan, which will be incorporated into the overall Development Plan.

SSAC recognises that, in some cases, to achieve the principle of equity, unequal effort is required and, if appropriate, will consider positive action to tackle under-representation.

## Legal Requirements

SSAC is required by law not to discriminate against its employees 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 and 1999
- Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (amended in 2005)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Scotland Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Civil Partnership Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2003
- Equality Act 2006
- Any later amendments to the above Acts/Regulations, or future Acts/Regulations that are relevant to SSAC.

SSAC will seek appropriate advice each time the policy is reviewed to ensure that it continues to comply with all legislation requirements.

## Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

Discrimination 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 affect 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.
- 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.

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

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characteristic. SSAC is committed to working to ensure that its employees, members, participants and volunteers are able to conduct their activities free from harassment or intimidation.

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

SSAC 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.

### **Responsibility, Implementation and Communication**

The following responsibilities will apply:

- The Board is responsible for ensuring that this Equity Policy is followed and to deal with any actual or potential breaches.
- The Board has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equity Policy.
- The Chairman has the overall responsibility for achieving the equity action plan.
- All employees, volunteers and members 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.

This policy will be implemented at a national level and will result in the following:

- A copy of this policy will be available to all employees, members and volunteers of SSAC.
- SSAC will take measures to ensure 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 consultants and advisors used by SSAC can demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practices of equity and that they abide by this policy.

The new 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 employee and volunteer induction training.
- All members will have access to the policy and a summary of any revisions will be published.
- It will be available on the website.
- At time of review, a mechanism will be put in place to allow all employees and appropriate selected members and volunteers to be part of the process.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Once approved, the policy will apply for 3 years before a formal review takes place, unless any proposal to the Board, or legislation change, requires an interim review and/or amendment.

The equity action plan, created to ensure the intent of the policy is delivered, will be reviewed by the Board on a regular basis.

On an annual basis, statistical information in relation to the gender and ethnic groupings of the membership holistically will be compiled for the Board to show the impact of this policy.

### **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

To safeguard individual rights under the policy, an employee, volunteer or member who believes he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure. The procedure for the above is given in Byelaw 8

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, volunteer, or member who violates SSAC's Equity Policy.

An individual may raise any grievance and no employee, volunteer or member will be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.