



BRITISH ROWING

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

September 2021

TEAMWORK | OPEN TO ALL | COMMITMENT



Introduction

British Rowing is committed to making rowing an inclusive and diverse sport that welcomes and has an offer for everyone. This commitment is at the heart of our National Strategy 'Rowing – Everyone's Sport'.

'Open to All' and inclusivity are part of our core values running through the Strategic Plan 2015-2024. British Rowing work with members and partners to enable rowing to be an accessible and inclusive sport that provides opportunities for enjoyment and achievement at all levels. There are a number of successful initiatives that have been undertaken to date to drive and support inclusion and diversity within rowing. Existing British Rowing plans, initiatives and programmes are outlined in British Rowing's Committed to Inclusion. The aim, for British Rowing, is for rowing to be truly representative of all sections of society.

Equality and Equity

If equality is the end goal, equity is how we will get there. The Equality and Human Rights Commission describes equality as, 'Ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.' British Rowing believes that in order to achieve equality we need to apply an equitable practice and provide what is necessary, i.e. not always treating people the same, for everyone to have access to the same opportunities.

Diversity and Inclusion

Research has proven that more diverse communities perform better, are more engaged and more innovative. The term 'diversity' refers to a mix of people from different backgrounds. Inclusion is the culture in which the mix of people can come together, take part in the environment they are in, feel comfortable and confident to be themselves. Inclusion ensures that everyone feels valued and importantly, adds value.

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all employees, Board members, senior volunteers, members of British Rowing, and participants of clubs, events, and organisations affiliated or recognised by British Rowing.

British Rowing is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that none of its members, volunteers, employees, or job applicants receives less favourable treatment, intimidation, or discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, gender reassignment, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity or parental, religion or belief, socio-economic status, sex, sexual orientation, or political belief.

British Rowing will make every effort to ensure that everyone, who wishes to, has an equal opportunity to participate in the sport of rowing, whether as a beginner, participant, performer, or as a coach, manager, employee, administrator or official.



Commitment to Action

British Rowing's Inclusive Sport Plan, 'Committed to Inclusion' outlines the current picture in rowing and a framework for change which is built on three areas;

1. Building a culture that values and champions diversity and inclusion;
2. Taking positive action¹ to improve diversity and inclusion at all levels;
3. Delivering real change in the diversity of our sport.

More information including the framework can be found in British Rowing's 'Committed to Inclusion'.

British Rowing will display its commitment to inclusivity by:

- Creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contribution of all staff, volunteers and members are recognised and valued;
- Providing appropriate training to all its employees, Board members and key volunteers to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities;
- Maintaining our representation where we are doing well, and improving representation in areas where we could improve;
- Recognising that in some cases, to achieve the principle of equality, equity is required and if appropriate, British Rowing will take positive action to tackle under-representation;
- Publicising our commitment to all employees, Board members, British Rowing members, volunteers, and officials;
- Monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing the impact of policies in order to set benchmarks and track progress.

Diversity of Leadership in British Rowing

42%, or five of the twelve, British Rowing Board members are female. In line with the Code of Sports Governance, our target is to work towards gender parity.

We are also committed to increasing the diversity of volunteers (including Board and committee members), participants, coaches and staff and will carry out initiatives and work with key stakeholders to encourage more women, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities and people from ethnically diverse communities to become more actively involved in all aspects of British Rowing's activities.

¹ Positive action is a range of measures allowed under the Equality Act 2010 which can be lawfully taken to encourage and enable people from under-represented groups to help them overcome disadvantages that may hinder their opportunities in rowing.



Legal Requirements

To ensure its practices are fair and equitable British Rowing recognises its legal obligations as a National Governing Body.

Discrimination

Discrimination can take the following forms:

Direct Discrimination when someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic², or someone thinks you have that protected characteristic (known as discrimination by perception) or you are connected to someone with that protected characteristic (known as discrimination by association).

Indirect Discrimination when there is a provision, criterion or practice that applies in the same way for everybody but disadvantages a group of people or individual with a protected characteristic.

Harassment when an individual receives unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic and the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It is also harassment if the unwanted conduct is sexual in nature or is related to gender reassignment or sex. Or the individual is treated less favourable because they did not submit to or rejected the unwanted conduct.

Victimisation when someone is treated badly because they complained about discrimination or helps someone else who has been discriminated against.

British Rowing regards discrimination, harassment or victimisation as serious misconduct and any employee, Board member, volunteer or member who discriminates against, harasses, or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

Responsibility for Implementation

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is everyone's responsibility: not responding to discriminatory or unacceptable language and behaviour is not an option.

All employees, members, volunteers, and officials have the responsibility to respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy.

² Protected Characteristics are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.



British Rowing's Welfare and Governance team will oversee the implementation of this policy and monitor and evaluate its effectiveness.

Communication

British Rowing will make this policy available, and communicate about this policy to all its employees, Board members, members, volunteers, officials, and clubs using its website, social media and member e-newsletters.

Disciplinary and Grievance

To safeguard an individual's rights under the policy an employee, member, volunteer, or official who believes that they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member, volunteer, or official who violates the organisation's Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Disciplinary procedures relating to volunteers or members of British Rowing are available from British Rowing's [Disciplinary and Grievance webpage](#).

Where an incident concerns a child, young adult, or adult with care and support needs, it will be triaged in consultation with British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer.

If the incident concerns a member of British Rowing staff, it should be reported to HR@britishrowing.org.

Contact

If you have any comments on this policy, or would like more information, please contact inclusion@britishrowing.org.

Review September 2024