



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
Sports Union

EQUITY POLICY

Updated — July 2017

Introduction

1. EUSU believes that equity is a broader concept than equality. It is not just about equal numbers, but is concerned more with fairness, justice, inclusion and respect for diversity. Sports equity is about making sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in and contribute to sport or physical recreation if they choose to do so, and that no one is discriminated against unfairly for any reason, including - but not limited to - gender, race, disability, age, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, social background, ethnic origin, language, marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy. Sports equity is also about recognising and acknowledging that inequalities do exist between people in Scottish sport, taking positive and proactive steps to overcome these inequalities, and thus making sure that any barriers standing in the way of people who are traditionally not involved in sport and physical recreation are removed. Ensuring equity may require the unequal allocation or reallocation of resources and entitlements in order to overcome previous inequalities or discrimination.

2. Research continually indicates that inequalities persist in most aspects of sport and physical recreation including participation, membership, governance, coaching and leadership. Because of this evidence - coupled with a strong commitment to implementing and promoting the principles of *Equity Standard: A Framework for Sport (2004)* throughout Scottish sport - Scottish Universities Sport is firmly convinced of the necessity to have in place a robust equity policy.

3. EUSU is absolutely committed to promoting and achieving equity, and to ensuring that unfair discrimination is eliminated. Discrimination on grounds such as those listed in paragraph one will not be tolerated within EUSU.

Statement of Intent

4. EUSU will ensure that equity and the needs of the diverse EUSU population are given due regard from the outset of development of all its policies, programmes and services.

5. EUSU will address any form of discrimination that occurs within the organisation.

6. EUSU will continue to comply with its statutory and legislative obligations¹ to eliminate discrimination and increase equity in sport and physical recreation, and will ensure that it remains informed of new developments in terms of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation. As such, EUSU will ensure that it takes steps to promote gender equality, racial equality and disability equality in line with its legislative requirements. This will include the publication of an action plan that sets out how the duties contained within these pieces of legislation will be met.

¹ See the annex for relevant anti-discrimination and equalities legislation affecting this policy

EUSU's Commitments

Accountability for Equity

7. EUSU will ensure that commitment and responsibility for equity is placed firmly at the most senior levels in the organisation. The Sport Union President is responsible and accountable for equity within EUSU.

Staff Time and Resources

8. The responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Ethics programme will be handled by the Sports Union President and the Staff Committee will oversee the implementation of this policy and the development and delivery of an Equity Strategy.

9. EUSU will invest in initiatives, programmes and infrastructure (physical and human) that positively impact on the participation and inclusion of under-represented groups in sport, and will continue to target investment at particular aspects of equity in sport.

Employment

10. EUSU is committed to being an equitable employer that recognises and encourages diversity, inclusion and respect in its workforce. It is committed to having in place employment conditions and practices that ensure all staff are treated equitably.

11. EUSU will take action designed to prevent any member of the workforce suffering harassment, discrimination or victimisation. However, in the event that any instances of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation do occur, robust grievance and disciplinary procedures are in place and will be firmly upheld.

12. EUSU will continue to operate equitable, open and transparent recruitment and selection policies and procedures to ensure that discrimination does not occur. All staff will be appointed purely on the basis of merit and their ability to do the job in question.

13. EUSU is committed to having in place a Code of Conduct that adequately reflects what is expected of Executive Committee and Club Committee members in terms of equitable conduct when carrying out their role.

14. EUSU is committed to ensuring that it is equitable in its interaction with volunteers at all levels in sport.

Training and Development

15. EUSU is committed to its staff and Executive Committee having a good understanding of the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion, in society and in sport. As such, EUSU is committed to ensuring that its staff including Executive Committee members - will receive ongoing education and training on equity and its impact on sport and physical recreation.

Policies and Programmes

16. EUSU is committed to ensuring that equity is considered from the outset when developing new policies, programmes, services or initiatives.

Our Partners in Sport

17. EUSU will take steps to ensure that partners in which it invests must demonstrate their commitment to equity.

18. EUSU will encourage its partners in sport and physical recreation to implement the principles of the Equity Standard: A Framework for Sport, and will provide advice and assistance in this area.

19. EUSU will promote examples of good practice in achieving and promoting equity in sport and physical recreation where available, and will ensure the successes of our partners in sport are recognised and promoted.

20. EUSU will continue to work with **sportscotland** to develop a consistent approach and standards in relation to equity in sport, and to share good practice in this area.

Consultation and Relationships with Equity Partners

21. EUSU will continue to work with and develop relationships with its key equity partners in sport to develop programmes, policies and initiatives that are inclusive and give due regard to equity, and to share information, research and good practice.

22. EUSU will begin to develop relationships with new partners in other areas of sports equity.

Communication and Access to Information

23. EUSU will continue to work with the media to promote the successes of athletes and sports people from all sections of The University of Edinburgh, and will strive to promote the successes of positive role models from under-represented groups.
24. EUSU will give due regard to equity when publishing documents and images, and will strive to ensure that positive images are used to reflect the demographics of The University of Edinburgh.
25. EUSU will give due regard to equity and accessibility when publishing information on the website.
26. EUSU will ensure that corporate publications can be made available in alternative formats and languages on request, as far as resources will reasonably allow.
27. EUSU will ensure that this policy, and our commitment to equity is communicated to all staff, members and partners in sport and physical recreation.
28. This equity policy will be made available on the EUSU website.
29. All new staff will be directed to read this equity policy as part of their induction.

Monitoring and Review

30. The implementation of this equity policy will be monitored and the Executive Committee will have a key role in this regard.
31. EUSU is committed to keeping this equity policy under review, and will formally review the policy again in 2016 unless any legislative change necessitates an interim review.

Grievances

32. Any member of staff who believes that he or she has been unfairly discriminated against, harassed, bullied or victimised by any other member of EUSU staff or Staff Committee should raise the matter with his or her Line Manager in the first instance. If it is not appropriate to discuss the matter with the Line Manager, staff are encouraged to raise the matter with a member of the Staff Committee. Staff should follow the procedures set out in the University of Edinburgh's Grievance and Harassment procedures which are adopted for use by EUSU.

33. Any individual who is not a member of EUSU staff who feels that he or she has suffered inequitable treatment as a result of a decision made by EUSU should follow the actions in the University of Edinburgh's Grievance procedure, a link is available at <http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/policies/#g> or this can be obtained from the EUSU Sports President on 0131 650 2346.

Further Information

34. For further information about EUSU's equity policy, or the forthcoming *Equity Standard*, please contact the Sports Union President at 48 Pleasance, Edinburgh, EH8 9TJ. Email sports.president@ed.ac.uk or call 0131 650 2346.

APPENDIX ONE

Definition of terms

Discrimination

- **Direct Discrimination** Where an individual or a group of people is treated less favourably than others in circumstances which are the same or not materially different. An example would be stating that only men can apply for the position of Chair in an organisation. This would constitute direct discrimination on the grounds of gender.
- **Indirect Discrimination** Imposing requirements or conditions which appear to apply equally to all, but which in practice can be met only by certain sections of the population. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be genuinely justified in relation to the situation in question (i.e. if there is a Genuine Occupational Requirement for an individual to be from a particular group in society). An example of indirect discrimination would be imposing a requirement upon all team players to wear a particular type of clothing as part of their uniform, which may indirectly preclude some people from being able to take part, on the grounds of their religious belief.

Diversity

Encouraging diversity means respecting and embracing individual and community differences in society.

Equal Opportunities

The prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people because of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or because of other personal attributes including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions. (*Scotland Act 1998*) In practice, equal opportunities involves an organisation fulfilling its obligations in terms of equality as required by law.

Equality

Equality is the state of being equal. In some cases, the pursuit of equality may require unequal effort to ensure that equality is indeed achieved - hence the requirement for equity.

Equity

In its simplest sense, equity means fairness. It is the process of allocating or reallocating resources and entitlements fairly and without discrimination, and taking steps to redress any existing inequalities or unfairness in how resources or entitlements are currently distributed. Equity in sport means applying the principles of fairness to ensure that the diverse needs of individuals in Scottish society are respected, so that all individuals have equal opportunities to participate in sport and physical recreation and have their rights protected

Ethics

The systematic application of a set of moral rules, principles, values and norms.

Harassment

A course of action, or form of behaviour that causes repeated or persistent offence to a person or group.

Positive action

Positive action means taking into account that a particular group has experienced disadvantage and so targeted action is needed to support/enable the disadvantaged group and to redress an existing inequality. This may require additional effort, time or resources to be targeted at a particular group in order to achieve a level playing field. This is NOT positive discrimination, which is not legal in the UK. Positive action can only be carried out within the bounds of the appropriate legislation. EUSU recommends obtaining legal advice before choosing to adopt positive action measures. An example of positive action would be advertising a post in media particularly aimed at women if there is clear evidence that women are under-represented in a particular role or level in that organisation.

Positive Discrimination

Positive discrimination is not lawful in the UK. An example of positive discrimination would be appointing a person purely on the grounds of his or her race or gender, rather than on that person's ability to do the job in question (unless a Genuine Occupational Requirement applies to the post).

Victimisation

Victimisation is defined as when someone is treated oppressively in revenge, and as such is subjected to suffering or ill treatment. If a person is subjected to ill treatment as a result of raising a grievance following discrimination, this would be victimisation.

APPENDIX TWO

Key Equalities and Anti-Discrimination Legislation

In implementing this equity policy, EUSU will continue to comply with its legislative obligations, and will give due regard to implications arising from the following Acts of Parliament and Regulations:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended in 1986 and 1999)
- The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended in 2000)
- The Disability Discrimination Act (as amended in 2005)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Scotland Act 1998
- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004
- The Civil Partnership Act 2004
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- The Equality Act 2010

EUSU will also comply with any relevant new equalities and antidiscrimination legislation that comes into force before this policy is reviewed, including age discrimination legislation, and regulations aimed at preventing discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and faith or religious belief.