

# ENGLAND NETBALL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY POLICY

## 1. Statement of Intent

1.1 England Netball is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or registered participant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, language, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religious belief, class or social background, sexual preference, gender reassignment or political belief.

1.2 England Netball will ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in all aspects of Netball activities and that they are treated fairly.

### 1.3 Scope of Policy – Gender

England Netball recognise the gender imbalance of players within our sport and is positive about the contribution that England Netball makes to the participation of women and girls in sport. Netball is recognised as the leading team sport for women in England.

The International Federation of Netball Associations (IFNA) rules state that only single sex competition is recognised and permitted.

Men and boys have an important role to play in Netball and England Netball's position in relation to gender is summarised below:

- England Netball encourages the involvement of men as volunteers, coaches, officials and administrators and employees.
- High 5 Netball is the recognised game for 9-11 year olds and is single sex or mixed.
- In the secondary sector England Netball approves and recognises mixed Netball in curriculum time up to and including GSCE as long as it is under the supervision of a qualified teacher.
- England Netball will carry out research into how other countries manage and integrate men and boys as players, in single sex and mixed provision.
- In the next 2-5 years England Netball will look to encourage growth in men and boys participation and recognise the governance of the game appropriately.

1.4 England Netball will encourage partner organisations to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equity.

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of clarification England Netball are working to the following definitions:

### ***Equal Opportunities***

Within the employment context, treating people as individuals and providing them with opportunities on the basis of their skills, talents and qualifications so that they are neither disadvantaged nor denied access on the grounds stated in section 1.1.

### ***Equality***

The state of being equal – treating individuals equally, which is not necessarily the same as treating them the same. In some cases the need for equality may require unequal effort to ensure the principle is achieved.

### ***Equity***

In its simplest sense, 'fairness' and respect for other people; the process of allocating (or re-allocating) resources and entitlements, including power, fairly and without discrimination. It includes fairness in opportunities and the upholding of individual human rights through social justice.

## **3. Purpose of the Policy**

- 3.1 England Netball recognises that ours is a diverse society and is committed to providing equal opportunities for people from all communities to take part in Netball.
- 3.2 England Netball recognises that members of some communities may have additional requirements for taking part in Netball and that some barriers do exist. England Netball will take positive action to ensure that the game is accessible for everyone.
- 3.3 This policy has been produced to identify and eradicate barriers, tackle discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, which may preclude some people from participating fully in Netball.

## **4. Actions**

- 4.1 England Netball will produce, maintain and monitor an action plan to ensure the intent of this policy is consistently delivered.
- 4.2 All areas of the organisation will be affected by this action plan, which will be incorporated in to the overall business delivery plan (Corporate Plan) of England Netball, which is itself reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- 4.3 England Netball recognises that, in some cases, to achieve the principle of equality, unequal effort and resource is required and, if appropriate, will consider positive action to tackle under-representation.

## **5. Legal Requirements**

- 5.1 England Netball 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 & 1999
  - Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
  - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
  - Human Rights Act 1998
  - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
  - Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003.
  - Any later amendments to the above Acts/regulations, or future Acts/regulations that are relevant to England Netball.

- 5.2 England Netball will seek advice each time the policy is reviewed to ensure that it continues to comply with all legislation requirements.

## **6. Discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

England Netball recognise the following:

- 6.1 Discrimination can take the following forms:

6.1.1 *Direct Discrimination.* This means treating someone less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances.

6.1.2 *Indirect Discrimination.* Imposing requirements or conditions, which on the face of it, 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 objectively justified.

6.1.3 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.

- 6.2 *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 characteristic. England Netball is committed to ensuring that its employees, members, participants and volunteers are able to conduct their activities free from harassment or intimidation.

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

- 6.4 England Netball 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.

## **7. Responsibility, implementation and communication**

- 7.1 The following responsibilities will apply:

7.1.1 The Board of Directors of England Netball will endorse and be responsible for ensuring that this Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches.

7.1.2 The Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy.

7.1.3 A specific member of staff, the Equity and Welfare Manager, designated by the Chief Executive, has the overall responsibility for

managing the implementation of the equity action plan as this will form a key part of their work programme.

- 7.1.4 All employees, volunteers and registered participants 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.
- 7.2 The new / revised policy will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and, at a corporate level, will result in the following:
- 7.2.1 A copy of this document will be given to all staff (both permanent and contract), and made available to registered participants of England Netball.
  - 7.2.2 England Netball will take measures to ensure that its employment practices are non-discriminatory.
  - 7.2.3 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.
  - 7.2.4 A planned approach will be adopted to eliminate barriers that discriminate.
  - 7.2.5 Regional Management Boards (RMB's), Counties and clubs will be required to adopt this policy and to include it within their constitutions.
  - 7.2.6 Partner organisations, consultants and advisers used by England Netball will be encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equity.
- 7.3 The new/revised policy will be communicated in the following ways:
- 7.3.1 It will be part of the staff handbook and reference will be made to it in any codes of conduct.
  - 7.3.2 It will be covered in all staff and volunteer induction training.
  - 7.3.3 England Netball will promote continual personal development for all employees, volunteers and registered participants to support equal opportunities and equity within the organisation and, where appropriate, provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.
  - 7.3.4 All registered participants will be made aware of the policy's existence when they join and a summary of any revisions will be published in England Netball's bi monthly Netball magazine.
  - 7.3.5 The policy will be available on the England Netball Web site.
  - 7.3.6 At time of review, a mechanism will be put in place to allow all staff, members and volunteers to be part of the process.

7.3.7 A summary of this document will be integrated into new and revised publications, where appropriate.

## **8. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 8.1 Once approved, the policy will apply for a maximum of 3 years before a formal review takes place, unless any proposal to the Board, or legislation change, requires an interim review and/or amendment.
- 8.2 The equity action plan, created to ensure the intent of the policy is delivered, will be reviewed by the Chief Executive and the Equity and Welfare Manager, who is responsible for leading its implementation, on a quarterly basis.
- 8.3 As part of the overall business delivery plan (Corporate Plan), the equity action plan, will be reviewed by the Board on a six monthly basis.
- 8.4 On an annual basis, statistical information will be produced for the Board, and this will be published internally and externally, to show the impact of this policy.

## **9. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

- 9.1 To safeguard individual rights under the policy, an employee, volunteer or registered participant who believes he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.
- 9.2 Appropriate action will be taken against any employee, volunteer or member who violates England Netball's Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy.
- 9.3 An individual may raise any grievance and no employee, volunteer or registered participant will be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.
- 9.4 Any employee, volunteer or registered participant who discriminates against or harasses any other person will liable to action according to the Articles and Regulations of All England Netball Association Limited.
- 9.5 'As with all grievance procedures, the final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Board Appeal Committee or as set out in Stage 3 of the Employee Grievance Policy and Procedure'.