

Policy Ref:
HR17



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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SASP are committed to our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) which sets out our ambitions for advancing and celebrating diversity and inclusion at every level of our organisation.

This stamp indicates areas in our policies / procedures that focus on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.

Policy Update Record (Version Control)		
Date	Author	Change(s)
10/12/2019	Meryl Bell	Original policy drafted and approved.
14/05/2025	Rachel Martin	Policy re-formatted and DIAP section added.

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Introduction

SASP recognises the benefits of a diverse community and workforce and is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination.

SASP will seek to promote the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and is responsible for ensuring that in all its dealings with employees, workers, job applicants, clients, customers, partners, suppliers, contractors, recruitment agencies and the public no one is unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation (together the "Protected Characteristics"). SASP recognises that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all Stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.

In addition, SASP will encourage partner organisations, including member clubs, affiliated associations, suppliers, contractors, sponsors and customers, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality, diversity and inclusion as set out in this policy.

All employees and those who act on SASP's behalf are required to adhere to this policy when undertaking their duties or when representing SASP in any capacity.

This policy outlines SASP's commitment to EDI, but more detailed information on various sections can be found in related policies including:

HR01	Staff Recruitment Policy
HR06	Maternity-Paternity-Adoption Policy
HR08	Staff Code of Conduct
HR09	Staff Disciplinary Policy
HR10	Staff Grievance Policy
HR14	Menopause Policy
HR16	Flexible Working Policy
HR18	Modern Slavery Policy
HR19	Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy
HR20	Volunteers Policy
HR21	Redundancy Policy
GOV13	Equality & Diversity Plan
GOV20	Complaints Policy

Unlawful discrimination

Unlawful discrimination can take the following forms:

Direct Discrimination: treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination: applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.

Unlawful discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated and SASP recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by, the Equality Act 2010. SASP will take all necessary action to prevent the occurrence of unlawful discrimination.

Specifically, SASP aims to ensure that no client, customer, partner, employee or job applicant is subject to unlawful discrimination, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic origin), disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment,

marital / civil partnership status, maternity, part-time status, age, religion or belief (together the Protected Characteristics).

Employment

The commitment above applies to all aspects of employment, including:

- recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, interview and selection procedures
- training promotion and career-development opportunities
- terms and conditions of employment, and access to employment-related benefits and facilities
- grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures
- selection for redundancy

Equal opportunities practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation change. SASP will review all policies and implement necessary changes where these could improve equality of opportunity and will review this Policy to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

Career development

While positive measures may be taken to encourage under-represented groups to apply for employment opportunities, recruitment or promotion to all jobs will be based solely on merit. All employees will have equal access to training and other career-development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities.

However, SASP will take appropriate positive action measures (as permitted by equal opportunities legislation) to provide specialist training, support and reasonable adjustments for groups that are under-represented in the workforce and encourage them to take up training and career-development opportunities.

Complaints of Discrimination

SASP will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination made by employees, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against, you are encouraged to raise the matter as soon as possible with:

- Your Line Manager or HR using the Grievance Procedure (outlined in the Employee Handbook and HR10) if you are an employee or volunteer.
- Via the Complaints Policy, available on the SASP website, if you are a client, customer, supplier, contractor or other third party.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated thoroughly. If you make an allegation of discrimination, SASP is committed to ensuring that you are protected from victimisation, harassment or less favourable treatment. Any such incidents will be dealt with under SASP's Disciplinary Procedures.

Investigating accusations of unlawful discrimination

If you are accused of unlawful discrimination, SASP will investigate the matter fully. During the course of the investigation, you will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation of your actions.

If the investigation concludes that the claim is false or malicious, the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.

If the investigation concludes that your actions amount to unlawful discrimination, you will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal without notice for gross misconduct.

Victimisation

SASP will not tolerate subjecting someone to a detriment because he or she has in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).

Responsibilities

The Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for ensuring that this Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The SLT is also responsible for ensuring that this Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy is enforced, and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.

The CEO (Jane Knowles) will have the overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy and for achieving any equality related actions resulting from it.

SASP recognises that, in some cases, to further the principle of equality, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. If appropriate and proportionate, SASP will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a Protected Characteristic which is currently underrepresented within any group of Stakeholders.

Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

In accordance with Sport England 'A Code for Sports Governance - Compliance with Requirements 2.1 – 2.3', SASP's DIAP was independently reviewed and passed in 2024.

The DIAP outlines SASP's aims and objectives in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Communication of Policy

The Policy will be included in the employee handbook (paper and electronic copies) and on the SASP website. Reference will be made to this Equality and Diversity Policy in any Code of Conduct.

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy will be highlighted in all staff and volunteer inductions and be available to all staff on the SASP intranet. All members will be made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy when they join.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn. A review of this Policy will take place as and when required, but not less than every 2 years.

Complaints Procedures

To safeguard individual rights under this Policy, any Stakeholder who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this Policy may raise the matter through the employee Grievance Procedure or the Complaints Policy.