



**THE BRITISH EQUESTRIAN  
FEDERATION  
EQUITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

**21<sup>ST</sup> REVISION – JANUARY 2025**

## PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

To make equestrianism, as delivered through the BEF and its member bodies, an activity that is open and inclusive for anyone who wishes to be involved, in whatever capacity and at whatever level, and to actively encourage a more diverse participation and workforce.

Our ambition in developing this policy is that British Equestrian and its Member Bodies:

- become more inclusive organisations and workplaces where people, regardless of their background, feel inspired and supported to achieve their very best.
- dismantle barriers across their organisations and build a more inclusive and representative leadership, workplaces and participation that embraces diversity, calls out discrimination and puts equity at its heart.
- set out expectations of behaviour by staff (including contractors, officials and volunteers) and members, and protect all participants from discrimination.
- foster a culture and environment that supports the dignity and respect and is free from any form of bullying, harassment or abuse.
- recognise the impact of discrimination on an individual's wellbeing.

## POLICY STATEMENT

The BEF is fully committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equity, values diversity and provides a diverse, inclusive, fair, and open environment that allows everyone to enjoy our sport, and hopefully grow and flourish whilst doing so. We recognise that equity and inclusion should be embedded in all our activities and will seek to promote awareness of equity and inclusion, championing good practice for and on behalf of the Federation as a whole.

We also recognise that achieving our ambitions includes a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory behaviour, irrespective of how it is expressed. We will actively seek to identify, challenge, prevent, eliminate and change structures, policies, programmes, practices and behaviours that perpetuate discrimination. We will work together to make radical changes that close inequality gaps by advancing opportunities and ensure the experience of discrimination in the workplace and our wider community is eradicated.

The BEF is therefore committed to a programme of action to support its equity and inclusion policy, to monitoring its effectiveness, and to publishing information on progress towards its equity aims.

The BEF seeks to ensure that no individual receives more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, sex (gender), disability, race or ethnicity, parental, marriage or civil partnership, or marital status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. These are known collectively as protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This includes all those involved in whatever capacity - participants, employees, Board members, coaches, consultants, owners, officials, volunteers and spectators.

In addition, the BEF is committed to take action to encourage more diverse participants and workforce. This is known as positive action. We also recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for anyone with a disability who is involved in our sport.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

As a federation we are committed to a shared set of principles and actions that include:

- Establishing inclusive cultures which are underpinned by a clear framework of policies and processes across all areas of our sport/industry that will drive our day to day operations.
- Not tolerating discriminatory behaviour internally or externally wherever it arises in relation to the organisation and 'calling out' discriminatory behaviours.
- Providing training for all staff that goes beyond protected characteristic specifics and seeks to educate and improve understanding of different lived experiences.
- Addressing inequality in the workplace and improving opportunity and access to services and employment.
- Gathering data to support our decision-making and track our progress.
- Building strong partnerships across our landscape to promote a full range of opportunities for everyone to be able to access and enjoy our sport.
- Ensuring clear and consistent messaging through our engagement and content that equestrian activities are for everyone, welcoming and valuing audiences from all backgrounds.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING ACTIVITIES

The BEF seeks to make a positive contribution to the advancement of equity through all its activities. In particular;

- seeking to embed equity, diversity and inclusion in all its activities;
- having regard to its obligations under relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010;
- publicising this policy, and any related codes of practice and guidance;
- promoting awareness and understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion among staff, athletes and member bodies through the provision of training, guidance and campaigns;
- Encouraging applications for positions within the BEF, whether as Board members or members of staff from the widest pool of potential candidates, especially where representation is disproportionately low, to improve diversity where appropriate.
- In respect of athletes, seeking to support outstanding talent whatever their background, and work to ensure that coaching and performance support provides an equal opportunity for all athletes to achieve and demonstrate their full sporting potential. Decisions on the selection of athletes onto the World Class Programme will be based solely on the individual merits of each candidate and the application of selection criteria.
- In respect of staff, seeking to ensure that entry into employment and progression within employment are determined solely by criteria which are related to the duties of a particular post and the relevant grade; and support career development and progression with the aim of ensuring diverse representation and participation at all levels.
- In respect of both staff and athletes, taking appropriate steps to meet the particular needs of individuals from protected groups where these are different from the needs of others, and work to eliminate any barriers to their success.

In addition, the BEF encourages its member bodies and organisations that are affiliated to or approved by its member bodies to adopt policies at all levels in their organisation that are in substantial conformity with this Equity and Inclusion Policy.

The BEF undertakes both a leadership and an advocacy role with its member bodies to actively encourage an increase in diversity of participants, members, volunteers, coaches, officials, Board and Council and its workforces in equestrian sport.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Directors and the Chief Executive of the BEF endorse and are accountable for ensuring that this Equity and Inclusion Policy is implemented and ensuring the organisation takes concrete actions and steps to address systemic barriers to involvement in equestrianism and create an inclusive environment for everyone. The BEF CEO is accountable for ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to deal with any actual or potential breaches.

The Board is responsible for agreeing and publishing the BEF's strategic objectives for equity, diversity and inclusion in its Strategic Plan and this Equity and Inclusion Policy and commits to monitoring progress towards achieving them.

All staff who manage or supervise other staff are responsible for ensuring that equity is embedded in the work of their team. All staff are responsible for promoting an inclusive working, research and learning environment, and for promoting a culture of dignity and respect where issues can be raised without fear of reprisal.

All staff must comply with this policy in the workplace and in the provision of services, whether that is to athletes on the World Class programme, Member Bodies or members of the public.

Managers should ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and understand their own and the BEF's responsibilities.

Managers have a particular responsibility to ensure that within their area of control, everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. They should:

- always challenge any unacceptable behaviour in the workplace, training or competitive environment.
- respond to complaints of discrimination swiftly, sensitively and objectively and be aware of behaviour that would cause offence, reminding workers of expected standards.
- deal explicitly with the discriminatory behaviour of third parties (such as service users, visitors or contractors) with a view to withdrawing service or ending a contract or banning them from the premises if the behaviour does not stop.
- ensure that this policy is followed and that there are thorough investigations if required.

All complaints of discrimination must be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the data protection policy and information sharing guidance.

Managers have an additional responsibility to be exemplars of acceptable behaviour. They should be aware of any risk of sending mixed messages about what is acceptable behaviour, and that inaction will only serve to condone discrimination.

All staff have a duty to assist in the creation of a respectful, safe and productive culture, where all forms of discriminatory behaviour are unacceptable. The BEF encourages all staff to report any instances of discriminatory behaviour.

Every member of staff has a personal responsibility to:

- ensure they understand what discriminatory behaviour is, including subtle racial or other forms of discrimination and microaggressions.

- be aware of how their behaviour may affect others and to uphold the standards of behaviour set within the team.
- work within the policy guidelines including co-operating fully in any investigation undertaken.
- be aware of discrimination and challenge unacceptable behaviour, whenever it is safe to do so.

Possible ways of intervening include:

- 'calling out' the discriminatory behaviour if it is safe to do so, making it clear that it is unacceptable.
- checking in with anyone who has experienced discriminatory behaviour after it has taken place.
- documenting and reporting incidents of discriminatory behaviour whether they are the target of the behaviour or they have witnessed it, or supporting targets of discriminatory behaviour in reporting it, and co-operating in an investigation into such behaviour. Reporting is necessary in order to address the issue both for the worker's own well-being and that of their colleagues or others that they interact with.
- being aware of their own conduct and avoiding colluding with inappropriate behaviour.

## TO RAISE A CONCERN

Discrimination is abusive behaviour that is centred on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to; race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic or national origin, age, religion or marital status.

You do not have to be the target of the discriminatory behaviour to make a complaint about it. If you see it happening or become aware of the problem, you have the right to complain about it. Tackling discrimination is everybody's responsibility and active bystanders can have an especially important role in combatting such behaviour. Discrimination may include overt or subtle forms of harm, and may be verbal, physical, visual abuse or harassment.

Some people are unaware that their behaviour in some circumstances is discriminatory. If it is clearly pointed out to them that their behaviour is unacceptable, the problem can sometimes be resolved. Discrimination constitutes Prohibited Conduct under the BEF Safeguarding Policy. If you have witnessed or experienced discriminatory behaviour, report it to our safeguarding team via;

- email on [safeguarding@bef.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@bef.co.uk)
- [our online reporting form](#)
- telephone on 02475 313437

All complaints will be handled and investigated in a timely and confidential manner.

The BEF also recognises that it has a responsibility to protect its staff from discrimination at work by members of the equestrian community or wider public and contractors and such behaviour will not be tolerated. All staff have the right to be treated with respect by the people they provide services for or work with.

Staff can report any concerns related to discrimination at work by contacting the HR team.