

IPSF Gender Equality Policy



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Gender Equality Policy Updated November 2015

FOREWORD

Policy Statement

The INTERNATIONAL POLE SPORTS FEDERATION endorses the principle of gender equality in sports and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in POLE SPORTS, whether as casual participants, athletes, team members, volunteers, coaches, office-bearers in federations and clubs or those within the INTERNATIONAL POLE SPORTS FEDERATION will adhere to this policy.

Legislative Context

The International Pole Sports Federation is based in the UK and therefore recognises legislation in this jurisdiction as being the guidelines of the policy on an international basis.

The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975). It added to the duty to eliminate sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, the duty to promote gender equality. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 prohibits discrimination on grounds of gender and marital status in employment, education and the provision of goods and services, and on grounds of gender reassignment in the field of employment.

Action Required

Under the terms of this policy the IPSF and all national federations will need to take action to:

- Eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women

The specific duties required are:

- Prepare and publish a gender equality scheme, showing how it intends to fulfil its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives
- Consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap in formulating its overall objectives



- Gather and use information on how policies and practices affect gender equality in the delivery of services
- Consult stakeholders and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives
- Assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality
- Implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years
- Report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years

Social Context

As the Governing Body of Pole Sports, we understand that despite thirty years of individual legal rights to sex equality there is still widespread discrimination and persistent gender inequality. Both sexes suffer from the stereotyping of their roles and needs and such stereotyping has to be understood, challenged and overcome.

The General Duty

In accordance with our Equality Policy each National Federation has due regard for the need to, and works to:

- Eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination
- Eliminate sexual harassment
- Promote gender equality

By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favourably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly. Indirect discrimination means that a particular policy or practice may impact more negatively on one gender than on the other, or may favour one gender to the disadvantage of the other.

By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also damaging to the perpetrator.



We understand 'sex' to refer to the **biological** differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider **social** roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognize and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.

We understand that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to treat girls and boys, and women and men differently, if that action is aimed at overcoming previous, current or possible future disadvantage.

The IPSF will take steps to counteract the effects of any past discrimination in staff recruitment. Where we are uncertain whether there is a genuine occupational requirement for preference to be given to the employment of someone of a particular gender we will seek specialist advice. National Federations are expected to do the same.

The IPSF recognises that both sexes can suffer from sexual stereotyping and that sometimes the same policies and practices can impact differently on men and women and boys and girls. We will make appropriate adjustments if this is found to be the case with any of our policies and practices.

We also recognise that girls and boys, and women and men, can experience different forms of discrimination depending on, among other things, their ethnicity, belief, sexual orientation, age or disability and we will take this complexity into consideration.

In these ways we will strive to improve the situation for, and the relationships between, men and women and boys and girls within our pole sports community

Single Sex Provision

Where we provide for one sex only, this is to help meet the different needs of boys and girls (men and women), needs often arising out of historical and current stereotyping and unjust gender discrimination, or where there is an issue of physical intimacy or embarrassment to be considered. We do not provide activities, classes, facilities, benefits or services for one sex only if this would



amount to less favourable treatment of the other sex, or where it would promote gender stereotyping and gender inequality.

We do not deny one sex the same opportunities as the other and where we provide for one sex only we ensure there are equivalent and proportionate facilities, benefits or services for the other sex. We do not offer different curriculum choices to boys and girls, and where there are curriculum options we ensure that these are not offered in such a way that boys and girls are steered into making choices based on gender stereotypes.

If requests for additional single sex activities, facilities or provision which appear to maintain or promote gender inequalities come from pupils, families or the community, these will be considered and legal advice sought.

Breaches of the Gender Equality Policy

We understand that eliminating gender discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality is in part an education function and a matter of cultural change. Where possible, breaches of the policy will be dealt with in a manner appropriate to the level of the breach, and with the intention of bringing about the relevant changes. More serious breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our school's Positive Behaviour Management procedures, and the disciplinary procedures for staff.