



Equality and diversity policy

Introduction

British Parachute Association (BPA) recognises that some individuals, groups and communities are more likely to face discrimination, harassment and exclusion in society. This policy reinforces the BPA's commitment to promoting equality and diversity within the skydiving community, particularly in the areas of competition, training, employment and recruitment. It also sets out the BPA's aims to safeguard those who may face inequality or harassment due to one or more of the nine 'protected characteristics'. These are protected from discrimination under equality legislation, the Equality Act (2010).

The nine Protected Characteristics are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Sex
4. Sexual orientation
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Gender reassignment
8. Marriage or civil partnership
9. Pregnancy and maternity

For the avoidance of any doubts, BPA is also committed to protecting those who may face inequality or harassment on grounds of gender presentation, which includes transgender and non-binary gender.

Equality and diversity statement

As an employer and the National Governing Body sport parachuting in the United Kingdom, BPA is dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture amongst the whole skydiving community as well as its workforce. It is within our best interest to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination.

The BPA's aim is to ensure that everyone is given equal opportunity and that our organisation and community is truly representative of all sections of society. Each member/employee/volunteer/service user/Director or supplier will be respected and valued and able to give their best.

The BPA recognises that treating everyone equally does not mean treating everyone the same. Instead the BPA embraces the diversity and aims to provide equal right to opportunities.

This policy demonstrates the BPA's commitment to providing equality and fairness to all, and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, gender presentation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation. The BPA is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Purpose of the policy

The BPA recognises that the society in which we operate is diverse and that individual differences may lead to direct or indirect discrimination. Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all those who work and volunteer for our association or use our services;
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics; and
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in sponsorship, training, coaching, competitions, volunteering, pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

Equality in Skydiving

The BPA values and celebrates the diversity that exists in our community. In order to further its objectives, the BPA has committed to:

- encourage equality and diversity within the skydiving community as they are good practice and make business sense;
- create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all people are recognised and valued;

This commitment includes but is not limited to training staff, judges, instructors, coaches, other volunteers and all other members about their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Responsibilities include assisting the BPA to provide equal opportunities across all areas of its activities, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination;

All Directors, members, staff members, volunteers and representatives should understand they, as well as the BPA, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public;

- not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination and to discipline those that breach this policy;

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the BPA's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to a criminal offence and lead to withdrawal of membership benefits and licence;

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both a disciplinary matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence;

- encourage anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so corrective measures can be applied (BPA is formulating a whistleblowing policy);

- make training, development and progression opportunities available to all people, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the BPA and to promote the sport;
- treat and to encourage everyone to treat each other fairly and with respect;
- make selections and decisions based on aptitude and ability (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010);
- review practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and update them and this policy to take account of changes in the law;
- monitor the make-up of its workforce (including volunteers) and membership regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how this policy, and any sporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Enforcement

This policy is fully supported by the Board of Directors, which has overarching responsibility for compliance with this policy, ensuring that the BPA is meeting its requirements in relation to equality and diversity legislation. The Board will oversee and analyse all equality and diversity matters.

Details of the BPA's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in BPA Form 256 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure. This includes with whom a complainant should raise a grievance.