



DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

1.1

The British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (the 'BHPA') recognises that discrimination is both unlawful and unacceptable. The BHPA believes that all persons should have equal rights to recognition of their human dignity, and to have equal opportunities to be educated, to work, receive services and to participate in society. The BHPA is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities within the Association through the way we manage the organisation and provide services to the community. In order to express this commitment, we develop, promote and maintain policies that will be conducive to the principles of fairness and equality in the workplace. We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer, and embedding equality, diversity and inclusiveness into everything that it does. The BHPA will ensure that all people are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, irrespective of their gender, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, religion and belief, ethnic or national origin. In the provision of services and the employment of staff, the BHPA is committed to promoting equal opportunities for everyone. Throughout its activities, the BHPA will treat all people equally whether they are:

- Seeking or using our services.
- Applying for a job or already employed by us.
- Trainee workers and students on work experience or placements.
- Volunteers.

1.2

Diversity in our work place and environment where the BHPA operates is an understanding that there are both seen and unseen differences among our employees and service users and that these differences can assist in raising the quality of our work, resulting in greater efficiency and effectiveness. At the BHPA we respect and value these differences so that each person is treated and valued as an individual.

1.3

Diversity is about the ways in which people differ, and in valuing diversity we promote and respect differences. The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales – including the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, The Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Employment Equality Regulations (religions and belief and sexual

orientation) 2003. The Equality Act 2010 instead outlines a set of defined protected characteristics which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Maternity / Pregnancy
- Marriage / Civil Partnership
- Race
- Religion / Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The BHPA is also committed to promoting and respect differences that are not amongst the protected characteristics. These differences may include personality, grade, job title, methods of working, sensitivity and so on. Instead of concentrating on issues as they affect groups of people, diversity is about valuing the differences between people within the organisation. The BHPA recognises the need for flexible working practices and is committed to exploring new ways of working to give access to the widest range of talent as possible.

1.4

There are powerful, sound business and legal reasons for taking an equal opportunity approach to the community in which we exist, including our members, our staff, our volunteers, our suppliers and related organisations, members of other voluntary and public organisations, and members of the public who come into contact with the free flying community. In achieving our objectives we embed the importance we place on diversity and equal opportunity in all of our activities.

PURPOSE

2.1

This policy applies to:

All those mentioned in paragraph 1.1 above to include all those who work for our organisation at all levels, job applicants and potential applicants, contractors, public and regulatory bodies, consultants and any contracted associate workers, agency workers, trainee workers and students on work experience or placements.

Each individual carries personal responsibility to comply with this policy, and for their own behaviour in relation to this policy.

2.2

This policy applies to all areas of the BHPA's activity:

All policies, systems and processes over which the Association has power or control, all recruitment activities terms and conditions, working conditions, training, staff development, selection methods for promotion and pay, capability, grievance, discipline, marketing material, publications, retirement, flexible working, sickness, annual leave and compassionate leave.

2.3

People from other organisations, business consultants, associates, trainers and suppliers have responsibility to comply with all policy requirements, rules and regulations and undergo a strict process of selection and vetting to ensure compliance with both the BHPA's and national requirements in relation to equality.

2.4

Members of the public, voluntary organisations, public sector organisations, staff from other employing agencies, individuals on work experience or honorary contract placements, contractors and suppliers are expected to comply with this policy.

DEFINITIONS

3.1 - Diversity

Diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing the differences between individuals. It is not about treating everyone exactly the same, but about treating people as individuals and accounting for inequalities and disadvantages.

3.2 - Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 brings together a number of existing laws into one place so that it is easier to understand and use. It sets out the personal characteristics that are protected by the law and the behaviour that is unlawful. The protected characteristics are set out in paragraph 1.3 above.

3.3 - Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunity is the provision of equal rights for people in all aspects of employment to maximise employee potential and create a framework ensuring everyone has equal access to all aspects of employment, and is able to maximise potential.

3.4 - Direct Discrimination

This occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

3.5 - Indirect Discrimination

This occurs when an organisation has a rule, policy or practice which applies to everyone, but which disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

3.6 - Harassment

Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

3.7 - Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made a complaint, or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010. An employee is not protected if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

3.8 - Perception

Discrimination can occur against an individual because others think that they belong to a protected characteristic group.

3.9 - Association

Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who belongs to a protected characteristic group.

3.10 - Staff

The term staff includes paid, honorary, voluntary and those in training.

RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1

At the BHPA we aim to promote and continuously develop our commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity, and in providing this we commit to:

- Comply with all the legal requirements incumbent on organisations that provide services for members and to which the public have access or involvement.
- Fulfil all our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other associated employment legislation and codes of practice
- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments for policies
- Promote equality of opportunity for all
- Promote a working and learning environment in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and in which no form of intimidation or harassment is tolerated preventing occurrences of all types of discrimination
- Train all employees in carrying out the requirements of diversity and equal opportunity practices
- Communicate the responsibilities for all under diversity and equal opportunities to all staff
Removing barriers to equality of opportunity
- Take affirmative or positive action where appropriate
- Continuously review how diversity and equal opportunity policy and practices are expressed in action

4.2

Board of Directors

Has overarching responsibility for compliance, ensuring that the BHPA is meeting its requirements in relation to equality and diversity legislation. The Board will oversee and analyse all equality and diversity work.

4.3

All Employees and members

All staff and members have a responsibility for their own behaviour in relation to this policy and are:

- Expected to take full, personal responsibility for the practical application of the Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy within their scope of activity
- Responsible for ensuring that their behaviour at work is consistent with the strategic outcomes and working principles set out in this policy and associated BHPA policies and guidance
- Required to co-operate with measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination
- Not to unlawfully discriminate against other employees or induce others to do so
- Not to victimise others on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information on discrimination
- Not to harass or intimidate others in pursuance of unlawful discrimination
- Under a duty to inform the Board if they suspect any form of discrimination is taking place

4.4

People from other organisations have the responsibility to comply with the BHPA's Diversity and Equality of Opportunity policy in matters which impact on our staff, the membership and the service we provide. Directors and managers will be swift to use a range of robust interventions to remedy any inappropriate behaviour that may have been identified.

TRANSLATING POLICY INTO ACTIONS

5.1

In General

The BHPA undertakes to:

Be transparent in its commitment to and action taken in relation to Diversity and Equality of Opportunity matters; incorporate equal opportunities information into general communications (eg staff publications, intranet, recruitment); collect and use, in accordance with relevant legislation, information relating to diversity and equality of opportunity to monitor the success of the policy in action; base decisions relating to all aspects of recruitment and employment on knowledge, understanding, competence, ability, skill and relevant experience.

Make a copy of the policy available; ensure BHPA imagery contains positive representations of people across the range of protected characteristics; ensure as far as possible flexible working arrangements, in accordance with the Flexible Working Policy Make staff aware of interpreting and communication services available, and how to book services where applicable; give advice and support for carers; examine scrupulously; monitor investigations and the outcome of disciplinary procedures to identify diversity and equality of opportunity issues; express commitment by promoting diversity and equality of opportunity policies in procurement documentation; and to determine the level of commitment of any potential or actual supplier.

5.2

Training and Development

The BHPA undertakes to:

Include diversity and equality of opportunity in induction training to enable understanding of rights and responsibilities in relation to the policy; ensure equal opportunity of access to and benefit from all forms of learning and development activity necessary to carry out the work of the BHPA to the required standard.

Where possible, ensure that diversity and equality of opportunity is embedded in the delivery of internal training events, ensure that diversity and equality of opportunity issues are embedded in all internal management-related training; provide training and development opportunities to accommodate staff who work on flexible patterns.

Be flexible in accommodating special requirements by making reasonable adjustments to the training and development environment, design and use of training materials; ensure that any external training providers comply with the BHPA's Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy.

5.3

Recruitment and Selection (including Promotion)

The BHPA undertakes to:

Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and BHPA policy, via the Recruitment function, which is responsible for the review and co-ordination of all recruitment advertising, in advance of publication; use appropriate job related selection techniques, job descriptions and person specifications in making selection decisions; compile shortlists using information supplied by the candidate, job requirements as determined by the job description and requirements as outlined in the person specification; review and update job descriptions to reflect accurately the requirements of the vacant position; create person specifications which accurately reflect the knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities necessary to carry out the job to the required standard; ask only interview questions which relate to the circumstances and requirements of the job (discriminatory questions are not allowed within the interview process); ask no questions about health or disability before a conditional offer of employment is made; invite candidates to inform the BHPA of any special arrangements or reasonable adjustments required when attending a job selection interview; ensure that people responsible for recruitment and selection, and selection of staff for training and promotion, are knowledgeable in diversity and equality of opportunity matters; and ensure that selection criteria and reasons for the selection or rejection of individual candidates are recorded Monitor the results of recruitment processes for compliance with diversity and equality of opportunity.

5.4

Appraising the Performance of Staff

The BHPA will appraise the performance of staff against objective criteria which include previously agreed work and diversity objectives and behavioural standards and include diversity objectives for all staff, as part of their working relationship with the BHPA

5.5

Termination of Employment

The BHPA undertakes to:

- Perform exit interviews (in person and / or written) with staff at all levels when employment terminates
- Place emphasis on establishing whether diversity or equality of opportunity issues have contributed to the decision to leave the BHPA

5.6

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

The BHPA is committed to its ethical, moral and legal obligations in compliance with legislation and this policy.

The BHPA undertakes to:

- Create a climate where, in the event of a member of staff feeling that discrimination has taken place, s/he feels confident to speak to the immediate line manager (or Board Member if appropriate) to resolve the matter quickly and through positive informal channels.
- Discipline staff, using formal procedures, if they discriminate, in the course of their employment with the BHPA, against a BHPA member or member of staff.

The Executive Council

February 2018