

Equality Policy

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Policy Statement

Ulster Badminton endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in badminton whether as casual participants, participants, team members, volunteers, coaches, office-bearers in clubs or those within Ulster Badminton:

- has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status or sexual orientation; and
- can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

Legal obligations

Ulster Badminton is committed to continuing to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind in badminton and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero tolerance approach to harassment. Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours in question are given in the Appendix.

Positive action

The principle of Sports Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully.

Ulster Badminton will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to badminton and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in the sport or has difficulty accessing it.

Implementation

The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote sports equality in Badminton:-

- A copy of this document will be published on Ulster Badmintons Website.
- The Chairman of Ulster Badminton will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed.
- The Ulster Branch Council will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of Ulster Badminton.
- Ulster Badminton will collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in badminton and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in badminton.

- It will be a condition of Ulster Badminton membership that member clubs take steps to ensure that their Committees, members and volunteers behave in accordance with the policy, including where appropriate
 - Taking disciplinary action under the Governing body constitution.
 - Ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive
 - Support such measures and initiatives that Ulster Badminton may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.
- It will be a condition of Ulster Badminton membership that individual and corporate members
 - Commit to act in accordance with this policy; and
 - Support such measures and initiatives that Ulster Badminton may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Chairman of Ulster Badminton will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy with support of the Ulster Branch Council.

The Council will review all Ulster Badmintons activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis, and the Chairman will report formally on this issue at the AGM.

The Council, or where appropriate a designated project leader, will review any measures or initiatives that Ulster Badminton may institute or take part in to promote and enhance sports equality in Ulster Badminton and will report back on their findings.

The Council will review the policy itself at intervals of no more than three years, (or when necessary due to changes in legislation) and will report with recommendations where necessary to the AGM.

Complaints and compliance

Ulster Badminton regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable, and is concerned to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member or volunteer who violates the Ulster Badmintons Equality Policy.

Any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this policy by a member club, individual member or corporate member of Ulster Badminton, should first complain to that person or organisation. If this does not resolve the matter, or in the case of allegations of discriminatory behaviour against Ulster Badminton itself,

the person may raise the matter by writing directly to the Chairman. Contact details are available through the website www.ulsterbadminton.com

The Chairman will investigate the complaint personally or appoint a Committee member to do so. The investigation will be conducted impartially, confidentially, and without avoidable delay. Any person or organisation against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter.

The outcome of the investigation will be notified to the parties in writing and reported to the Ulster Badminton Council Committee. If the investigation reveals unacceptable discriminatory behaviour on the part of an individual member, corporate member, or member club, the Ulster Branch may impose sanctions on that person or organisation in line with Ulster Badminton's Constitution and disciplinary codes of practice. Sanctions may range from a written reminder concerning future conduct up to and including temporary or permanent expulsion from Ulster Badminton membership. In deciding what sanction is appropriate in a particular case, the Council will consider the severity of the matter and take account of any mitigating circumstances.

Where the violation of the Equality Policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amounts to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.

In the event that an individual or organisation associated with Ulster Badminton is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the Ulster Badminton Council will cooperate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action as above in relation to the matter concerned.

Appendices

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Equality Statement

The Ulster Branch Badminton Union of Ireland (UBBUI) aims to promote the sport of Badminton for all present and potential participants, members, instructors, coaches, competitors, officials, volunteers and employees and will be mindful of the need to carry out our functions in a manner, which promotes equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age
- Marital status or sexual orientation
- Between men and women generally
- Persons with a disability and persons without
- Persons with dependants and persons without
- Persons with matters involving Pregnancy, maternity, paternity
- Persons with matters involving gender reassignment

The Ulster Branch Badminton Union of Ireland (UBBUI) aims to make its services and training programmes accessible to all and may take special measures to ensure that certain groups are not unfairly disadvantaged, provided such action does not adversely affect the standard, quality and integrity of its schemes.

The Ulster Branch Badminton Union of Ireland (UBBUI) reserves the right to discipline any of its members or employees who practise any form of discrimination in breach of this policy

Appendix B

Action Plan Maybe to be included as an appendix? Might link in with what Sport NI are placing more emphasis on in terms of ‘how’ you are actively carrying this out as a work area. Below is from the Equality Commission for NI. A basic action plan could be a good place to start.

Time Period		Actions
Year 1	1 March to 30 June	To carry out a <i>disability access audit</i> of our premises and website. This audit will include consideration of customers with hearing, speech, sight, mobility and mental health difficulties.
	1 July to 30 September	To develop an action plan to address issues arising from the <i>disability access audit</i> .
Year 2	1 January to 31 March	To carry out a <i>customer satisfaction survey</i> . This will include questions that specifically focus on how particular groups of people experience our services and facilities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pregnant women and new mothers • parents with young children • disabled persons • Irish Travellers • Migrant workers • Gay people • People who have undergone or who are undergoing gender reassignment • Members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities • Children and teenagers • People aged 55 years and over
	1 April to 30 June	To develop an action plan to address issues arising from the <i>customer satisfaction survey</i> .
	1 July to 31 December	To develop and deliver a training programme for all our staff about equal opportunities and that includes lessons from the <i>disability access audit</i> and the <i>customer satisfaction survey</i> . <p>Other areas to consider are below, in terms of how UB can promote equality and diversity through specific actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - club and schools development - PR and advertising (website, social media – language, images used) - volunteer and employee recruitment - etc

APPENDIX C

Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination

Legal rights

Section 75 of the N.Ireland Act 1998, requires public authorities to have due regard for the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependants and persons without

The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires proactive action to promote equality of opportunity and encourages public authorities to take action to address inequality among the groups listed above.

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Discrimination arising from disability

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the

purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.