



# **Equality Policy**

Approved by the Committee – 22nd November 2021

Review date – 22nd November 2022

## Policy Statement

Central Athletic Club endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in athletics (in all its disciplines and forms), whether as athletes, casual participants, club members, officials, volunteers, coaches, office-bearers or those within the governance structure of Central Athletic Club:

- 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, 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

**Central Athletic Club** is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind in athletics, 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.

**Central Athletic Club** will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to athletics 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 promote this policy and sports equality in athletics:

- A copy of this document is published on the **Central Athletic Club** website.
- The Committee of **Central Athletic Club** will take overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation and observation of this policy, and the requirement for all members of the organisation to follow this policy will be enshrined within the Memorandum.
- The Committee will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of
- **Central Athletic Club** will collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in athletics and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in athletics.
- **Central Athletic Club** will provide access to training in order to raise awareness of collective and individual responsibilities for all of its Committee members and employees, and enable access to suitable training for anyone involved in the sport, with a focus on accredited coaches, and officials in terms of equality and diversity training
- It is a condition of **scottishathletics** 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 Club's constitution; and
  - ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive;
  - support such measures and initiatives that **scottishathletics** may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

Note: **scottishathletics** will provide advice and training support to clubs in the above areas linked to wider club development support and implementation of programmes.

- It is a condition of **scottishathletics** membership that individual and corporate members
  - Recognise they are bound by this policy; and
  - Support such measures and initiatives that **scottishathletics** may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

### **Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Board will review all **scottishathletics** activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis, and the Chief Executive Officer will report formally on this issue at the AGM.

The Board will appoint a designated project leader who will review any measures or initiatives that **scottishathletics** may institute or take part in to promote and enhance sports equality in athletics, their findings being formally reported to the AGM.

The Board 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 to the AGM.

### **Complaints and compliance**

**Central Athletic Club** 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 **Central Athletic Club** 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 an individual member of **Central Athletic Club**, 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 **Central Athletic Club** itself or an employee of **Central Athletic Club**, the person may raise the matter by writing directly to the Club Secretary at [secretary@centralathletics.co.uk](mailto:secretary@centralathletics.co.uk)

The Club Secretary will investigate the complaint personally or appoint a designated Office Bearer. The investigation will be conducted impartially, confidentially, and without avoidable delay. Any person or Club 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 Committee. If the investigation reveals unacceptable discriminatory behaviour on the part of an individual member, corporate member, or member club the Committee may impose sanctions on that person or organisation in line with the **Central Athletic Club constitution**. Sanctions may range from a written reminder concerning future conduct up to and including temporary or permanent expulsion from **Central Athletic Club** membership. In deciding what sanction is appropriate in a particular case the Committee 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 amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.

In the event that an individual or organisation associated with **Central Athletic Club** is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the **Central Athletic Club** Committee and employees will co-operate 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.

## **APPENDIX – Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination**

### **Legal rights**

Discrimination has been legally defined through the Equality Act 2010.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics'. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as age (employment only until 2012), disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic<sup>1</sup>. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

### **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.

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<sup>1</sup> The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.