



# West of England Billiards & Snooker Foundation

## Equal opportunities policy

This policy is reviewed annually and any amendments made will be shown in **bold underlined**.

The West of England Billiards & Snooker Foundation is committed to providing equal opportunities for all and to avoid unlawful discrimination. This policy is intended to assist putting this commitment into practice. Our aim is that the environments in which we operate are free of harassment and bullying and that all our participants and volunteers are treated with dignity and respect, which is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities.

### The law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly because of a 'protected characteristic'. The Equality Act defines the protected characteristics as being age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership.

Discrimination occurring after a volunteer leaves the Foundation may also be unlawful, e.g. if the Foundation refuses to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

It is also unlawful to discriminate against or harass a member of the public or participant in the provision of services or goods or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, the Foundation has an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

### Types of unlawful discrimination:

**Direct discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. However, discrimination may be lawful if there is an occupational requirement which is core to a volunteer role and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

**Indirect discrimination** means putting in place, a rule or policy or way of doing things that has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one, when this cannot be objectively justified.

**Harassment** is where there is unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or which creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

**Associative discrimination** is where the individual treated less favourably does not have a protected characteristic but is discriminated against because of their association with someone who does, e.g. the parent of a disabled child.



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**Perceptive discrimination** is where the individual discriminated against or harassed does not have a protected characteristic but they are perceived to have a protected characteristic.

**Third-party harassment** occurs where a volunteer is harassed by third parties such as a participant, due to a protected characteristic.

**Victimisation** is treating someone unfavourably because they have taken some form of action relating to the Equality Act, i.e. because they have supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, a volunteer is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

**Failure to make reasonable adjustments** is where a rule or policy or way of doing things has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and reasonable adjustments have failed to be made to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

### Equal opportunities in Volunteer recruitment

We will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of volunteer support and recruitment and will base volunteer recruitment decisions on objective criteria. We will consider making reasonable adjustments in recruitment as well as for volunteering activities.

### Participants, suppliers and others

We will not discriminate unlawfully against participants using or seeking to use the services we provide. If you are bullied or harassed by a participant, supplier, contractor, visitor or others, or if you witness someone else being bullied or harassed, you are asked to report this to the WEBSF Champion who will take appropriate action.

### Training

We will provide information and guidance to those involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise to help them understand their responsibilities and to avoid the risk of discrimination.

### Your responsibilities

All volunteers are responsible to support the organisation to meet its commitment and avoid unlawful discrimination. If you believe that you have been discriminated against you should report this to the WEBSF Champion. We take any complaint seriously and you will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

If you witness what you believe to be discrimination you should report this to the WEBSF Champion as soon as possible.

Individual volunteers can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation for any act of unlawful discrimination. Volunteers who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against other volunteers or participants are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under our



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disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to the individual being removed without notice.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be monitored periodically to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

Produced:	4 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
Review date:	January 2020

### Acknowledgements:

*This policy has been developed using NCVO resources produced by HR Services Partnership.*