

Scottish Hockey – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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1. Introduction

Scottish Hockey's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy is aligned with the Equality Act 2010 and reflects the approaches of National governing bodies of Sport, UK Sport and sportscotland, placing inclusion at the heart of sport in Scotland.

We are committed to applying these principles across our workforce, systems, and opportunities, and to actively identifying and addressing barriers to participation, whether related to protected characteristics, socioeconomic factors, geography, or other challenges such as mental health.

We recognise that some barriers to participation may be beyond the immediate scope of our resources or influence. However, we are committed to identifying these challenges and taking all reasonable and practical steps within our capacity to promote inclusion, fairness, and opportunity for all.

We acknowledge that achieving inclusion is an ongoing journey, requiring focus, resources, and collaboration with our key stakeholders including clubs, volunteers, players, and partners. This policy sets out our commitment to continuous improvement and transparency, promoting equitable opportunities and a positive experience for all participants, and taking practical steps to reduce barriers to involvement wherever possible.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Equal Opportunity to Participate

Scottish Hockey seeks to ensure that everyone involved in our sport — players, volunteers, coaches, officials, staff and other key stakeholders — has a fair and genuine opportunity to take part in hockey to the full extent of their ambitions and abilities, regardless of age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status,

pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation.

In competitive hockey, where necessary to ensure fairness and safety, participation rules may be based on biological sex at birth and age. The Equality Act 2010 (Section 195) recognises that some sports are “gender-affected activities” where the average physical differences between males and females may affect fair competition or safety. The Act allows governing bodies to apply sex-based restrictions in such cases, provided this is necessary to achieve fair competition. These provisions apply only in the competitive context; Scottish Hockey remains fully committed to ensuring inclusive opportunities for everyone across all other areas of the game.

2.2 Respectful Environment

We aim to provide an environment where everyone’s rights, dignity, and individual worth are respected, and where people can participate in hockey without intimidation, victimisation, harassment, or abuse.

2.3 Positive Action

Discrimination in any form is unacceptable. We are committed to identifying, reducing, and where possible removing physical, structural, and cultural barriers to participation, working with partners to improve accessibility and inclusion over time.

3. Scottish Hockey’s Equality Diversity and Inclusion Commitments

Guided by sportscotland’s three strategic pillars:

3.1 Our People

We aim to build a culture where everyone feels valued and able to contribute. This includes taking steps to make recruitment, development, and retention practices more inclusive, and increasing awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion across our workforce and volunteers. We recognise this is a journey and will work towards broadening representation and ensuring all voices are heard.

3.2 Our System

We are working towards developing processes and environments that are inclusive by design. We will actively seek and listen to feedback, and use available information to guide changes that improve access, participation, and the overall experience of hockey for everyone. Participation rules aim to balance fairness, safety, player development, and safeguarding. Historically, younger players have also participated in adult competitions, providing valuable development opportunities. Participation should always be considered carefully with attention to fairness, safety, and wellbeing. Rules are applied consistently to maintain fair competition, while also recognising

opportunities for development where supported by historical experiences, evidence, best practice, and structured guidance.

3.3 New Ideas

We will look for opportunities to work with under-represented groups to shape new approaches and test different ways of making hockey more inclusive. We will learn from experience and adapt our actions as we go.

4. Implementation & Governance

4.1 A Board-appointed EDI Champion will work with the People Committee and Board to support the implementation of this policy and help ensure the principles of fairness, inclusion, and respect for all participants are considered in decision-making.

4.2 We will increase awareness of EDI principles among staff, Board members, and volunteers through training and communication.

4.3 We will work with clubs, facility providers, and partners to identify and address barriers to participation.

4.4 We will review progress regularly and update our priorities as our capacity and resources allow.

4.5 Member Clubs:

It will be a condition of Scottish Hockey's membership that member clubs:

- Formally adopt this policy, or produce their own equality and diversity policy in terms that are consistent with it;
- 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;
- Ensure that access to membership is open and inclusive;
- Support such measures and initiatives that Scottish Hockey may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

4.6 All Members:

It will also be a condition of Scottish Hockey's membership that all members:

- Commit to act in accordance with this policy; and
- Support such measures and initiatives that Scottish Hockey may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

5. Practical Commitments

5.1 Our People

- 5.1.1 Make job and volunteer opportunities more accessible through clear, inclusive language and advertising.
- 5.1.2 Encourage applications from people in under-represented groups.
- 5.1.3 Promote a welcoming and respectful culture in all parts of the sport.
- 5.1.4 Take part and coordinate EDI training

5.2 Our Systems

- 5.2.1 Consider accessibility, affordability (aligned to the cost of the activity), and flexibility in programmes and events, taking into account our capacity to deliver.
- 5.2.2 Support clubs in making hockey more accessible and inclusive over time.

5.3 New Ideas

- 5.3.1 Pilot new approaches with the involvement of under-represented groups.
- 5.3.2 Adapt and improve based on feedback and learning.

6. Monitoring & Continuous Improvement

- 6.1 Collect and review equality data where possible to understand participation patterns.
- 6.2 Use this information to shape future priorities and actions.
- 6.3 Continue to engage with players, volunteers, clubs, and partners to guide progress.

7. Legal and Broader Commitments

Scottish Hockey is committed to complying fully with all relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, and to upholding the principles of fairness, inclusion, and respect for all participants.

- 7.1 Comply with all relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.
- 7.2 Use sportscotland's equality, diversity, and inclusion framework as a benchmark for good practice.
- 7.3 Extend our inclusion work beyond legally protected characteristics to consider other barriers such as socioeconomic background, rural access, and mental health.
- 7.4 Transgender Participation - Scottish Hockey recognises that the legal, medical, and sporting landscape regarding transgender participation, particularly transgender women competing in women's competitions, is evolving. In light of recent court decisions, government guidance, and developments in sport policy, Scottish Hockey will:

7.4.1 Develop and maintain clear policies on transgender athlete participation that balance inclusion, fairness, and safety, and that are consistent with the Equality Act 2010 (including its sporting exemptions), relevant legal rulings, government guidance, and recognised best practice from sport governing bodies.

7.4.2 Adopt a phased approach to development, informed initially by legal, medical, and sport science guidance. Future reviews will prioritise meaningful consultation with affected communities and representative bodies, ensuring that policies remain inclusive, evidence-based, and fit for purpose as the legal and sporting landscape continues to evolve.

7.4.3 Review and update participation policies regularly to reflect changes in legislation, scientific understanding, and social context, ensuring they remain appropriate and lawful.

7.4.4 Ensure that decisions relating to transgender participation are made through a transparent and fair process, with clear eligibility criteria, appropriate safeguarding considerations, and a right of review or appeal.

7.4.5 By adopting this approach, Scottish Hockey seeks to foster an inclusive environment while maintaining the integrity, safety, and fairness of competition.

8. Forms of Discrimination

Scottish Hockey is committed to ensuring a sporting environment free from discrimination. The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy:

- Direct Discrimination: Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination: Applying a policy or practice that disadvantages a particular group unfairly.
- Harassment: Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment.
- Victimisation: Treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint related to discrimination.

Protected characteristics include age, sex, gender identity, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and others as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Should you have any concerns you can [report a concern here](#)

9. Related Policies and Documents

This Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents which provide further detail on specific areas:

- Transgender Participation Policy 2025 (in draft)
- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Harassment and Respect Policy
- Raising Concerns and appeals policy
- Rules and Disciplinary Code

Scottish Hockey regularly reviews these policies to ensure they remain current and effective.
