

## Swim Ireland Equal Opportunity Statement

‘Equal opportunity is about celebrating difference and diversity and as such providing a swimming structure that can respond to this in a proactive and positive manner’.

The aim of this policy is to help all staff and volunteers and members in our Aquatic Community develop their full potential and ensure that the talents and resources of the workforce are fully utilised. It is important to note that Swim Ireland is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, both direct and indirect.

Swim Ireland is committed to the promotion, principle, and practice of equal opportunities across all its aquatic disciplines, both as an employer, provider and as a facilitator of such practices by all its members. In our work with key partners, such as swimmers, clubs, teachers, coaches, officials, and administrators, we will advocate our policies.

Swim Ireland’s Vision is to ensure that Irish Swimming is a ‘sport for life and for all’. To work towards achieving this vision we need to do the following:

- Swim Ireland is committed to work towards ensuring that swimming is accessible to the many, rather than few.
- Swim Ireland recognises the need to acknowledge the diversity of provision that is required to ensure people, regardless of their race, sex/gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, and social economic background, can access swimming and develop at a level that is appropriate to them.
- Swim Ireland recognises the need to celebrate difference and diversity of provision as a means of creating entitlement and accessibility to our structure.
- Swim Ireland recognises that equal opportunity is about recognising that people are different and therefore require different provision.

### Swim Ireland as an employer

The organisation will provide employment equally to all, irrespective of:

- gender, gender re-assignment, marital or family status
- religious belief or political opinion
- disability
- race or ethnic origin
- nationality
- sexual orientation
- age

All full-time and part-time staff and volunteer applicants will be treated fairly. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

The organisation will promote a good and harmonious working environment, where all men and women are treated with respect and dignity. No form of intimidation or harassment will be tolerated. Breaches of the equal opportunities policy and practice will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

Swim Ireland wishes to undertake the following with regards to their employment:

- Provide full and fair considerations for all job/role and applications.
- Assist all our employees to realise their full potential by ensuring that they receive fair consideration of their training and career development needs and promotion opportunities.
- Wherever possible modify employment practices and procedures to reduce barriers experienced by members of disadvantaged social groups in seeking and during employment with then Association.
- Maintain records in recruitment, training and employment and use this information as a means of identifying areas of inequality.
- Require all our employees to undergo relevant training before taking part in recruitment and selection.
- Regularly review our recruitment, selection, training, and promotion procedures to ensure that they are fair and reflect current best practice.

### **Swim Ireland as a Membership organisation**

Swim Ireland is committed to encouraging membership from all sectors of the community.

To achieve this we undertake to:

- Promote an open and honest culture that values diversity.
- Communicate widely, ensuring that our messages can be understood and appreciated by all.
- Positively encourage the involvement of all people, regardless of the gender, race, disability, age and social background.
- Work to redress the effects of discrimination.
- Change attitudes and working practices to ensure that everyone can feel a valued member of the Association.

### **Swim Ireland as an Awarding Body**

In our centre approval process Swim Ireland will ensure that:

- Approved centres and sites where assessment may take place operate equal opportunities policies that are consistent with best education practices.
- There is a mechanism in place which will enable anyone who believes they have been discriminated against to raise the matter through the appropriate channels and to have access to the Awarding Body if they feel the matter is not appropriately resolved.
- Records relating to equal opportunities disputes are retained by accredited centres for a minimum period of 2 years.

### **Swim Ireland Teachers and Coaches**

In our training and development of teachers and coaches, we will strive to ensure that accredited centres establish and implement professional and ethical values and practice.

- Promote and apply the principles and practices of equal opportunities.
- Promote positive images of people with special needs.
- Encourage, and where required assist candidates with special requirements to access training provisions.
- Encourage high expectations and standards of achievement from all they teach.
- Involve everyone in meaningful and appropriate activity to ensure a quality experience.
- Help everyone to achieve their full potential.

### **Swim Ireland Officials and Administrators**

In our involvement of officials and administrators we will expect them to:

- Adopt, promote, and practice the values of the Association.
- Ensure that participation can be enjoyed by all.
- Provide meaningful and appropriate experiences which recognise and value the diversity of the participants.
- Actively encourage the participation and involvement of people from disadvantaged groups of the community.

### **From Policy into Practice**

Swim Ireland recognises that to successfully implement our policies will require the commitment of everyone involved in the Association. People's attitudes, views and working practices may have to change to ensure that an inclusive agenda is accepted by all and throughout the sport.

The CEO has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. All Directors, staff and volunteers also have responsibility for implementing aspects of the policy. The organisation expects all Directors, staff, and volunteers to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment that the policy seeks to establish.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The provision of equality of opportunity will be monitored by the collection of information on full-time, part-time, and volunteer staff and applicants. This will include, as a minimum, information on age, ethnic background, gender and status as a disabled person, community background, marital and family status, and may include information on the sexual orientation of members of staff or applicants.

The collection of information will be consistent with the statutory obligations arising from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and with the promotion of a culture of rights and responsibilities (stemming from the Human Rights Act 1998).

Progress on the implementation of this policy and the equal opportunities programme will be reviewed annually in consultation with appropriate stakeholders. Periodic reviews of the composition of the workforce will be carried out in compliance with current legislation.

### **Complaints**

Staff or volunteers who believe they have been subject to any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and in complete confidence.

These internal procedures do not replace or detract from a member of staff's right to pursue a complaint under any relevant legislation.

The organisation will make every effort to ensure that staff making complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will also be dealt with seriously, promptly and in complete confidence and may result in disciplinary action against the offender which may lead to dismissal.