

# ABRS - Equal Opportunities, Equality and Diversity Policy



## Objective

The Association of British Riding Schools (ABRS) is a national member body for riding school, trekking and livery businesses. To make equestrianism, as delivered through the ABRS and its members, an activity that is open to anyone who wishes to be involved in whatever capacity and at whatever level and to actively encourage more diverse participation and workforce.

As a member of the British Equestrian (BE), the ABRS the Association of British Riding Schools supports the Equal Opportunities and Equality Policy as outlined by the BE.

## Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

The ABRS is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that no individual receives more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, sex, gender, disability, race, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religion, or belief, and/or sexual orientation and gender reassignment. This includes all those involved in whatever capacity – members, participants, employees, coaches, consultants, owners, officials, volunteers, and spectators. In addition, the ABRS is committed to take action to encourage more diverse members, participants, employees, volunteers, and spectators.

The ABRS is committed also to the fair treatment of its current and potential staff and volunteers or users of its services.

## Implementation – the ABRS as a Member Body

The ABRS will:

- Work towards ensuring gender and ethnic parity and an increase in diversity of the ABRS Board. The composition of the Board will be reported on at the ABRS's Annual General Meeting.
- Ensure, wherever it is reasonably practical and within the ABRS's direct control, that there is open access to those that wish to participate in equestrian activity and that, when they do, they are treated fairly.
- Expect its members and the centres that it uses for training to adopt similar equal opportunities, equality and diversity policies and approaches. Further information on the ABRS' approach to diversity is contained in the ABRS Code(s) of Conduct.

The ABRS will act in both a leadership and an advocacy role with its members, encouraging actively an increase in diversity in equestrian sport.

## Implementation – the ABRS as an Employer

The ABRS takes measures to ensure that its employment practices are non-discriminatory. The ABRS ensures that no job applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions that are not necessary to the performance of the job or that constitute unfair discrimination. Appointments will be based on an individual's knowledge, skills, and experience in line with the competences required for the specific job. This includes both employed roles and voluntary roles (such as the role of a non-executive director).

As an organisation using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order, ABRS complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. The ABRS makes this policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. Every subject of a criminal record check submitted to the DBS is made aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and a copy is made available on request.

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to the DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position. The ABRS aims to ensure that all current and potential staff and volunteers are treated fairly and on an equal basis, irrespective of their sex, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, social status, offending background or part-time or fixed term contract status. The ABRS actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates and selects all candidates based on their skills, qualifications and experience. The ABRS undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

The ABRS can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that the ABRS is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either Standard or Enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended), the ABRS can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected and will be disclosed on the DBS certificate. The ABRS ensures that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have received appropriate guidance and training on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The ABRS ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place with the individual seeking the position on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant, including any matter revealed on a DBS certificate, before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

### **Handling and Storage of DBS Information**

The information provided by the DBS is highly confidential and will only be used to assess the suitability or otherwise of the applicant for the job in question. Notes of any discussions with the candidate and rationale for the decision-making process will be stored electronically in the applicant's file. The DBS snapshot will be kept on file for a period of 6 months and a record will be made on the ABRS staff HR spreadsheet/volunteer record that a check has been carried out, including the unique disclosure number, type of check carried out and the issue date.

### **Existing Employees and DBS Rechecks**

All existing staff in posts which are subject to a DBS check will be required to register with the Online Update Service, if they have not already done so, at the time their recheck is due.

### **Responsibilities**

The Trustees of the ABRS endorse and are responsible for ensuring that this Equal Opportunities, Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches. The ABRS Chair has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

### **Complaints Procedures**

To safeguard individual rights under this Equality Policy, any individual who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this Equality Policy may raise the matter through the ABRS complaints procedure

### **Relevant Legislation**

The following pieces of legislation and codes of practice have informed this policy:

- The Equality Act 2010

This legislation introduces nine protected characteristics which are grounds upon which it is unlawful to discriminate. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

This legislation prohibits employers from discriminating against applicants with spent convictions. Some employers are exempted and, can take into account, both spent and unspent convictions. For example, if the job involves working with vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, people with learning disabilities, or people with mental health issues, or involves handling money or security work.

### **Review Arrangements**

The policy will be reviewed every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As a result of any other significant change or event