Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

EnglandSumo is committed to making sumo an open, welcoming and inclusive sport. Sumo is for everyone — of every age, background, faith, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and body size. This page sets out our EDI **policy**, our **action plan**, and how to raise a concern.

Download the EDI policy and action plan (PDF)

Version 1.0 · October 2026 · reviewed annually · pending formal adoption by the Board (see action plan). Questions or concerns: email info@englandsumo.com.

1. Purpose and scope

This policy applies to everyone involved in EnglandSumo: members, athletes, coaches, referees and officials, volunteers, the committee/board, applicants, and spectators at our sessions and events. It covers both how we behave towards one another and the decisions we make about recruitment, selection, participation, and access to our sport.

2. Legal framework and protected characteristics

EnglandSumo is committed to complying with the **Equality Act 2010** and to eliminating discrimination in our sport. The nine protected characteristics covered by the Act are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We may also choose to extend our commitments beyond the Act to other groups (for example, carers and people from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds). We do not treat any of these groups less favourably.

3. What we mean by discrimination

- **Direct discrimination** — treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** — a rule or practice that applies to everyone but disadvantages a group with a protected characteristic without good reason.
- **Discrimination arising from disability** — treating someone unfavourably because of something connected to their disability, without justification.
- **Discrimination by association or perception** — unfavourable treatment because of someone's connection to a person with a protected characteristic, or because of a mistaken belief.
- **Harassment** — unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation** — treating someone badly because they have made or supported a complaint.
- **Bullying** — offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour that undermines, humiliates or injures someone.

4. Our commitments

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect, and take all concerns about discrimination seriously.
- Make our sessions, competitions, selection and official roles genuinely accessible to all.
- Make **reasonable adjustments** so that disabled people can train, compete, coach or officiate.
- Provide EDI guidance and training to coaches, officials and volunteers.
- Recruit openly and fairly to board and volunteer roles, and consider the diversity of skills and experience we need.

- Provide a clear, accessible way to raise a concern (see section 10) without fear of recrimination.
- Monitor our progress annually and report openly on it.

5. Reasonable adjustments and accessibility

Where a person faces a barrier because of a disability, we will consider reasonable adjustments to the way sessions and competitions are run, or to equipment or communications (using recognised tools such as the **Activity Inclusion Model** and the **STEP** framework — Space, Task, Equipment, People). Ask us and we will work with you.

6. Body size and weight

Sumo is one of the few sports where a larger body can be an advantage rather than a barrier, and we actively welcome participants of every size. Some people come to sumo after being put off other sports by weight stigma. We therefore:

- do not tolerate weight-based harassment, body-shaming or bullying, from anyone, ever;
- make sure coaching language, kit and imagery reflect and respect all body sizes; and
- measure and respect the wider benefits of the sport for health and confidence.

Note: body size or obesity is **not** itself a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Where excess weight arises from, or causes, a long-term impairment, disability protections may apply, and we treat this as a matter of inclusion in any case.

7. Adapted sumo and disabled participants

EnglandSumo supports **adapted sumo**, including competition for visually impaired athletes under shared adapted rules. We will keep connecting and promoting these pathways with recognised disability-sport partners so that disabled athletes can progress from first session to international competition.

8. Inclusive recruitment and positive action

Board and volunteer roles are advertised openly with clear, necessary criteria; adjustments are offered at application; and we use a skills matrix to build a balanced, effective board. We welcome applications from under-represented groups. Any positive action we take is lawful under the Equality Act 2010. Where a role legitimately requires it (for example, single-sex support work or a genuine occupational requirement), we may apply a limited exception.

9. Responsibilities

- **The Board** owns this policy, appoints an EDI Champion, and reviews progress annually.
- **The EDI Champion** (a named board member) leads on EDI, supports culture and training, and is a first point of contact for concerns.
- **Coaches, referees and officials** model inclusive behaviour, deliver adjustments, and raise concerns promptly.
- **All members** uphold this policy and challenge or report behaviour that does not meet it.

10. Raising a concern or complaint

If you experience or witness discrimination, harassment or bullying, please tell us. Email info@englandsumo.com, or contact any board member you feel able to raise it with. For safeguarding concerns involving children or vulnerable adults, use the dedicated route at Governance and safeguarding (safeguarding@englandsumo.com).

We will take every report seriously, handle it as fairly and confidentially as possible, and link it to our complaints and disciplinary procedures. No one will be treated less favourably for raising a concern in good faith.

11. Monitoring, data protection and review

We may collect aggregated diversity information to understand whether our sport is becoming more inclusive. This is voluntary, handled confidentially, processed lawfully under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, and we do

not publish breakdowns for groups so small that individuals could be identified. This policy is reviewed annually and reported on at the Board.

EDI action plan

Our current actions, with named owners and timescales:

Area	Action	Owner	Timeline
Leadership	Appoint an EDI Board Champion and record the appointment in the Board minutes.	Board	Q4 2026
Leadership	Formally adopt and publish this EDI policy; record approval in the AGM/Board minutes.	Board	Q4 2026
Evidence & insight	Add a voluntary, aggregated diversity-monitoring and reasonable-adjustments question to membership sign-up (never published for groups under 10).	General Secretary	Q1 2027
Culture	Run one annual EDI module for coaches, officials and volunteers; log attendance and refresh annually.	EDI Champion	Q1 2027 (annual)
Culture	Publicise the anti-discrimination and adjustments route in every member and club communication.	EDI Champion	Q1 2027
People & participation	Replace word-of-mouth board and volunteer recruitment with an open, skills-based process using a board skills matrix and adjustments offered at application.	Board	Q1 2027
People & participation	Formalise and promote the adapted-sumo / visually-impaired pathway, linking with recognised disability-sport partners (e.g. Activity Alliance, British Blind Sport, UK Deaf Sport).	Coaching lead	2027
Communication	Publish a one-page annual EDI update and review this policy at the Board.	EDI Champion	Annually

See also: Governance and safeguarding, Constitution of EnglandSumo, Adapted sumo, and Find a sumo club in England.

Last updated: **2026-11-02**.