

The Equity Standard: Key Points for Scottish Governing Bodies

What is Equity?

Equity ultimately means fairness. Equity in sport means having policies, procedures and actions in place that ensure everyone who wants to take part in sport has the opportunity to do so. If equitable procedures and decision making is in place, opportunities will be open to everybody, regardless of personal characteristics such as gender, disability, race, political or religious belief, age, sexual orientation or social background.

What is the Difference between Equity and Equality?

Equality is **QUANTITATIVE**, and is concerned with ensuring parity in terms of participation or representation (e.g. equal numbers of men and women playing sport, or being represented on a Board).

Equity is **QUALITATIVE**, and as such is not simply concerned with numbers. It is about ensuring fairness and inclusion, and as such making sure that the actual **opportunity** to participate exists for all, regardless of personal characteristics such as gender, disability, race, age, political or religious belief, sexual orientation, or social background. It should be understood that unequal effort might be required to reach equity. Furthermore, it may take longer to achieve equality than equity, as individuals must choose to take up the opportunities that equity brings them.

What is the Equity Standard ('the Standard')?

The Standard is a framework to help guide organisations in sport towards achieving equity in their policies, procedures and decision-making processes. It was prepared jointly by UK Sport and the four HCSCs, and was endorsed by key equity partners. The Chair of Sport England launched it in November 2004.

The Standard is based on achieving four levels of accreditation (Foundation, Preliminary, Intermediate, Advanced). The Standards sets out a number of key outcomes and suggested tasks for each level. Organisations should deliver actions in two areas of work in order to achieve each level: (a) Developing your organisation, and (b) Developing your services.

To reach each level, each organisation must put together a portfolio of evidence, which will then be assessed by an independent panel.

Roll Out of the Standard: Implementation in Pilot SGBs

The ten one-stop plan governing bodies, plus the Scottish Hockey Union and Basketball Scotland, are involved in the pilot roll out of the Standard. As set out in **sportscotland's** Equity Strategy, the pilot SGBs will be encouraged to aim to reach the Foundation level by spring 2006. All other SGBs which are

not involved in the pilot will be invited by December 2005 to set themselves target dates for reaching Foundation and Preliminary levels.

Support for SGBs Involved in the Pilot: VAGA Associates and sportscotland

VAGA Associates have been appointed by UK Sport and associated equity partners to assist all governing bodies involved in the pilot across the UK to implement the Standard.

VAGA and **sportscotland** are currently scoping out the extent of support they will be able to provide to SGBs involved in the pilot. However, this can only be done in detail when the actual support needs of each of the SGBs have been identified. A summary of support likely to be provided by VAGA Associates and **sportscotland** is attached as **appendix A**.

All SGBs who intend to work towards achieving the Standard as part of the pilot are encouraged to now consider the steps they need to take to achieve Foundation and/or Preliminary level, and to identify any specific support they would require to take these steps.

Once the nature of support required by each SGB is known, VAGA and **sportscotland** will be in a better position to identify what support they are able to provide, as it is anticipated that the needs of individual SGBs will differ.

sportscotland's Partnership Managers will be able to provide ongoing advice and support to those SGBs working towards achieving the Standard.

Thereafter, Partnership Managers will have an ongoing role in providing support and advice to the SGBs. There will also be a role for the collation and dissemination of good practice in increasing equity and diversity.

However, not all SGBs will be involved in the pilot scheme: in fact, the majority will not. However, **sportscotland's** Partnership Managers and Ethics Manager will still:

- Promote the Equity Standard and its benefits to all SGBs.
- Provide advice and support for SGBs not involved in the pilot, but which are keen to take steps towards implementing the Standard.
- Invite all SGBs which are not involved in the pilot to set target dates by December 2005 for the achievement of Foundation level.

sportscotland's Equity Strategy

sportscotland's Equity Strategy is very closely aligned with the framework in the Equity Standard, and sets out:

- (a) How **sportscotland** will implement the Standard
- (b) How **sportscotland** will encourage and support key partners to implement the Standard – starting with the pilot group of SGBs.

The first version of the Strategy sets out how **sportscotland** will achieve the Foundation and Preliminary levels of the Standard, and includes an action plan to summer 2007. It is estimated that **sportscotland** will achieve Foundation by April 2006, and will work to reach Preliminary level throughout 2006.

The Strategy also includes target dates by when SGBs should aim to achieve the Foundation and Preliminary levels.

Next Steps: Key Dates

VAGA Associates obtain confirmation of SGBs involved in Pilot, and confirmation of target date to reach Foundation (suggested April/June 2006)	June 2005
sportscotland Partnership Managers/Ethics Manager communicate broad support available from VAGA to SGBs in pilot	June 2005
Dates agreed for first individual meetings between VAGA Associates and individual SGBs	August 2005
Publication of sportscotland's Equity Strategy	August 2005
SGBs, with support of VAGA, scope out actions and any assistance required to reach Foundation	Summer- Autumn 2005
First individual meetings between VAGA and SGBs take place	September-October 2005
SGBs begin to build up their portfolios of evidence	September onwards (or earlier if ready)
Second individual meetings between VAGA and SGBs take place	January 2005
Ongoing advice/support to 'pilot' SGBs by Partnership Managers/Ethics Manager	Ongoing from May 2005
Promotion of/advice on Equity Standard to all other SGBs and other key partners by Partnership Managers/Ethics Manager	Ongoing from May 2005
Partnership Managers obtain confirmation of target dates for 'non-pilot' SGBs to achieve Foundation and Preliminary levels	December 2005
Submission of portfolios to sportscotland for pre-assessment, and then to UK Panel for Assessment	Dates set out in VAGA newsletter number five (August 2005)
sportscotland achieve Foundation level	TARGET DATE – April 2006
Pilot SGBs achieve Foundation level	TARGET DATE – April/June 2006
Achievement of Preliminary levels	See sportscotland's Equity Strategy for target dates

Appendix A

Equity Standard: A Framework for Sport Support Available to Scottish Governing Bodies

Introduction

Vaga Associates have been contracted to work with Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport (SGBs) to assist them to achieve the Foundation and Preliminary Levels of the Equity Standard. The support available is limited by time. This brief document sums up the proposed approach and invites SGBs to now negotiate the best way in which to use the resources that are being made available.

1 Planned Group Meetings

Initially three meetings have been planned to which all SGBs working towards a 'One Stop Plan' are invited.

- Meeting One in April 2005
- Meeting Two June 13th 2005
- Meeting three - date to be agreed (possibly September/October)

The agendas for these meetings will be broad and will focus on bigger issues that have an impact on the SGBs in general. There will be opportunities to discuss specific items outside the meeting on the same day when time allows. Research and other information will also be presented to the group and plenty of opportunity will be allowed to resolve problems and raise concerns.

2 Individual Meetings

Additional support will be provided through individual meetings between Vaga Associates and each SGB. Preferably these meetings would be held at the 'home' of the governing body. At these meetings, SGB staff would have an opportunity to further scope out and plan the specific actions required to meet the Foundation and/or Preliminary level of the Standard, and to further ascertain their own specific support requirements.

There are no definitive dates set aside for these meetings but the following are suggested as a guide:

- September/October at the latest¹
- January or February at the latest.

There are some issues that could influence the timing of these meetings:

¹ Note: VAGA will be unable to attend meetings with SGBs between 23 June and 10 July, and during the last week of August.

- The needs of the SGB as it prepares papers and policy decisions for key meetings such as an AGM or Board meeting
- The agreed date for submission of the portfolio for assessment (April or June 2006 for most SGBs)
- A specific need that needs to be addressed before any additional progress can be made.
- Simply time and pressures on the SGB at a particular time of year.

Present at each meeting would be the key people from the SGB, Jeremy Harries from VAGA Associates, and the relevant partnership manager from **sportscotland**.

3 Other Support

VAGA Associates and **sportscotland** recognise that the above may form the minimum level of support to SGBs as they prepare to meet the requirements of the Equity Standard. There are other forms of support that are being investigated and developed. At this stage, additional support is still being scoped out, as it may require additional resources that need to be identified. It will not be possible to formally offer further specific support until the specific support needs of each SGB are identified. It is likely that different SGBs will require different support, and thus the assistance and support required is likely to differ. However, possible forms of additional support might include:

- An awareness raising session for the staff and Board of each SGB
- Sessions for key people within the governing body
- Collective sessions for groups of governing bodies facing similar issues
- Printed and electronic template materials (e.g. model policies)
- Equity and diversity training, carried out by experts in the field
- Production of an online Directory of Equity Trainers in Scotland
- Ongoing advice and support through **sportscotland**'s network of Partnership Managers

All SGBs involved in the pilot are encouraged to consider the steps they will need to take to achieve the Foundation level as soon as possible, and to begin to identify any areas where they would require specific support. This will then enable Vaga and **sportscotland** to consider what support can be provided to assist. Each SGB should contact its Partnership Manager to start this process.

Finally, SGBs are reminded that the Vaga Associates web site holds specific information that will be of particular use as they work towards all levels of the standard: <http://www.vagaassociates.com/eqss//index.htm> This provides you with essential information about equity, legal documents and links to other useful web sites.

You may also find the **sportscotland** Ethics and Equity website useful: <http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/ethics>

4 Key Contacts

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Plus sportscotland's network of Partnership Managers