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1. About Sport Ireland

Sport Ireland was established on October 1 2015. It is the authority tasked with the development of sport in Ireland. This includes participation in sport, high performance sport, anti-doping, coaching and the development of the Sport Ireland Campus.

Sport Ireland leads the national sports agenda through:

- Communicating the value and leading the thinking on sport
- Promoting an inclusive and fair culture
- Generating value from finite resources
- Building strong sports organisations
- Realising the concept of ‘sport for life for everyone’
- Supporting high performance success

In June 2019, following the completion of the National Sports Policy, Sport Ireland’s new five-year statement of strategy for 2018-2022 was approved. Sport Ireland based its strategy on the following four key pillars:

- Participation (Lifelong and Inclusive Sport).
- Performance (Playing and competing at a level appropriate to ability).
- High Performance (Reaching Ireland’s potential at the highest levels of competition) and
- Sport Ireland Governance (Drive the development of a highly effective sports sector that will have an impact throughout the country).

1.1 Role and Function of Sport Ireland as per the Sport Ireland Act 2015.

- ❖ Advocating and Funding of sport and sport bodies and individual sportspersons; by developing strategies for increasing participation in recreational sport at national and local level.
- ❖ Advising the Minister, for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, and other government departments in relation to sports policy issues;
- ❖ Providing information in relation to all aspects of sport through local, national and our media platforms.
- ❖ Developing programmes to support and assist sports organisations and their staff and volunteers at all levels in sport and, in co-operation with sporting bodies.
- ❖ Implementation of a comprehensive anti-doping programme, through guidelines and codes of practice.

- ❖ To develop guidelines and codes of practice for promoting protection of children in sport consistent with child protection legislation.
- ❖ Facilitation and direct provision of training and support services to sports organisations,
- ❖ Creating partnerships and alliances among organisations involved in sports promotion, development and administration.
- ❖ Promoting equality and diversity for all.
- ❖ To develop, or to continue the development of, a sports campus on the site, and maintain other sports facilities as approved by the minister.
- ❖ To perform any additional functions assigned to Sport Ireland as per section 9 of Sport Ireland Act 2015

1.2 Our customers Values

As a public sector organisation, we are committed to providing a quality service to citizens. In order to achieve this, we will interact with our customers and stakeholders in a clear, polite, helpful, open and professional manner and treat our customers fairly and consistently.

At all times we seek to instil, develop and maintain values and behaviours that maximise our capacity to deliver our objectives. In addition to a duty to be professional, responsive, open and accountable, we are firmly committed to continual reform, innovation and improvement.

In an environment of change, competing demands and obligations, our values underpin our work and are demonstrated in all outputs. **Our 8 core values** are as per our Code of Governance and Business Conduct are below

1. Integrity
2. Teamwork
3. Recognition
4. Respect
5. Accountability
6. Leadership
7. Inclusive
8. Innovative

Sport Ireland has a very broad and multi-layered remit, in terms of the range of its functions it carries out in sport as mentioned above. Broadly these functions reflect the fact that Sport Ireland is a development agency looking to work in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to advance national policy goals.

1.3 Main Clients, Stakeholders of Sport Ireland and Services we provide to them

- ❖ Sports Arena - National Governing Bodies, Local Sports Partnerships, Other funded bodies, Olympic Federation of Ireland, Paralympics Ireland, Individual Sportspersons; Coaches, World Anti-Doping Agency
- ❖ Government Departments - Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Department of Education, Department of Health and Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth etc.
- ❖ Public Bodies- Healthy Ireland, Health Products Regulatory Authority, Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland
- ❖ General Public
- ❖ Other Bodies Media, Schools, Universities, interest groups, etc.;

It is important to note that in comparison with some public sector bodies our level of direct engagement with members of the public would be considerably lower with the vast majority of our engagement being directly with the bodies and athletes we fund.

2. Development of the Quality Customer Service Action Plan.

The service standards set out in the Customer Charter were developed with regard to:

- ❖ Sport Ireland staff experiences of service delivery since the establishment of Sport Ireland in October 2015;
- ❖ Feedback received from customers relating to service delivery;
- ❖ Consultation undertaken during the development of our most recent Statement of Strategy
- ❖ Central Guidance on best practices and guiding principles of Quality Customer Service
- ❖ Consultation with relevant staff members

2.1 Implementing the 12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service

In their dealings with the public, Public Service organisations are obliged take into account the following 12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service. These principles set out in broad terms the level of commitment to customer service that we are aspiring to.

The 12 Principles are as follows:

1. Quality Service Standards
2. Equality/Diversity
3. Physical Access
4. Information
5. Timeliness and Courtesy
6. Complaints
7. Appeals
8. Consultation and Evaluation
9. Choice
10. Official Languages Equality
11. Better Co-ordination
12. Internal Customer

Feedback, while not one of the 12 principles is a key element of our approach to customer service. Therefore, we welcome comments, suggestions and views on any aspect of our service because we believe this will help us to be a more efficient and effective organisation.

Our Customer Feedback Form is available on our website can use this form to give your comments, compliments and complaints.

The key actions we will undertake to progress the implementation of these principles are outlined below.

Principle 1: Quality Service Standards

In order to address this principle, we will publish a statement which outlines the nature and quality of service which citizen's customers and stakeholders can expect and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Publish a new Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan (CAP) 2021-2023 in both Irish and English. This will inform our customers and stakeholders of the standards of customer service that they can expect over the lifetime of the Plan.
- ❖ Make the Customer Action Plan and Customer Charter available in the Customer Services area on our website.
- ❖ Display the Customer Charter in the reception areas of the main buildings.
- ❖ Monitor progress made in achieving the customer service standards outlined in our Customer Charter and Action Plan.
- ❖ Make available more online forms such as complaints reducing risk and resulting in a more efficient process for customers.

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Availability of information regarding customer service standard commitments to our users.

Principle 2: Equality/Diversity

We are committed to meeting our Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, and will report, in an accessible manner, our achievements in our annual reports.

We will identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards

We will aim to:

- ❖ Respect the principles of equality and diversity in all dealings with our customers and report on progress made in fulfilling our obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.
- ❖ Provide any required accommodations to staff with disabilities or specific needs and monitor compliance with the employment targets under part 5 of the Disability Act 2005
- ❖ Ensure website and other published materials are published with regard to best practice in accessibility.

- ❖ Ensure Sport Ireland provide programmes which are inclusive diverse and accessible to all.
- ❖ Raise awareness of equality/diversity issues in Sport Ireland through information distribution and educational talks.
- ❖ Ensure staff avail of appropriate training and development opportunities

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Nature of feedback from customers and representative groups on service standards.
- ❖ Ongoing review of accessibility of Sport Ireland services and appropriate resolutions provided to requests for special assistance.

Principle 3: Physical Access

Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Provide a clean, safe and comfortable environment for staff and visitors.
- ❖ Provide access and facilities to meet all our customers' and employees or interviewees needs, including those who require reasonable accommodation(s).
- ❖ Ensure full compliance with all Workplace Health and Safety legislation.
- ❖ Ensure that Equality/Diversity policies and procedures take full account of physical environment factors.
- ❖ Provide contact details for Access Officer to any customers requiring special assistance in relation to physical access.

Performance Indicator.

- ❖ The feedback from customers and representative groups on service standards.
- ❖ Effective implementation of compliance measures in relation to Health and Safety legislation.

Principle 4: Information

Sport Ireland has a dedicated Communications Unit responsible for coordinating and disseminating guidance and information.

Sport Ireland publishes a broad range of information on its website, through a broad range of formats including formal guidance notes, blogs, and online reports. Sport Ireland proactively promotes its publications on social media.

Sport Ireland website is designed with regard to accessibility principles. Sport Ireland has a dedicated public information service, and receives and responds to queries from individuals and organisations by means of email, online form or telephone in a timely manner.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Provide customers with information that is appropriate, comprehensive and accurate.
- ❖ Use clear and simple language in application forms and leaflets.
- ❖ Respond to customer queries in a timely manner.
- ❖ Make information available in alternative formats such as Braille, audio, or other language (as far as practicable), on request.
- ❖ Provide material on our website www.sportireland. i.e. in a manner that conforms to web content accessibility guidelines.
- ❖ Continue to provide e-mail access to our main business areas and also provide electronic access to our leaflets and application forms.

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Regular publication of information and guidance.
- ❖ Ongoing review of information and website for accuracy, clarity and timeliness.
- ❖ Ensuring responses are made within timelines.
- ❖ Reviewing accessibility to information.

Principle 5: Timeliness and Courtesy

Sport Ireland sets out in its Customer Charter its commitment to delivering its services within defined timelines and with appropriate courtesy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Provide appropriate customer service training to relevant staff.

- ❖ Monitor and evaluate our performance against the standards of quality service we are committed to providing.
- ❖ Monitor customer satisfaction and review and improve standards of delivery where appropriate.
- ❖ Acknowledge all correspondence within 5 working days¹.
- ❖ Respond to correspondence in clear plain language within 15 working days.

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Adherence to customer service standards as set out in Customer Charter.

Principle 6: Customer Service Complaints

Despite our best endeavours we recognise that things may not always meet customer expectations. We aim to maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Ensure all customers are aware of the Customer Feedback Form
- ❖ Ensure relevant staff are empowered to make enquiries and issue authoritative responses to complaints.
- ❖ Monitor the number and nature of complaints received.
- ❖ Raise staff awareness of the cause of complaints and provide training as appropriate.

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Effective resolution of all complaints received.
- ❖ Ensure relevant staff have sufficient training in conflict resolution.
- ❖ Ensure we make it as easy as possible to make a complaint

¹ It is important to note that Social media communication does not fall within scope of our formal communication channels.

Principle 7: Customer Service Appeals

Should the complainant not be satisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint, Sport Ireland has a clear and simple appeals process. The customer can appeal the decision by writing to the Secretary, and subsequently the Office of the Ombudsman.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Ensure customers are aware of the options available to them when they are dissatisfied with a decision made in relation to our services.
- ❖ Ensure we have accessible methods for customers to appeal.

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Information on appeals mechanisms is available and clearly explained on our website.

Principle 8: Consultation and Evaluation.

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Ensure all public consultations to be communicated and promoted effectively.
- ❖ Facilitate customers to share their views on our service delivery through the Customer Service area on our website.
- ❖ Ensure that feedback received through public consultations, in addition to other forms of feedback received, is considered fully in relation to development, delivery and review of services.
- ❖ Ensure feedback received from customers to be incorporated into meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

Performance Indicators

- ❖ Regular customer engagement as required at local level.
- ❖ Meaningful consideration of consultation responses and other forms of feedback in relation in the development, delivery and review of services.

Principle 9: Choice

Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Provide a range of appropriate contact channels, for example, voicemail, email and through our website.
- ❖ Continue to provide information on-line and through appropriate channels.
- ❖ Continue to make electronic payment facilities available, where appropriate.
- ❖ Progress and broaden the range of services available to customers on-line.

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Ability of Sport Ireland to respond appropriately to customers through all means outlined in Customer Charter.
- ❖ Reviewing and updating our technology when feasible.

Principle 10: Official Languages Equality

Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Comply with our obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003.
- ❖ Publish major publications such as the Annual Report and Statement of Strategy in Irish and English.
- ❖ Make available main pages of our website in both Irish and English.
- ❖ Reply in Irish to all correspondence received in Irish.
- ❖ Provide signage in public offices in both Irish and English. Continue to encourage and support staff to learn Irish and/improve their Irish language skills.
- ❖ Encourage and support staff to celebrate the Irish Language through formal and informal means

Performance Indicator

- ❖ Compliance with the Language Scheme.
- ❖ Number of courses offered to staff to support the development of their Irish language capabilities

Principle 11: Better Co-ordination

Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

We will aim to:

- ❖ Participate in inter Departmental and cross Governmental fora, such as the Quality Customer Service (QCS) Network, in order to ensure that our approach to service delivery is consistent with best practice across the Public Service.
- ❖ Ensure the Anti-Doping unit engage with international bodies in order to keep up to date with global standards
- ❖ Identify areas for partnership, synergy and collaboration across the public sector

Performance Indicator

- Effective and successful cooperation with relevant bodies.

Principle 12: Internal Customer

Sport Ireland is growing and evolving and appropriate support and consultation with staff is important.

Sport Ireland has established internal communications channels, and has appointed a dedicated Human Resources Unit to ensure all staff are supported.

In order to address this principle, we will implement the following service standards.

- Establish an appropriate HR function and implement appropriate policies, procedures and strategies regarding Human Resources.
- Provide necessary induction, support, training and upskilling to empower staff to carry out their roles.
- Maintain effective Performance Management and Development System.
- Consult with staff on major organisational changes.
- Ensure staff are aware of The Protected Disclosures Act 2014.

Performance Indicator

- Staff feedback
- Evidence of acting on staff feedback where appropriate

3. Appendices

If you have a query, concern or complaint regarding a matter relating to customer service, you can engage with the Sport Ireland in the following ways:

- By web-form on our website;
- By email;
- By post.

3.1 Complaints overview

What does our Complaints Procedure cover?

Complaints about issues such as delays, mistakes and poor customer service provided by Sport Ireland

The Complaints procedure does not cover?

Matters of policy that are the subject of litigation or matters that have been referred to the Ombudsman or Information Commissioner

How do I complain?

- If you are dissatisfied by some aspect of our service, please express this to the person with whom you are dealing with or fill out our Customer Feedback Form
- If you prefer, please ask to speak to a manager who will try to help as we aim to resolve all difficulties at "local" level where possible
- We will examine and review your complaint, acknowledging it within 5 working days and send a decision to you within 15 working days or as soon as possible following receipt of your complaint.
- If you remain dissatisfied and wish to make a complaint, you can contact our Board Secretary who will arrange for your complaint to be formally investigated
- Complaints may be made in writing to the address under contacts.

What information do I need to provide when making a complaint?

- ❖ Your name, address and telephone number and what it is you are dissatisfied with
- ❖ The name of the staff members or sections that dealt with you
- ❖ Copies of any relevant documentation.

How does our complaints procedure work?

- ❖ We will treat your complaint properly, fairly and impartially
- ❖ We promise that making a complaint will have no implications for your dealings with Sport Ireland
- ❖ A staff member other than those originally involved in the initial issue, will examine your complaint.
- ❖ We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
- ❖ A staff member other than those originally involved in the initial issue, will examine and review your complaint and send a decision to you within 15 working days or as soon as possible following receipt of your complaint
- ❖ In the event the complaint is upheld we will change the way we do things to avoid making the same mistake in future

Sport Ireland will endeavour to offer a reasonable and fair service and expect the same standards from individuals making a complaint. Illustrative examples of what we consider fair and reasonable behaviour when interacting with us are below:

- ❖ Providing additional details when requested.
- ❖ Recognising that there is a defined procedures in place to address matters
- ❖ Recognising that there are limits to Sport Ireland's powers under the Sport Ireland Act (2015)
- ❖ Recognising that Sport Ireland cannot continue to address matters that have been dealt with comprehensively through previous engagements.
- ❖ Treating staff courteously and respectfully

Sport Ireland will adopt a professional approach to engaging with all stakeholders and will expect similar standards from stakeholders.

3.1.2 The Provision of Grant Information

One of the main services of the Sport Ireland is the provision of core and programme funding to sports bodies and performance-based funding to individual sportspersons. Details of some of our standard schemes are below

- ❖ Core funding is used primarily to assist and support the organisational structures and systems

essential for the effective administration and development of sport.

- ❖ Programme funding is used to promote specific and targeted initiatives.
- ❖ High Performance Programme Funding is used to promote specific and targeted initiatives within National Governing Bodies high performance environments.
- ❖ Funding is provided to individual sportspersons through the Sport Ireland's International Carding Scheme and the Team Ireland Golf Scheme.

To ensure that all relevant bodies and individuals receive the information they require to apply for this funding

Sport Ireland will aim to:

- ❖ Supply all prospective grant applicants with eligibility criteria, terms, conditions and other relevant information in advance
- ❖ Explain exactly what is required in application forms and ask only relevant questions
- ❖ Process all applications including making a final decision within six weeks of receipt of the application
- ❖ Communicate the decision to the grant applicants within two weeks following the date of decision
- ❖ Issue payments under grant schemes within two weeks of the receipt of confirmation that grant scheme conditions have been met

Sport Ireland will endeavour to deliberate on individual Grant Scheme applications as soon as reasonably practicable. Each Grant Scheme will be judged on its own set of Criteria, meaning that the volume of applications and level of complexity of each Scheme may determine length of the assessment period. Extended timelines may be put in place in cases where the approval of another relevant third party is required. Sport Ireland will remain in communication with applicants throughout the process.

Appeals

Sport Ireland operates an Appeals Procedure in respect of all its funding schemes.

Principles of the Appeals Scheme

- Proper, fair and impartial
- Lodging an appeal will have no implications for your dealings with Sport Ireland
- Open, accessible and accountable

How to Appeal

- Applicants may appeal against a funding decision on the basis of an alleged infringement or unfair application of, or a deviation from Sport Ireland's published procedures.
- If you wish to appeal a funding decision, you can contact the Executive member responsible for the decision.
- If after you have discussed the matter with a member you still wish to appeal a funding decision, you must write to the Chief Executive of Sport Ireland within four weeks from the date of notification.
- You will receive a written acknowledgement.
- Within twenty working days of receiving such a request, the appeal will be considered by the Chief Executive, the Secretary, and an independent Chair. Their conclusions and recommendations will be submitted to the next available meeting of the Board (approximately one per month except during the July/August period). The decision at this stage will be final and will be communicated to the appellant giving their reason for the decision within seven working days of this meeting.
- In the case of the International Carding Scheme appeals will be dealt with by the NGB Appeals Committee for transition sports and by Sport Ireland's independent Carding Appeals Committee for non-transition sport. Sport Ireland may appoint a representative on the NGB appeals committee if necessary. You can appeal by contacting the NGB for details on how to appeal and for an official appeals form. Further details are available in the International Carding Scheme guidelines.

Sport Ireland is committed to providing an open, accountable and accessible system of procedures and processes in relation to all areas of its work. Any suggestions as to how we might improve our services may be directed to customerfeedback@sportireland.ie

3.1.3 Contact Details

Further Information on our customer services may be obtained from: -The Secretary, Sport Ireland, The Courtyard, Sport Ireland Campus, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 PN0N

Telephone - 01 8608800 Fax - 01 8608880

Website - www.sportireland.ie

Email – customerfeedback@sportireland.ie

Appeals

Address - Appeals Section, Sport Ireland, The Courtyard, Sport Ireland Campus, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 PN0N

Telephone - 01 8608800 Fax - 01 8608880

Email – customerfeedback@sportireland.ie

Freedom of Information:

Address - FOI Officer, Sport Ireland, The Courtyard, Sport Ireland Campus, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15,
D15 PN0N

Telephone - 01 8608846

foi@[sportireland.ie](mailto:foi@sportireland.ie)

Media- media@sportireland.ie

Access Officer

Colin Murphy

Email: cmurphy@sportireland.ie

Social Media

- <https://twitter.com/sportireland>
- <https://www.instagram.com/sportireland/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/SportIreland/> ²

² Social media communication does not fall within scope of formal communication channels.