



BALMAIN
ROWING CLUB
Rowing for All

BALMAIN ROWING CLUB INC.
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Gender Equitable Access and Usage Policy 1.01

1. BACKGROUND AND POLICY STATEMENT

Balmain Rowing Club is committed to being a diverse, inclusive and community-driven club in the spirit of its motto “Rowing for All”.

Balmain Rowing Club (“**BRC**”) recognises women and girls may not currently have equal access to rowing facilities and that cultural biases often result in men and boys receiving more dedicated coaching, given better and more popular training times and/or better access to rowing-friendly waterways.

Recognising both the disadvantages faced by female athletes coupled with the club’s increasing female membership, increased female interest and participation in its learn-to-row and indoor rowing programs, its partnership with a girls school, and its relationship with the local secondary school and community, BRC actively seeks to support and promote the participation of women and girls in rowing as a sport and physical activity by:

- prioritising equitable and enduring access and use of the club’s facilities for the purposes of women and girls’ participation in rowing by removing barriers to decision-making processes;
- fostering positive experiences for women and girls through quality rowing participation activities, including equipment, which is modern, inclusive, welcoming and safe and tailored to the needs of women and girls and those experiencing intersectional disadvantage;
- providing enduring programs and initiatives that address barriers for women and girls to participate in rowing and build a culture of equality, respect and inclusion in rowing; and
- addressing discrimination and inequality that women and girls encounter and provide opportunities to participate in, and contribute, and remain involved in all aspects of rowing life.

2. PURPOSE

The policy provides a management framework to address potential barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using the club’s rowing facilities and to foster rowing programs and facility usage which is both effective and empowering in the participation of women and girls in rowing as a sport and physical activity. The purpose is to ensure that all voices, concerns and experiences are integrated into the design, implementation and monitoring of programs as well as the use of the rowing facilities.

3. SCOPE

The policy applies to the BRC shed and facilities, to all BRC rowing equipment (including BRC rowing boats) and venues used by BRC for rowing purposes.

This policy applies to the participation of women and girls in the following programs:

- a) MLC School Rowing Program (to the extent necessary for its program to fully operate at the BRC shed and have access to rowing channels on the Parramatta River, Iron Cove and Lane Cove River)
- b) Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus BRC Rowing Program
- c) BRC – Learn-to-Row and Intermediate Learn-to-Row Rowing Programs
- d) BRC Indoor Rowing Sessions (also known as “Community Rowing”)
- e) BRC Member Training for Local, State, and National Regattas

4. GUIDELINES AND INITIATIVES

BRC is committed to the following guidelines and initiatives to provide clear direction for change.

➤ Practice and Event Schedule – creation and distribution

- Prior to the start of each season, BRC will engage fairly and consult with all user groups of on-water rowing irrespective of gender to create a Practice and Event Schedule. In this process, inclusive planning will be undertaken in respect of female user groups (or their school body) to ensure that:
 - a) scheduling of programs considers the stated needs of female users in a program during the consultation process, including factors such as academic or schooling needs/timetables, personal or family commitments and physical/age related needs; and
 - b) practise times for female users within the schedule are prioritised have regard to those stated needs.
- The Practice and Event Schedule (and any applicable Regatta Schedule) will be shared with all user groups (or their school body) at least four weeks before the start of each season to allow for planning and preparation.
- Feedback on the Practice and Event Schedule will also be sought from female user groups at the time of distribution. Reasonable adjustments to timetabling can be made within that period to align with this policy.

➤ Change rooms – scheduling of exclusive female use

- BRC uses its shed and facilities flexibly to comply with its obligations to its members and to its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy as well as ensuring equitable access under this policy.
- Female users will be given exclusive use to the change rooms and toilet facilities on the lower level of the BRC shed in the following circumstances:
 - a) when a MLC School Rowing Program is scheduled;
 - b) when a Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus BRC Rowing Program is scheduled;
 - c) on weekday mornings before 7.30am when Women’s Programs for Regattas are scheduled;
 - d) when women-only Community Rowing Sessions are scheduled; and
 - e) any other times as notified by signage and otherwise through the usual club communication channels.

- The Diversity Champion may vary these exclusive use times, through signage and formal communication to club members, following consultation with the affected female user group(s) specified above.

➤ **Facilitating participation**

- Mentorship opportunities will be facilitated whereby senior BRC members will be encouraged to mentor younger female rowers on their rowing journey.
- Coordinators of more experienced female crews will be requested to place novice or intermediate female rowers into their boats periodically during new rowers' first membership year. This is aimed at being a mutually beneficial learning experience for all and to new rowers with building relationships within the club to eventually be a part of regatta crews.
- Athletes in the "Learn to Row" and "Intermediate to Row" programs will receive an additional 6 weeks of coaching to build the confidence and skills needed to row independently or form their own crews.

➤ **Community Rowing Sessions**

- BRC will create Community Rowing Sessions aligned with specific feedback received from women following its surveys and through its expressions of interest to fulfil those sessions.
- Scheduling of Community Rowing Sessions will be designed with the goal of balancing the needs of proposed participants whilst complementing existing on-water rowing timetabling.

5. COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING

- BRC commits to undertake a half yearly assessment of the Practice and Event Schedule and consider opportunities to strengthen gender equitable access and use of its rowing facilities in line with this policy.
- BRC commits to regular engagement with MLC School, Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus and co-ordinators of female squads to determine the effectiveness of the Practice and Event Schedule and overall access to facilities such as change rooms and gather feedback for developing action plans in line with this policy.
- BRC commits to fostering an environment where female athletes feel comfortable in discussing any concerns or conflicts and has access to the Diversity Champion to help guide open and safe communication.
- This policy should be reviewed annually to consider any changes in our schools' arrangements and partnerships and all ongoing feedback from our members, volunteers and participants in respect of accessing and using the club's rowing facilities.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Balmain Rowing Club Code of Conduct
- Balmain Rowing Club BRC Harassment & Discrimination Policy
- Balmain Rowing Club BRC Junior Member Protection Policy
- Balmain Rowing Club Member Handbook
- Balmain Rowing Club Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Balmain Rowing Club Strategy 2022-2027

7. DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Approved by: Joseph Grech, Club President

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