



5th March 2025

Re-imagining Sports through Mixed Ability



Introductions

IMAS is a not-for-profit organisation promoting the Mixed Ability model around the world.



The Grand National... for humans!

Go to the next hurdle if you:

left home and CHOSE where you went to live?

ever worked abroad?

could write an A4 page about a hobby you enjoy?

do you have a driving licence?

will probably get married or have been married?

read any novel?

co-produced something to produce a positive outcome?

played a sport with disabled teammates before?





The Dream

“I supported my local team for years. They would not let me play, they thought I would get hurt. Of course we get hurt, it’s part of the game!”

Anthony Brooke

Bumble Bees RUFC founder





Anthony at IMART 2022 in Cork, taking the ball into contact against the Oshawa Vikings, Canada's first Mixed Ability team.

On the 17th of June 2023 as a testament to his extraordinary achievement Anthony was awarded the British Empire medal (BEM) for services to people with disabilities

“Anthony has been a tireless advocate for Mixed Ability Rugby, educating others about the inclusive format of the game and encouraging new participants to take up the sport. It’s brilliant to see him recognised in this way.”

Jatin Patel, Inclusion & Diversity Director at England Rugby



Nathan



The IMAS Co-production Team



Our vision & mission

VISION

To radically change the way we think of, join in and enjoy sports, leading to a fairer and more equal society.

MISSION

Bringing people of all abilities together to play sports and learn from each other, giving everyone the opportunity to fulfil their potential.



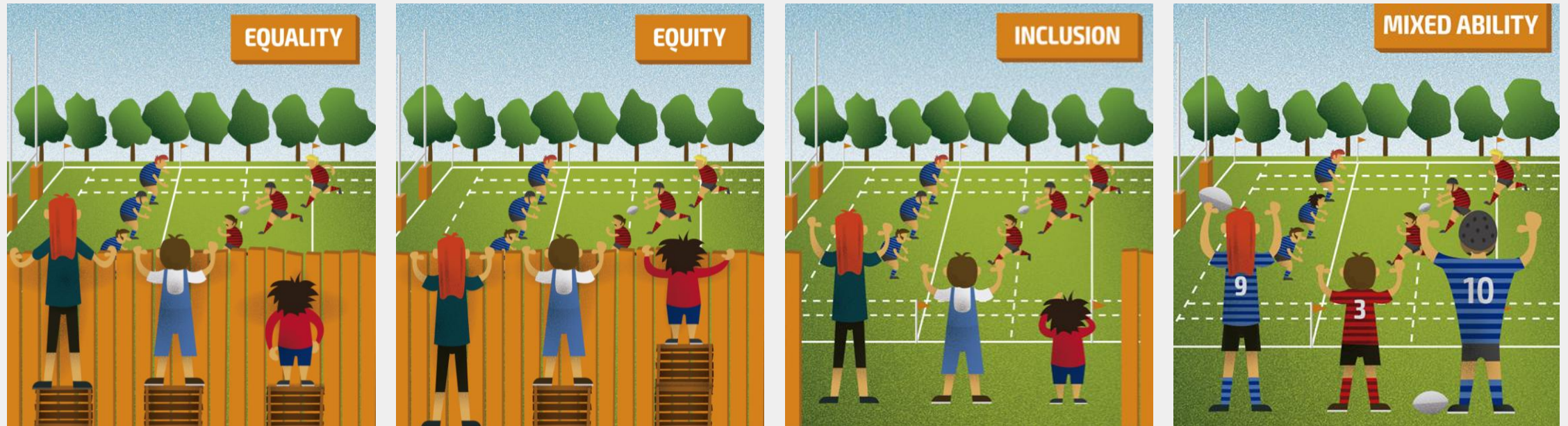
Mixed Ability is not

- A project
- Disability Sport
- Separate to the club
- A quick fix to being inclusive
- A PC way of saying disabled participants
- Players graded, assessed or identified as being disabled by clothing or badging



Equality doesn't mean equity

Liberation = breaking down barriers



Non-inclusive

→ Inclusive

The Mixed Ability Manifesto



MIXED ABILITY manifesto



Sport has the power to transform lives making us healthier and happier, and yet there are people excluded or segregated because of stigma, prejudice or personal perceptions of their capability.



Mixed Ability is a social movement within sports, actively promoting inclusion and equality through a sense of belonging and membership to a group, team or club.



Too often sport is seen as the prerogative of elite athletes or established majorities. Grassroots sport can also be responsible for excluding minorities allowing access only to charitable or segregated activities.



Mixed Ability Sports follows the same rules and regulations of mainstream sports without adaptations, and only minor adjustments to take into account individual participant needs.



Mixed Ability recognises the right of everyone to participate in community sports without being separated, classified or labelled.



In breaking down these barriers Mixed Ability Sport creates opportunities for marginalised communities to challenge the established status quo and affirm their right to equal participation.

Disabled people are one of the largest marginalised groups in the world (WHO, 2023), 16% of the world population.

People with Down Syndrome have a life expectancy on average 17 years shorter than a non-disabled person (Marmot Report, 2019)

2019 LeDeR Annual Report was published 16th July 2020.

Updated data suggest that the disparity between age at death for people with learning disabilities and the general population in 2019 was 22 years for males and 27 years for females

In January 2025 the government released the NHS operational planning guidance for 2025/26. A number of targets are missing from this year's guidance, including the goal for 75% of people with a learning disability to receive an annual health check. (The Challenging Behaviour Foundation)

Disabled people and people with a long-term health condition are twice as likely to be physically inactive than those without a disability or health condition. (Sport England, Our Active Lives Survey 2024)

Mixed Ability activities, something for everyone





International Growth

- | | |
|---|---|
|  ENG |  CHL |
|  SCO |  IRL |
|  WAL |  ESP |
|  ARG |  ECU |
|  NED |  BEL |
|  ITA |  URU |
|  CAN | |



**What can
you do to
support the
movement?**



Become a Mixed Ability Champion

Make your voice heard, if you want to be active tell people!

Spread the word with service providers and support services

Help us train clubs and coaches in your town.
Join IMAS.

Contact



For ongoing advice and support

Tell your sports group, team or gym about the Mixed Ability concept.

Work with us to create new Mixed Ability activities where you live!

Come to a club taster day. Next Manchester date April 2025

Closing thoughts!

 mixedabilitysports.org

 contact@mixedabilitysports.org

 bsky.app/profile/mixedabilitysports.bsky.social

 [@imas_sport4all](https://www.instagram.com/imas_sport4all)

 [Mixed Ability Sport](https://www.facebook.com/MixedAbilitySport)



