

# **Participation in Badminton by Transgender and Non-binary Players – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Last updated 28/09/23**

## **The Policy**

### **Why has the policy been updated?**

The Badminton England Policy for Transgender Badminton Players was approved in 2015 and updated in 2019. It is now appropriate to update this policy to take account of existing validated research and the Sports Councils' Equality Group Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport

<https://equalityinsport.org/docs/300921/Guidance%20for%20Transgender%20Inclusion%20in%20Domestic%20Sport%202021.pdf>

### **When does the policy come in to effect?**

The policy was adopted by the Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023, meaning everyone will need to comply from this date.

### **When will the policy be reviewed?**

We recognise that this is a developing area of policy with new research being published and changing societal attitudes. As such, we will review this policy annually before the start of each competitive season to ensure that up to date research and best practice is considered.

### **Do all affiliated clubs, leagues, County Badminton Associations, and players have to adhere to the policy?**

All Badminton England affiliated clubs, league and County Badminton Association and players must adhere to the policy.

We would recommend that all clubs and leagues adopt this policy regardless of their affiliation status.

### **What support will I receive to help me understand and adhere to the policy?**

Resources, webinars, and guidance will be provided to help everyone involved in badminton, especially competition, understand the changes and be prepared to carry out their roles effectively.

### **How do I share a concern or ask a question relating to the policy?**

Questions or concerns relating to the policy should be submitted to [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk)

### **How is this policy applied at junior age group competition?**

The policy is applied across all levels of competition at all ages.

## **Competition**

### **What is defined as competition?**

Competition is defined as any match where a result is recorded, and it contributes towards the outcome of a league or tournament – E.g., all unsanctioned competition and Badminton England sanctioned competition. Please see pages 4 and 5 of the policy document for definitions of these.

### **I am unsure what the policy means for the session I run?**

Any queries about the policy should be directed to [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk)

### **I am unsure what the policy means for my tournament or competition?**

Any queries about the policy should be directed to [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk)

### **Who can compete within the open category?**

All players can play within the open category. This includes, players assigned male at birth, players assigned female at birth, transgender males, transgender females, and non-binary players.

### **New** If I play within the open category, how can you make up a doubles pair?

Within doubles, partners must be of the same birth sex. In the female category, both female players must have a birth sex of female. For mixed doubles, partners must be of a different birth sex. This applies to all tournaments and competitions.

We recognise, however, that many leagues have, for a number of years, operated a flexible policy to the composition of teams in their league structures. Any female only leagues must comply with the policy; however, any leagues wishing to be more flexible, including offering open competition, may adopt rules that reflect their local need and landscape. This means that a league can adopt an open category where a doubles pair can be comprised with any combination of players, regardless of birth sex.

### **I've noticed there are still references to men's singles and men's doubles – When will this change to open category?**

Badminton England is working through this category change as a sport, and it will be a gradual change as many tournaments already have opened their entries. Consequently, there will be a period of transition from men's to open categories, and therefore you will see some references to 'men's' appearing on documents and within competition following 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023. We recognise this is a significant change and want to work with the badminton community on the transition. Badminton England will also work closely with tournament organisers and other workforce to support them to put in provision to accommodate these changes.

**I organise a local affiliated league – When are we expected to change our men’s league to an open league?**

Badminton England is working through this category change as a sport, and it will be a gradual change. All changes will need to be made ahead of the 2024/25 season starting, but if you are in a position to implement this for 2023/24 season, we would encourage you to do so. We recognise this is a significant change and want to work with the badminton community on the transition. Badminton England will also work closely with tournament organisers and other workforce to support them to put in provision to accommodate these changes.

**I’m eligible for the female category but I would like to play within the open category – Is this possible? And how can I do this?**

Badminton England is currently working with Tournament Software and our membership provider to understand how this can best be facilitated. In the meantime, please direct all enquiries to [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk).

**I’m eligible for the female category but would like to play within both the female and open category within my local league – Am I able to do this?**

Yes, you are able to play within both female and open categories within your local league.

**Can I enter both the female and open categories within one event?**

No, you can only enter either female or open within each event.

**I am a transgender male – Which category am I eligible to play in?**

Within competition, all players must play within their sex assigned at birth – If you haven’t undergone any hormonal or surgical intervention you’re welcome to compete in the female category. If you have, you are required to compete within the open category.

**What are the eligibility rules for transgender and non-binary players competing with Badminton England’s National Schools Championships?**

The government is expected to release Transgender Guidance in Schools imminently – Once this has been published, Badminton England will update these FAQs as appropriate.

**I am using our County Restricted Tournament for selection purposes – What is the best approach for players that would like to be selected?**

Where tournaments or events are used for selection purposes, such as a county restricted, then players should enter the events that want to be considered for selection. This ensures results are relevant to the selection process.

**If I enter both the female and open category, what are the implications of this on my grade/ranking – Will I have two separate grades/rankings?**

Grading: You only have one singles, doubles or mixed grade. Results from both female and open events will affect your grade.

Ranking: You can have a ranking in both female and open category events. This will be based upon the event(s) you play as this will be where you get your ranking points.

## **Concerns about application of policy**

### **What should I do if I believe this policy is being breached?**

If you believe the policy is being breached, please report this with full details to [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk).

### **I am unsure if someone is being truthful about their sex assigned at birth – What do I do?**

Please do not approach the person directly as any presumption, whilst legitimate, may be unfounded and cause harm. Questions or concerns relating to the policy should be submitted to [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk)

### **I am a tournament organiser and have received a concern relating to the gender of a player – What do I do?**

The player should not be challenged on the day. Following the event, any concerns should be raised to Badminton England by contacting [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk).

### **I am involved in badminton and have a concern relation to the gender of a player – What do I do?**

Any concerns should be raised to Badminton England by contacting [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk).

### **I believe I am being discriminated against because I identify as a transgender female/transgender male/non-binary – What do I do?**

Badminton England believes that transgender and non-binary players can access badminton without fear of discrimination or prejudice. People who identify as transgender or non-binary have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Badminton England operates a zero tolerance policy on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. Any concerns should be raised to Badminton England by contacting [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk).

### **I believe my child is being discriminated against because they identify as a transgender female/transgender male/non-binary – What do I do?**

Badminton England believes that transgender and non-binary players can access badminton without fear of discrimination or prejudice. People who identify as transgender or non-binary have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Badminton England operates a zero tolerance policy on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. Any concerns should be raised to Badminton England by contacting [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk).

## **Gender identity**

**A member of my club would like to change their gender identity – How can I support them?**

Guidance and support is available at Badminton England's [Inclusion Hub](#).  
Specific guidance relating to non-binary players can be found [here](#)

**A transgender player plays/would like to play at our club – How can I support them?**

Guidance and support is available at Badminton England's [Inclusion Hub](#).  
Specific guidance relating to non-binary players can be found [here](#)

**I would like to change my gender identity – How do I do this?**

Players can update their gender identity on the membership system by logging into their profile and updating the equality tab. Once a player has chosen their gender identity, they are committed to that gender for the duration of the badminton season (September to August).

**Changing facilities**

**What is Badminton England's policy on transgender and non-binary people's use of changing rooms?**

Due to majority of badminton taking place in public facilities, Badminton England does not set a changing room policy for transgender and non-binary players. The facility is responsible for this so if you have queries about changing room usage, Badminton England recommends speaking to the facility about its designated policy. We will continue to engage with those third party providers to ensure best practice and guidance for the safe use of changing facilities and toilets is adopted.

If you have a safeguarding concern, you should contact the Badminton England Safeguarding Team via [safeguarding@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@badmintonengland.co.uk)

**Other**

**I have a query that is not covered by the FAQs. What should I do?**

We recognise a number of challenges will emerge as this policy is implemented locally. We are working through some of these challenges to support local delivery and will update these FAQs as appropriate. If you have any queries, questions, or concerns, please contact [inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk)