

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

Updated 20th January 2025

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 was then appropriate to update this policy in 2023 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>

What was the process for reviewing the policy in 2024?

Badminton England conducted an annual review in 2024 of the Transgender and Non-binary Players Policy working with Gateley Legal. The policy has been reviewed against current domestic and international legal frameworks and amendments have been made in accord with current legislation, scientific / medical evidence and BWF's policy. No changes have been made to the prioritisation of inclusion or fairness within this revised policy.

When does the policy come into effect?

The revised policy has been approved by Badminton England's Board of Directors on 9th October 2024 and now applies with immediate effect.

How often will the policy be reviewed?

We recognise that this is a developing area of policy with new research being published and changing societal attitudes. Therefore, 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.

Aligned with all our policies, we will continue to review these guidelines as the National Governing Body, and we are looking forward to delivering a wider consultation on this policy in early 2025, with which we would openly welcome the badminton community's participation.

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

The policy will continue to apply to all Badminton England sanctioned competition, and we will be proactively sharing best practice and further educational resource on this topic throughout the sport in this country as we keenly encourage those within our badminton

community to adopt the policy and its principles.

Badminton England will continue to work with clubs, leagues and County Badminton Associations to support them to adopt this policy. If you would like support on how to implement this policy, please contact inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk.

How do I share a query, concern, complaint or challenge relating to this policy?

Queries or concerns relating to the policy should be submitted to inclusion@badmintonengland.co.uk.

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.

How is this policy applied at junior age group competition?

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

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

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

Any queries about the policy should be directed to competition@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.

Who can play within the female category?

Only players assigned female at birth can play within the female category.

Transgender females that have undergone hormonal and/or surgical intervention are not permitted to compete in the female category – Transgender females are required to compete in the open category. Transgender males that have undergone hormonal and/or surgical intervention are required to compete in the open category.

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.

Within an open doubles competition, whilst playing with a partner of the same birth sex, you may play against two players of the opposite birth sex. For example, a doubles pair comprised of two females assigned at birth, may play against two males assigned at birth.

This does not apply to unsanctioned competition. Within unsanctioned competition, doubles pairings can be comprised of players of a different birth sex in open double events – This includes doubles and mixed doubles.

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

Badminton England worked through this category change as a sport during 2023-24 season. All Badminton England sanctioned events are now delivered as female and open competition.

Locally, there will be a period of transition from men's to open categories. We encourage all clubs, leagues and County Badminton Associations to adopt the policy and its principles. 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. Ahead of the 2025-26 season starting, we are aiming for all clubs, leagues and County Badminton Associations to adopt the policy.

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

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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 they 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.

Eligibility for competition

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?

Yes this is possible. Badminton England competition entry allows females assigned sex at birth to enter either the open or female category events. Any queries about tournament entry should be directed to competition@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.

New Can I represent my County in both female and open category (where eligible for both) within County competitions over the duration of the season and/or within a fixture?

Over the duration of a season, a player may represent their county in both female and open categories in separate fixtures, as the team selection for each fixture is different and based on various factors such as squad rotation and availability of players. This would still be subject to any other related squad/selection regulations for that competition.

Within a fixture, a player can only play in either female or open category and not both. This is to avoid possible restriction of squad positions and scheduling clashes within an individual fixture.

Can I enter both the female and open categories within a Badminton England sanctioned tournament?

No, you can only enter either female or open within each event. This is to avoid scheduling clashes across disciplines within the same competition, and grade/ranking point allocation.

To note, 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.

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 and/or surgical intervention you're welcome to compete in the female category. If you have undergone any hormonal and/or surgical intervention, 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 National Schools Championships are currently exempt from this policy and will be delivered in accordance with government guidance in schools where there is no risk of harm.

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

Concerns about application of the 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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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