

NORTH OXFORD LAWN TENNIS CLUB TRANSGENDER AND NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS POLICY

TAKEN FROM THE LTA DIRECTOR OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Version 1

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LTA TRANSGENDER AND NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

1. This is the LTA's Transgender and Non-Binary Individuals Policy ("Policy"). As set out at LTA Competition Regulation 8.1, subject to the terms of this Policy, a Player assigned male sex at birth will be eligible to compete in the men's competition category (and as the man in a mixed doubles team), and a Player assigned female sex at birth will be eligible to compete in the women's competition category (and as the woman in a mixed doubles team). This Policy sets out the eligibility of a transgender or non-binary Player to compete in the women's competition category and/or the men's competition category and/or any mixed doubles competition.

Explanatory note: Further information and guidance for stakeholders in relation to the Policy is available at [here](#).

CONTEXT

2. The LTA has developed this Policy in the context of the Sports Councils' Equality Group's 'Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport'. This Policy seeks to balance the conflicting rights and interests of various groups, in particular cisgender women and transgender women, and is informed by the law and available scientific evidence. The LTA reserves the right to amend this Policy from time to time.
3. For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, tennis is a gender-affected activity of a competitive nature where the physical strength, stamina or physique of average women puts them at a disadvantage compared to average men. Accordingly, the law permits sports' governing bodies (1) to organise separate sporting competitions for men and women, and (2) to impose restrictions on the eligibility of transgender and non-binary Players to participate in sport if such restrictions are necessary to secure (A) the safety of competitors, and/or (B) fair competition.
4. The science is clear that there is a significant sex difference in sport performance between biological men and biological women, and the sex performance difference is driven primarily by higher circulating testosterone in biological men. That significant sex difference in sport performance is the reason a separate women's competition category is necessary. In tennis, the sex performance difference arises from – among other things – differences in strength, power, and endurance, and also from anatomical differences between men and women (men on average have larger musculoskeletal frames including longer limbs to lever, generating greater power of shot). While gender-affirming hormone treatment for transgender women (i.e. suppression of high circulating testosterone levels in the men's range to levels in the women's range) reduces to some degree muscle mass and strength and other physical attributes that contribute to sport performance, the significant sex difference is not eliminated (and residual performance advantages of men's biology remain).

AIM OF THE POLICY

5. This Policy is intended to facilitate the provision of competitive opportunities for transgender and non-binary Players in a safe and supportive environment that is free from harassment and abuse, while also seeking to maintain fair and meaningful competition conditions for Players participating in Specified Competitions and Non-Specified Competitions. If circumstances arise in the application of this Policy that the LTA (in its absolute discretion) determines either are not foreseen in this Policy or give rise to exceptional unfairness, then the LTA may (in its absolute discretion) address them in a manner that protects and advances these imperatives.

SCOPE AND EFFECTIVE DATE

6. This Policy will come into full force and effect on 1 January 2025 (the "Effective Date"), replacing the LTA's 'Policy and guidance on trans people playing tennis' that was in force prior to the Effective Date. This Policy will apply both to cases arising prior to the Effective Date and to cases arising on or after the Effective Date.
7. This Policy primarily concerns eligibility to compete in LTA Sanctioned Competitions. The eligibility of transgender or non-binary Players to compete in competitions that are not LTA Sanctioned Competitions will be governed by the policy of (as applicable) the international sanctioning body (for example, the International Tennis Federation, or the Women's Tennis Association) or relevant competition organiser.

8. Subject to LTA Competition Regulation 9.1, which permits competition between boys and girls in 8U, 9U and 10U events, this Policy applies to all competition age groups.

DEFINITIONS AND USE OF LANGUAGE

9. This Policy distinguishes between biological sex and gender identity, and between biological women and biological men, solely to ensure that the Policy is clear and has its intended effect. There is no intent to disrespect or question the gender identity or the dignity of any individual. In this Policy:
 - 9.1 “**biological sex**” refers to an individual’s status as a man or a woman based on biological (in particular chromosomal, gonadal, and hormonal) sex characteristics, which are dichotomous;
 - 9.2 “**gender identity**” refers to an individual’s self-identified gender. This may be the same as or different to the individual’s biological sex;
 - 9.3 “**transgender**” refers to an individual whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth (whether or not they have commenced and/or undergone any form of medical transition);
 - 9.4 “**transgender woman**” refers to an individual who was assigned male sex at birth and has a female gender identity;
 - 9.5 “**cisgender woman**” refers to an individual who was assigned female sex at birth and has a female gender identity;
 - 9.6 “**transgender man**” refers to an individual who was assigned female sex at birth and has a male gender identity;
 - 9.7 “**cisgender man**” refers to an individual who was assigned male sex at birth and has a male gender identity;
 - 9.8 “**non-binary**” refers to individuals whose gender identity does not sit comfortably as ‘male’ or ‘female’. Non-binary identities are varied. Some individuals identify with some aspects of male and/or female identities, and other individuals reject binary identities entirely;
 - 9.9 “**Organiser**” means the person or persons administering and/or organising the relevant Specified Competition or Non-Specified Competition; and
 - 9.10 “**Player**” means an individual player of the Game (as defined in the LTA’s Articles of Association, as amended from time to time).
 10. This Policy distinguishes between competition at different levels:
 - 10.1 “**Specified Competition**” refers to any LTA Sanctioned Competition that:
 - 10.1.1 is graded 1-6 (excluding Local Tennis Leagues), or
 - 10.1.2 starts below grade 6 but progresses at any stage to grade 6 or above (including but not limited to Play Your Way to Wimbledon), or
 - 10.1.3 is designated by the LTA as Specified Competition for the purposes of this Policy.
 - 10.2 “**Non-Specified Competition**” refers to any competition that:
 - 10.2.1 is not Specified Competition AND the Organiser of such competition is (a) an LTA Registered Organisation, (b) an LTA Licensed Official, or (c) an LTA Accredited Coach, or
 - 10.2.2 is a Local Tennis League.
- Explanatory note:** Further information on grading, including grades for particular competitions, can be found at www.LTA.org.uk/CompetitionRegulations.
11. Other capitalised terms used in this Policy will have the meanings given to them in Appendix One, and the explanatory notes in the Policy will be used to interpret the Policy.

ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE IN SPECIFIED COMPETITIONS

12. Paragraph 14 sets out who is eligible to compete (i.e. subject to this Policy, who may choose to compete) in the women's competition category of Specified Competition, and paragraph 15 sets out who is eligible to compete (i.e. subject to this Policy, who may choose to compete) in the men's competition category of Specified Competition. An individual who is eligible to compete in both the women's competition category and the men's competition category of Specified Competition may choose in which category they wish to compete (see paragraphs 17 and 18).
13. In all cases, eligibility for the women's and/or men's competition category of Specified Competition is subject to compliance with the requirements of this Policy, as applicable, including the process for LTA approval of eligibility set out at paragraphs 17, 18 and 19.
14. The following Players are eligible to compete in the women's competition category (and as the woman in a mixed doubles team) in Specified Competitions:
 - 14.1 cisgender women.
 - 14.2 transgender men who have never commenced gender-affirming hormone treatment (i.e. exogenous administration of testosterone).
 - 14.3 non-binary individuals who were assigned female sex at birth and have never commenced gender-affirming hormone treatment (i.e. exogenous administration of testosterone).

Explanatory note: For the avoidance of doubt, transgender women and non-binary individuals who were assigned male sex at birth (in each case irrespective of any gender-affirming hormone treatment commenced, i.e. suppression of testosterone) are ineligible to compete in the women's competition category (and as the woman in a mixed doubles team) in Specified Competitions.

15. The following Players are eligible to compete in the men's competition category (and as the man in a mixed doubles team) in Specified Competitions:
 - 15.1 cisgender men.
 - 15.2 transgender men (irrespective of any gender-affirming hormone treatment commenced, i.e. exogenous administration of testosterone).
 - 15.3 transgender women (irrespective of any gender-affirming hormone treatment commenced, i.e. suppression of testosterone).
 - 15.4 non-binary individuals who were assigned female sex at birth (irrespective of any gender-affirming hormone treatment commenced, i.e. exogenous administration of testosterone).
 - 15.5 non-binary individuals who were assigned male sex at birth (irrespective of any gender-affirming hormone treatment commenced, i.e. suppression of testosterone).

PROCESS TO OBTAIN LTA APPROVAL OF ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE IN SPECIFIED COMPETITIONS

16. Paragraph 17 sets out the process by which a transgender or non-binary Player may – where necessary – obtain LTA approval of eligibility to compete in their chosen competition category in Specified Competitions. Paragraph 18 sets out the requirements and process by which a transgender man or a non-binary Player assigned female sex at birth (in either case, who has never commenced gender-affirming hormone treatment (i.e. exogenous administration of testosterone)) may apply for LTA approval of eligibility to compete in the women's (or men's) competition category in Specified Competitions after having previously competed in the men's (or women's) competition category in Specified Competitions.
17. Anyone who wishes to compete in Specified Competition will be asked via forms on the LTA website to specify their gender identity and their sex assigned at birth. Subject always to the eligibility requirements of paragraphs 14, 15 and 18:

- 17.1 If a transgender woman or a non-binary individual assigned male sex at birth wishes to compete in the men's competition category, they may do so without further notice to the LTA.
 - 17.2 If a transgender man or a non-binary individual assigned female sex at birth wishes to compete in the men's competition category, they may do so without further notice to the LTA.
 - 17.3 If a transgender man or a non-binary individual assigned female sex at birth wishes to compete in the women's competition category, they will be asked via forms on the LTA website whether or not they have ever commenced gender-affirming hormone treatment (i.e. exogenous administration of testosterone). If they state that they have not, they will be asked for evidence (i.e., medical records) to demonstrate that to the satisfaction of the LTA (in its absolute discretion). The LTA will review and determine the application in accordance with paragraph 19, below.
18. If a transgender man or a non-binary individual assigned female sex at birth is (and remains) eligible to compete in both the men's and women's competition categories and, having competed (whether before, on or after the Effective Date) in one of those categories (referred to as the 'first category'), subsequently wishes to compete in the other category (referred to as the 'second category'), the Player will not be eligible to compete again in the first category for a period of two years from the date that they last competed in the second category. Such Player must complete the applicable form on the LTA website, and the LTA will review and determine the application in accordance with paragraph 19, below. For the avoidance of any doubt, where a transgender man or non-binary individual assigned female sex at birth is (or has been) playing in the men's competition category and wishes to change their competition category to the women's competition category, then the process set out in paragraphs 17.3 and 19 applies (in addition to the ineligibility period of two years).
19. For any application made under paragraph 17.3 or 18, above:
 - 19.1 The LTA will review the application and may request (and the Player must provide) information or documents to demonstrate the Player's satisfaction of the applicable eligibility conditions for the competition category in which the Player wishes to compete. The Player is responsible for ensuring that the information provided is accurate, complete and not misleading, and that nothing relevant to the LTA's assessment of the application is withheld.
 - 19.2 The application (and any required information and documents) must be provided to the LTA at least fifteen business days before the entry deadline for the first Specified Competition in the competition category in which the Player wishes to compete.
 - 19.3 Unless and until the application is granted by the LTA (in its absolute discretion), the applicant Player will not be eligible to compete in the competition category in which they wish to compete.
20. The eligibility requirements for transgender and non-binary Players to compete in LTA Sanctioned Competitions operate without prejudice to the other requirements in the LTA Code of Conduct, LTA Disciplinary Code, LTA Competition Regulations, or other LTA rules or policies that are applicable to all Players. In particular, nothing in this Policy permits, excuses or justifies non-compliance with any of the requirements of the LTA's anti-doping regulations (forming part of the LTA Disciplinary Code), including the requirement to obtain a therapeutic use exemption before using any substance – including testosterone or testosterone-suppressing substances (such as but not limited to spironolactone or GnRH agonists) – that is included on the World Anti-Doping Agency's list of prohibited substances, as in force from time to time.

Explanatory note: For more information, see the World Anti-Doping Agency's Transgender Athletes TUE Physician Guidelines, available at www.wada-ama.org.

ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE IN NON-SPECIFIED COMPETITIONS

21. In a Non-Specified Competition where the Organiser is the LTA or an LTA Group company:
 - 21.1 transgender and non-binary Players are entitled to compete in either the men's competition category or the women's competition category (and accordingly either as the man or the woman in any mixed doubles team competition); and

- 21.2 if separate sex competition is not provided (for example, in some Local Tennis Leagues), transgender and non-binary Players are eligible to compete.
22. In a Non-Specified Competition where the Organiser is not the LTA or an LTA Group company:
- 22.1 the eligibility of transgender and non-binary Players to compete in the men's competition category and/or the women's competition category and/or any mixed doubles competition is, subject to paragraph 22.2, entirely at the discretion of the Organiser and must be communicated to Players in accordance with LTA Competition Regulation 15.2;
- 22.2 the Organiser, if organising both men's and women's competition categories as part of the same competition, must ensure that Players of all gender identities are eligible to participate in (at least) one competition category;
- Explanatory note:** For the avoidance of doubt, an Organiser must not (1) structure eligibility criteria so as to exclude a Player from all competition categories (but this does not require an Organiser to organise both a men's competition category and a women's competition category for any particular competition), or (2) impose restrictions on the eligibility of transgender men or non-binary individuals assigned female sex at birth to compete in the men's competition category (because such restrictions would be not be necessary to ensure fair competition or safety and would therefore be unlawful).
- 22.3 the Organiser may (in its absolute discretion) rename the 'men's' competition category as an 'open' category; and
- Explanatory note:** Specified Competitions are organised into 'men's' and 'women's' competition categories for historical, regulatory, and administrative reasons. An Organiser for a Non-Specified Competition may choose to rename the 'men's' competition category as an 'open' category (because some transgender and non-binary individuals consider that descriptor more inclusive).
- 22.4 any decision regarding eligibility criteria and/or player eligibility pursuant to this paragraph 22 that is made by an Organiser that is not the LTA or an LTA Group company is entirely a matter for that Organiser (and not a matter for the LTA).

INTERNATIONAL, TEAM AND LTA PERFORMANCE PATHWAY SELECTION

23. Where the LTA (or any member of the LTA Group) is responsible for selection of Players for (i) any competition (including but not limited to the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games, the Commonwealth Games, and any competition organised by the International Tennis Federation, the Women's Tennis Association, Tennis Europe, the International Padel Federation, Premier Padel and any other national or international governing body of tennis) and/or (ii) any LTA performance pathway, then the LTA will apply the same principles and eligibility criteria as are set out in this Policy for Specified Competitions in making any such selection.

ELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER LTA PRODUCTS AND PROGRAMMES

24. Subject to and/or as permitted by any applicable law and/or other LTA policy (and aside from participation in Specified Competitions or as otherwise provided for in this Policy), consistent with their gender identity:
- 24.1 transgender women and non-binary individuals will be eligible to use, access, and participate in (as applicable) all other LTA products, programmes, services and grants which are targeted towards or allocated for women where they are provided or delivered by LTA (or any member of LTA Group) or where such LTA products or programmes are delivered by an LTA Registered Organisation or LTA Accredited Coach at an LTA Registered Venue.
- 24.2 transgender men and non-binary individuals will be eligible to use, access, and participate in (as applicable) all other LTA products, programmes, services and grants which are targeted towards or allocated for men where they are provided or delivered by LTA (or any member of LTA Group) or where such LTA products or programmes are delivered by an LTA Registered Organisation or LTA Accredited Coach at an LTA Registered Venue.

Explanatory note: Gender identity should be no barrier to participation in other products or programmes provided or delivered by LTA (or any member of the LTA Group). The LTA encourages individuals of all gender identities to become involved in tennis coaching, officiating, administration and/or other activities.

USE OF CHANGING FACILITIES

25. Where LTA Sanctioned Competitions or other events or activities are held at the National Tennis Centre or Nottingham Tennis Centre (or any other LTA-controlled venue):
 - 25.1 appropriate provision of changing spaces and facilities will be made available to all individuals, including transgender and non-binary individuals, in a manner that respects their privacy and dignity;
 - 25.2 the LTA will restrict access to any communal women's changing spaces and facilities to individuals assigned female sex at birth; and
 - 25.3 the LTA will restrict access to any communal men's changing spaces and facilities to individuals assigned male sex at birth.
26. Where LTA Sanctioned Competitions or other events or activities are held at a venue other than the National Tennis Centre or Nottingham Tennis Centre (or any other LTA-controlled venue), the controller of the venue will determine its policy on access to any communal women's and communal men's changing spaces and facilities (including the appropriate provision of changing spaces and facilities for transgender and non-binary individuals).

Explanatory note: All users of changing spaces and facilities should feel comfortable and secure, and the LTA recognises that some users may not feel so in the presence of individuals of the opposite biological sex and/or gender identity. The LTA's policy on changing facilities is based on guidance from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (available at <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/separate-and-single-sex-service-providers-guide-equality-act-sex-and>). The LTA recommends that other venue controllers determine their policies with reference to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission's guidance and their own venue-specific and user contexts.

MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

27. In addition to the general power to monitor and investigate Player eligibility pursuant to LTA Competition Regulation 15.5, the LTA may investigate at any time:
 - 27.1 whether a Player who has not established their eligibility to compete in LTA Sanctioned Competitions (in accordance with this Policy) should be required to do so;
 - 27.2 whether (because of a subsequent change in circumstances, subsequent learning or experience, or otherwise) it is necessary to require a Player who has previously been determined to satisfy the eligibility conditions to provide further information and documents in order to determine whether they did satisfy and/or continue to satisfy those conditions; and/or
 - 27.3 any circumstances that indicate potential breach of or non-compliance by an individual with this Policy;and in such cases the individual in question must cooperate promptly, fully and in good faith with that investigation.

Explanatory note: For the avoidance of doubt, a breach of this Policy or non-compliance by an individual will be a breach of the LTA Code of Conduct. In addition, it will be a breach of this Policy (and will constitute "Misconduct" under the LTA Disciplinary Code) for a transgender woman or non-binary player assigned male sex at birth to enter and/or compete in the women's competition category in a Specified Competition.

28. Only the LTA may initiate an investigation further to paragraph 27, and it may only do so in good faith and on reasonable grounds. In appropriate circumstances the matter may, in the LTA's absolute discretion, be resolved by the LTA and/or resolved pursuant to LTA Competition Regulation 15.6 and/or referred for consideration under the LTA Disciplinary Code.

29. Where necessary to safeguard the fairness of LTA Sanctioned Competitions, the LTA may provisionally suspend a Player from competing in some or all LTA Sanctioned Competitions pending completion of an investigation and resolution of the matter. In such cases all reasonable efforts will be used to complete the investigation as expeditiously as possible.

Explanatory note: The LTA's power to provisionally suspend an individual under this paragraph 29 is separate from and independent of the provisional suspension powers under paragraphs 17 to 21 of part B, and paragraphs 16 to 21 of part C, of the LTA Disciplinary Code.

GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

30. Each Participant (as that term is defined in the LTA Disciplinary Code and which includes, without limitation, Players) and every other person who brings themselves under the authority of the LTA by providing information to the LTA for consideration under this Policy and/or by participating, competing or seeking to compete in LTA Sanctioned Competition:
 - 30.1 is bound by and must comply in full with this Policy;
 - 30.2 must cooperate promptly, fully and in good faith with the LTA in the discharge of its responsibilities under this Policy, including providing the LTA with all of the information it requests to assess/monitor their compliance with to this Policy;
 - 30.3 must ensure that any information they provide to the LTA for consideration under this Policy is accurate, complete and not misleading; and
 - 30.4 must not provide any information in bad faith, to harass, stigmatise or otherwise injure another person, or for any other improper purpose.
31. The dignity of all Players must be respected at all times. Players must not be stigmatised or discriminated against on the grounds of their gender identity. In particular (but without limitation), persecution or campaigns against Players simply on the basis that their appearance does not conform to gender stereotypes are unacceptable. Any such conduct may be considered misconduct and a serious breach of the LTA Disciplinary Code.
32. A Player may revoke at any time, with or without giving reasons, the consent that they have granted in accordance with paragraph 30. In that event, the Player will (where relevant) be deemed to have withdrawn any claim to satisfy the eligibility conditions for transgender or non-binary players set out in this Policy, which might result in the Player being ineligible to compete in Specified Competition.

CONFIDENTIALITY

33. All cases arising under this Policy, and in particular all Player information provided to the LTA under this Policy, will be maintained in strict confidence at all times. All medical information and data relating to a Player will be treated as sensitive personal information and the LTA will ensure that it is processed as such in accordance with applicable data protection and privacy laws. Such information will not be used for any purpose not contemplated in this Policy, and will not be disclosed to any third party save (1) as is strictly necessary for the effective application and enforcement of this Policy; or (2) as is required by applicable law.
34. The LTA will not comment publicly on any case arising under this Policy except in response to public comments attributed to the individual or the individual's representatives. In appropriate circumstances and at the LTA's discretion, the LTA will consult with a Player on whether and if so how to communicate publicly about the Player's eligibility status.

SUPPORT

35. Any individual seeking to understand and comply with the requirements of this Policy applicable to them may review the LTA guidance available at [hyperlink] and/or seek assistance from the LTA via <https://www.lta.org.uk/transgender-and-non-binary-policy/>

COSTS

36. The costs incurred by the LTA in assessing and monitoring compliance with this Policy will be borne by the LTA. All other costs, including the costs (if any) involved in complying with this Policy (including, without limitation, providing satisfactory medical evidence), will be borne by the individual in question.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

37. In no circumstances will the LTA or any of the LTA's directors, officers, employees, agents, or representatives (or the LTA Group or any of the LTA Group's directors, officers, employees, agents, or representatives) or other persons involved in the administration of this Policy be liable in any way in relation to acts done or omitted to be done in good faith in connection with the administration of this Policy.

APPENDIX A

1. The capitalised terms used in this Policy will have the following meanings:
 - 1.1 “**Local Tennis League**” means a box league competition organised and/or facilitated by a member of the LTA Group, where Players of a similar level are placed into local groups, known as a local tennis league, to self-arrange matches.
 - 1.2 “**LTA**” means Lawn Tennis Association Limited, with registered company number 07459469.
 - 1.3 “**LTA Accredited Coach**” has the meaning given to that term in the LTA Coach Accreditation Regulations, as amended from time to time and found here: <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/governance-and-structure/rules-regulations/>.
 - 1.4 “**LTA Code of Conduct**” means the code(s) of conduct issued by the LTA (or, where applicable, any member of the LTA Group) from time to time and with which any or all Players are required to comply and, as at the Effective Date, found at <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/governance-and-structure/rules-regulations/>.
 - 1.5 “**LTA Competition Regulations**” means the competition regulations of the LTA, as amended from time to time and, as at the Effective Date, found at <https://www.lta.org.uk/roles-and-venues/officials/competition-organiser-resources/competition-regulations/>.
 - 1.6 “**LTA Disciplinary Code**” means the disciplinary code of the LTA in force from time to time, incorporating (amongst other things) the LTA’s disciplinary regulations, safeguarding regulations, registration appeal regulations, anti-doping regulations, and anti-corruption regulations.
 - 1.7 “**LTA Group**” means the LTA, any subsidiary or holding company from time to time of the LTA, and any subsidiary from time to time of such a holding company of the LTA.
 - 1.8 “**LTA Licensed Official**” has the meaning given to that term in the LTA Official Licensing Regulations, as amended from time to time and found here: <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/governance-and-structure/rules-regulations/>.
 - 1.9 “**LTA Registered Organisation**” has the meaning given to that term in the LTA’s articles of association, as amended from time to time and found here: <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/governance-and-structure/rules-regulations/>.
 - 1.10 “**LTA Sanctioned Competitions**” has the meaning given to that term in LTA Competition Regulation 1.2.



LTA
The National Tennis Centre
100 Priory Lane Roehampton
London SW15 5JQ

www.LTA.org.uk

