

LTA TRANSGENDER AND
NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS POLICY:

GUIDANCE FOR PLAYERS

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SUMMARY

This guidance has been written to help inform you about what the Policy means for you as a player, what the rules are and what your responsibilities are in complying with them.

Why are we changing the Policy?

We need to balance our responsibilities to ensure competition in tennis is fair and to make tennis as inclusive as possible for all. Tennis is a gender-affected sport – the average man has an advantage when playing against the average woman. The majority of currently available research says that some of this advantage is retained in trans women or non-binary individuals assigned male at birth, making competition potentially unfair..

What are we doing?

We are changing our Policy to restrict trans women and non-binary individuals assigned male at birth from playing in the women's category in **Specified Competitions** – these are competitions which are Graded 1-6, so will range from National Championships through to local county and district leagues. At this level, eligibility for each competition category in all forms of tennis and padel, and including disability competitions, and in all age groups is:

Gender	Men's Competition Category in Specified Competitions	Women's Competition Category in Specified Competitions
Transgender woman	Yes	No
Transgender man	Yes	Yes – provided gender-affirming hormone treatment not started
Cis-gender woman	No	Yes
Cis-gender man	Yes	No
Non-binary assigned female at birth	Yes	Yes – provided masculinising gender-affirming hormone treatment not started
Non-binary assigned male at birth	Yes	No

For **Non-Specified Competitions** – which are largely internal venue competitions ranging from a Sunday afternoon social American doubles tournament to club championships – venues have a choice whether to introduce similar restrictions. We strongly encourage venues to start from a presumption of being inclusive for trans and non-binary players by ensuring they provide competitive opportunities which allow them to take part in the category which matches their gender identity.

Use of changing rooms

Given each Venue will be different, it is not possible for us to provide one-size-fits-all guidance. Venues should consult the Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance on the provision of single-sex spaces in making decisions in relation to changing room provision.

INTRODUCTION

This guidance is intended to help tennis players understand the LTA Transgender and [Non-binary Individuals Policy](#) and should be read alongside the policy. If you are a responsible for an LTA Registered Venue/an Accredited Coach or a Licensed Official you can find specific guidance for you [here](#).

In developing this Policy, we have had to balance two potentially conflicting responsibilities as the governing body for tennis and padel. We have a responsibility to ensure that competition in our sport is fair and a responsibility to make sure that tennis is welcoming and inclusive for everyone. The Policy attempts to balance these two duties appropriately but in the knowledge that different people will reasonably have different views as to where that balance should lie. We recognise the diversity of opinion around this matter and would like to assure the tennis community that the LTA will continue to listen to all views and keep the Policy under review in response to emerging research and data, and further guidance from other relevant bodies.

Language and terminology

Language matters. The language we use can significantly impact other people and so it is very important that we all use language which is inclusive for all. However, we know that sometimes it can be worrying for people who may be unsure of the right language to use and who do not want to say something which might negatively affect someone else. As a result, we have produced advice on how best to have inclusive conversations which will be published imminently.

As a minimum, it is important to understand the meaning of certain terms in order to apply the policy appropriately:

- **TRANSGENDER** – this is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity is different from, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. “**Trans**” is often used simply as shorthand for Transgender.
- **TRANSITION** – every person’s transition is different; it is the process which some people, whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth do not match, go through to align their life and/or physical identity to match their gender identity. This can include different steps such as social transition (e.g. changing the name or pronouns they wish to be known by), medical transition (e.g. taking medical steps such as hormone therapy), or legal transition (e.g. changing their name, gender and/or sex on legal documents).
- **NON-BINARY INDIVIDUAL** – someone whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with ‘female’ or ‘male’. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.
- **TRANSGENDER WOMAN** – someone who was assigned the male sex at birth but who identifies as a woman.
- **TRANSGENDER MAN** – someone who was assigned the female sex at birth but who identifies as a man.
- **CISGENDER WOMAN** – refers to an individual who was assigned female sex at birth and has a female gender identity.
- **CISGENDER MAN** – refers to an individual who was assigned male sex at birth and has a male gender identity.
- **SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH** – this means the male or female designation which doctors ascribe to infants, usually based on their genitalia, which is marked on their birth records.

A more complete list of terms which you might hear used when talking about the Policy and more generally around inclusion is included at the end of this guidance.

Who does the policy apply to?

The policy applies to everyone at all LTA Registered Venues or taking part in LTA Sanctioned Competition. It has provisions which apply specifically to transgender and non-binary players but it also requires everyone, especially those who run LTA Registered Venues, to help to create a fair and inclusive environment for all.

When does the Policy apply from?

The policy is effective from the 1st January 2025. However, in order that people are not removed from competitions which they have legitimately entered prior to the announcement of the Policy, it will not be enforced for non-team based competitions until after 25th January 2025 (i.e. the length of the six week entry period for competitions after the announcement on the 11th December). For team based competitions, e.g. county and district leagues, it will not be enforced until the start of the Summer season on 1st April 2025.

How does the Policy divide competition?

The Policy divides competition into two types:

SPECIFIED:

- These are competitions which are in Grades 1-6 at any stage of the competition (which covers national level through to regional, county and local level competition, typically with players from different venues), or which are defined as Specified by the LTA.
- They are competitions where players have less control over who they are playing against and where the primary purpose is usually to provide fair competitive opportunities.
- In these competitions there are restrictions placed by the LTA upon the eligibility of transgender and non-binary individuals, in particular in relation to the competition category which does not match their sex assigned at birth.

NON-SPECIFIED

- This is all other competition (typically competition closed for members within a tennis venue), which includes LTA Local Tennis Leagues.
- This is where there is a greater degree of choice as to who to play with/against and where the primary purpose is usually to create fun, social competition to enable players to feel part of their local tennis community.
- This will include all competitions played solely between members of a single venue. In these competitions there are no restrictions imposed by the LTA, and competition organisers have discretion regarding eligibility for competitions.

I am a trans woman – what Specified Competitions can I play in?

The new policy sets out that the women's category in all **Specified Competition** is only open to those who have been assigned female at birth.

For example, if you are a trans woman, you will not be able to compete in the women's category in any LTA sanctioned competition between venue teams, such as a district or county league, or in any LTA sanctioned tournament which is open to people from more than one venue.

I am a trans man – what Specified Competitions can I play in?

If you are a trans man, you will be able to compete in the men's category in all **Specified Competition** – this is because there is no evidence of any competitive advantage for trans men over cis men. If you want to play in the men's category, you do not need to inform the LTA, our competition management system will simply allow you to enter those competitions.

I am a trans man – can I still compete in the women’s category in Specified Competitions if I want to?

We know that for some trans men, who have played in female teams before they have come out and/or transitioned, those teams can be an important and supportive part of their lives. We want to ensure that can still be the case after you transition, should you wish, and provided there is no potential for unfairness. So, for that reason, you will also be able to compete in the women’s category provided you have not started gender-affirming hormone treatment, i.e. have not started taking testosterone. You will need to provide a doctor’s note to confirm that this is the case – see further below for the mechanism for doing so.

I am non-binary – what Specified Competitions can I play in?

If you identify as non-binary but want to compete in binary categorised **Specified Competition**, e.g. women’s/men’s singles, you will need to select which competition sex category you wish to play in. If that category is the same as your sex assigned at birth there will generally be no restrictions on competing in that category. If it is different, the same restrictions as for a trans man or trans woman will apply.

Can I take part in more than one category in Specified Competition?

It is possible for an individual to take part in more than one category but not at the same time.

For example, someone who was assigned female at birth and competes in the women’s category but then wishes to begin to transition to becoming a man. They can then choose to compete in the men’s category. However, if they were then to want to compete in the women’s category again, they would have to both:

- still be compliant with the requirement not to have started gender-affirming hormone treatment; and
- wait for a period of two years from the point they last competed in the men’s category.

What are the rules around Non-Specified Competition?

The new policy sets out that **Non-Specified Competition** is any competition which does not fall within the definition of Specified Competition. Most informal, everyday competition put on by LTA Registered Venues and Accredited Coaches will be Non-Specified. This might include - local competition taking place within a venue for members of that venue e.g. a weekend American tournament or club box league.

The LTA has designated Local Tennis Leagues as Non-Specified because this is the equivalent of this everyday, informal competition, just usually played in parks rather than clubs. It is a level-based competition, using the World Tennis Number to ensure fairness, so the same issues do not arise.

Non-Specified competitions will almost always be between players within a venue and we already expect venues to prioritise wherever possible ensuring that everyone feels included and has a place in tennis. As a result, at this level of competition, whoever is responsible for organising a competition should start from a presumption of inclusion, allowing people to play according to their gender identity in order that they can feel fully part of their local tennis community.

Ultimately, it will be for whoever is responsible for organising a competition to decide whether there are any Non-Specified Competitions where they feel they need to prioritise protecting the fairness of the outcome and which they choose to treat the same as Specified Competition as a result. For example, a Venue could decide to restrict the women’s category in their ‘club championships’ to those who have been assigned female at birth.

The person or persons responsible for organising a competition should not make this decision lightly.

You should expect them to give appropriate consideration to the following in reaching a conclusion:

- listening to the views of their members and players, seeking to gather and understand them in an inclusive way;
- thinking about the impact any restrictions might have on attracting new players to the venue, in particular those who are trans or non-binary;
- whether they are striking the appropriate balance between prioritising being inclusive for all and fairness, given the competition and the ability of the players;

- if you put in place any restrictions, you should still have a competitive offering for trans females in the female category; and
- if you need advice or guidance, in which case you can contact us [here](#).

Other products and programmes

Gender identity should be no barrier to participation in non-competitive LTA products or programmes and we welcome participation by trans and non-binary individuals in their identified gender in all non-competitive LTA products and programmes. In particular, the LTA encourages individuals of all gender identities to become involved in tennis coaching, officiating, administration and/or other activities, and to contact us for more information about the potential for financial support to begin your coaching journey, to improve representation within the on-court workforce.

What should I do if I experience trans or non-binary-phobic behaviour?

Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, in particular at any LTA Registered Venue or when taking part in LTA Sanctioned activity. The LTA operates a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour and so should all LTA Registered Venues, Accredited Coaches and Licensed Officials.

If you experience any such behaviour at a Registered Venue, you should report it immediately in line with that Venue's published complaints policy. Such conduct towards someone because of their disability, transgender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation may also be considered hate crime and should be reported to the police. Further information on how to do this can be found [here](#).

How do I inform the LTA that I am planning to transition or have transitioned?

We want to ensure that the process of moving to a new LTA Advantage account when you transition is as easy as reasonably possible. We are also committed to ensuring that your personal data is treated with appropriate confidentiality. In addition, as referenced above, the Policy requires all trans males who wish to take part in the women's category in Specified Competitions to provide us with a doctor's note confirming that you have not begun gender-affirming hormone treatment.

You can contact us [here](#) and we will help you through the process.

What should I do if I have never had an LTA Advantage account before?

If you are a trans or non-binary individual and you have never held an LTA Advantage account before, then you can sign up and create one in exactly the same way as a cis-gender member. You will be asked for your gender identity initially. If you then choose at any point in time to enter an LTA Sanctioned Competition which is managed through our online competition management system, you will be asked if your gender matches your sex assigned at birth. That combination of information will then determine which competitions you are eligible to enter.

Will I be able to keep my World Tennis Number?

Yes, because your World Tennis Number (WTN) is designed to enable level based play it is not affected by your gender or sex assigned at birth. As part of the process of creating a new account when you transition, we will transfer across your WTN.

What does it mean for me if I am, or want to be, a performance player or represent Great Britain?

The Policy only applies to LTA Sanctioned Competitions and so any competitions which are sanctioned by an international body – either the International Tennis Federation, the Women's Tennis Association, the Association of Tennis Professionals or the International Padel Federation – will be governed by their eligibility rules.

For the same reasons of fairness which apply to eligibility for Specified Competitions, we will not be selecting individuals who were not assigned female at birth for either our Performance Pathway support or to represent Great Britain in the women's category. Trans and non-binary performance players are welcome to use the facilities at the National Tennis Centre under the same policy criteria as cis-gender players.

Use of changing facilities and toilets

We know this can be incredibly important for users of all genders. All users of changing spaces and facilities should feel comfortable and secure, and that their dignity is recognised and protected, 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.

Given the significant differences between the many types of Registered Venue, and what facilities they already have in place, it is not possible for us as a governing body to provide direction or advice to all Registered Venues as to how best to provide changing and toilet facilities in a way which is inclusive for all members, players and visitors. Each Registered Venue will need to consider this independently.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has provided [guidance](#) on interpreting the Equality Act 2010 in relation to single sex spaces, such as separate men's and women's changing rooms.

The guidance sets out in relation to trans people's use of such spaces that the organisation's "approach must be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. This will depend upon the nature of the service and may link to the reason the separate or single-sex service is needed. For example, a legitimate aim could be the privacy and dignity of others. You must then show that your action is a proportionate way to achieve that aim. This requires that you balance the impact upon all service users." This means that venues may decide to restrict access by users to changing facilities on the basis of the birth sex of users but do not have to.

We advise venues that they should first seek to understand the views of users of the space.

Then, in that context, they need to consider:

- what spaces and facilities are already available – this might range from a single toilet through to large multi-person changing rooms – and how they are currently used;
- if those spaces are, or can be made to be, sectioned off and lockable in some way, does that provide appropriate privacy for all users and so do they need to be explicitly gendered?;
- how best can these facilities be used to meet the needs of all members, players and visitors – this might include being more flexible and considering creating gender neutral and/or individual changing spaces; and
- ensuring that any policy is implemented in a way which respects the dignity and privacy of all members, players and visitors.

In relation to changing facilities at the National Tennis Centre and at Nottingham Tennis Centre, both run by the LTA, our position is based on the guidance referenced above. Within this context, we will provide appropriate changing spaces, respecting in particular the needs and dignity of trans and non-binary users. We are also restricting use of the men's and women's changing spaces to those who were assigned male and female at birth respectively.

Compliance with this policy

All players are required to comply with the provisions of the Policy. Any breach of the Policy will be a breach of the LTA Code of Conduct and will be dealt with as such. However, under no circumstances should a player raise with another player any suspected breach of the policy by that player. Any concerns should be raised with the LTA. This can be done [here](#). We would expect any player to do so in a respectful way and with reference to evidence to support their belief. It will then be for the LTA to decide whether any further action needs to be taken. In accordance with the Policy, any information they provide to the LTA for consideration under the Policy must be accurate, complete, and not misleading; and the person must not provide any information in bad faith, to harass, stigmatise or otherwise injure another person, or for any other improper purpose. Any issues in relation to Non-Specified competition should be dealt with by the competition organiser or LTA Registered Venue as appropriate.

APPENDIX A – USE OF LANGUAGE

As referenced above, language matters. It is useful to educate yourself, where necessary, on the following terms which might help in having inclusive conversations on this topic. Some terms are included here not because they are directly relevant to trans and non-binary people but to help differentiate for those with less understanding or lived experience of trans and non-binary people:

SEX:

this refers to the physical differences between people who are male, female, or intersex. A person typically has their sex assigned at birth based on physiological characteristics, including their genitalia and chromosome composition.

GENDER:

this refers to how a person identifies. It is not made up of binary forms but, instead, can be a broad spectrum. A person may identify at any point on this spectrum or outside it entirely. These identities may include transgender, non-binary, gender fluid or gender-neutral. There are many other ways in which a person might define their own gender.

TRANSGENDER:

this is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity is different from, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. “Trans” is often used simply as shorthand for Transgender.

NON-BINARY INDIVIDUAL:

is someone whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with ‘female’ or ‘male’. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

TRANSGENDER WOMAN:

someone who was assigned the male sex at birth but who identifies as a woman.

TRANSGENDER MAN:

someone who was assigned the female sex at birth but who identifies as a man.

INTERSEX:

is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy which does not fit the typical definitions of female or male. For example, a person might be born with female typical appearance on the outside but having mostly male typical anatomy on the inside.

SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH:

this means the male or female designation which doctors ascribe to infants based on their factors including their genitalia, which is marked on their birth records.

CIS-GENDER:

this is a term meaning that whatever gender a person is now is the same as the sex you were assigned at birth, e.g. someone who identifies as a male and was assigned male at birth is a cis-gender male.

TRANSITION:

every person’s transition is different; it is the process which some people, whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth do not match, go through to align their life and/or physical identity to match their gender identity. This can include different steps such as social transition (e.g. changing the name or pronouns they wish to be known by), medical transition (e.g. taking medical steps such as hormone therapy), or legal transition (e.g. changing their name, gender and/or sex on legal documents).

GENDER DYSPHORIA:

this describes a sense of unease or distress that a person may have because of a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity.

GENDER AFFIRMING HORMONE TREATMENT:

this is hormone therapy, such as the taking of testosterone or oestrogen supplements, to help better align a person's body/physical appearance with their gender identity.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT:

is where a person undergoes or proposes to undergo, a process for the purposes of reassigning their sex.

GENDER RECOGNITION CERTIFICATE (GRC):

this is a legal document which a person can apply for if they want their acquired gender to be legally recognised in the UK.

GENDER PRONOUNS:

personal pronouns are words we use every day to refer to ourselves or others. They can be an important way to express and recognise someone's gender identity and should be respected and used in relation to that person at all times.

DISCRIMINATION:

there are different types of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination** – this is when you are treated worse than another person or other people because: you have a protected characteristic (including sex and gender reassignment); someone thinks you have that protected characteristic; or you are connected to someone with that characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** – this happens when there is a policy which applies in the same way for everybody but which disadvantages a group of people who share a protected characteristic.

TRANSPHOBIA:

this is intolerance of gender diversity or fear, dislike or prejudice against someone on the basis that they are transgender.

DEAD NAMING:

this is the act of referring to someone to someone who is transgender, whether intentionally or not, by the name they used before they transitioned. This can be very harmful to them.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

this is about who you are attracted to and want to have romantic or sexual relationships with. This includes gay, lesbian, heterosexual, bisexual and asexual, as well as other orientations.

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