

Transgender Policy

FAQs

Q: Can transgender athletes compete in triathlon?

A: Yes. Transgender athletes are, and will continue to be, very welcome at recreational and competitive activity in Triathlon. At any competitive event from 1st January 2023, there will be a Female category open to athletes who are the female sex at birth and an Open category open to all other athletes. We will work with event organisers, clubs and coaches over the next few months to provide guidance that will encourage the involvement of anyone in Triathlon.

Q: What does this mean for transgender women?

A: Transgender women who are the male sex at birth will be able to compete in the Open Category as well as participate in recreational/non-competitive activities and events as the gender they identify as.

Q: What does this mean for transgender men?

A: Transgender men who are the female sex at birth and who have or are transitioning involving hormone therapy treatment, will be able to compete in the Open Category provided they have a valid Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE). They would not be eligible for the Female category. They can also participate in recreational/non-competitive activities and events as the gender they identify as.

Q: When does the policy come into effect?

A: 1 January 2023. We are choosing to share it now to ensure clarity of direction to all of our athletes and participants and so that we can provide information to event organisers about how they operate Open and Female category events, as well as event organisers and other deliverers who may consider delivering non-competitive open participation activities and events. Additional guidance will be shared with key stakeholders including clubs and coaches in the autumn to ensure that policies are implemented fairly and inclusively.

Q: How will you implement this policy?

A: The policy becomes effective on 1 January 2023. This is to give us time to work on revisions to the British Triathlon rules and related policies, and to provide guidance to various key stakeholders such as event organisers, clubs and coaches. We will also seek to work with other sports and national sports councils to establish a system that enables the regulation of the policy whilst respecting the privacy of individuals concerned. If this isn't possible, we will establish our own system of implementation.

Q: What if World Triathlon and/or other sports establish a different policy?

A: We have looked at what other sports are doing and have engaged with World Triathlon. However, the British Triathlon Board was resolute in its determination to establish a policy that is right for our sport in Great Britain specifically. To this end, we took real cognisance of the outcomes from our consultation and of just how important gender equity is in triathlon and in swim, bike, run. We were keen to provide clarity and practical guidance as soon as possible so that participants, event organisers, clubs and coaches know what to expect next season.

Q: When will additional guidance be published?

A: We will provide additional guidance to support event organisers, clubs, coaches and other key stakeholders on the implementation of the policy in autumn 2022, ahead of the policy coming into effect on 1 January 2023.

Q: Until 1 January 2023 what is your transgender policy?

A: Until 01.01.23, the [existing transgender policy](#) will continue to be effective..

Q: What happens if someone breaks the policy and enters the female category?

A: If British Triathlon is made aware of a transgender woman entering a permitted event, it will support the individual to provide evidence of compliance with the policy and if not complaint, advise the event organiser that the individual is able to participate in the event but not compete in the female category.

Q: Who has been involved in the policy review?

A: A working group was established with clear terms of reference:

- To evaluate all credible research
- To oversee a triathlon stakeholder consultation exercise, ensuring representation from all points of view
- Write one or more policy to govern the eligibility of transgender individuals at all levels of the sport
- Produce robust guidance to event organisers, clubs, coaches and officials
- Establish protocols, procedures and resource requirements for the fair and consistent application of the policy/ies
- Identify any governance requirements needed for the fair and consistent application of the policy/ies, e.g. sub committees.

Accordingly, the group will continue to work on implementation and guidance.

Q: What did the consultation involve?

A: Proposals from consultancy organisations were gathered ahead of appointing the lead consultant to support British Triathlon in delivering a comprehensive independent consultation process. The purpose of the consultation was to define the preferred or supported options of the British Triathlon membership for categorisation into triathlon competition in the UK.

The consultation took place during April/May 2022 and consisted of.

- An online survey: 3167 responses (1 in 5 response rate, more than 10% of our total membership)
- Six focus groups: comprising of athletes, staff and invited sports organisations, advocacy groups, charities and academics.
- 17 one-to-one interviews: including board members from all home countries as well as British Triathlon, athletes including transgender athletes, committee members, coaches, and event organisers

Q: I am a member and didn't receive a survey?

A: Information accompanied our statement update on our policy review in April 2022 that highlighted those members who had previously opted out of communications over email within their marketing preferences would need to update these to receive the survey, which was shared via email.

Our statement was shared on our website, via email and on social media, to encourage all members to access the survey.

Q: Why is triathlon considered a gender affected sport?

A: As a sport, Triathlon has had gender equity from its inception, with our male and female athletes competing on the same course, on the same day for equal prize money. Our male and female athletes also train alongside each other within our performance centres and as a result we are easily and reliably able to observe the advantages – in terms of both performance outcomes and physiology/biology – those athletes who are the male sex at birth have over athletes who are the female sex at birth.

We are also a sport made up of three distinct disciplines, each of which have a long history with clear differentials between the performances achieved between males and females.

The Equality Act defines 'Gender Affected Sport' and this definition is included in the policy.

Q: What about selection for GB teams?

A: Olympic and Paralympic: We will work with BOA and BPA to specify eligibility criteria for Team GB and Paralympics GB. It would be our intent that the provisions of the BTF Policy be replicated in the respective selection policies.

World and Europe Triathlon races: Only people who are the female sex at birth will be eligible to be selected to represent GB for international events in the female category, irrespective of World and/or Europe Triathlon policy.

Age Group international races: Only people who are the female sex at birth will be eligible to be selected for international events in the female category, irrespective of the governing/organising committee policy.

Q: Why is the Open category for all individuals including male, transgender and those non-binary who were male sex at birth, and why not a separate open category for transgender athletes?

A: We consulted with our membership on various competitive structures, to explore how events could be run in our sport. While event organisers may look at Male, Open and Female categories, we recognise that without significant numbers of athletes, an Open category specific to transgender athletes may not feel inclusive for those competing, so our policy stipulates an Open and a Female category for competitive events and an open format for non-competitive ones. We will be working on guidance to support event organisers to run these categories well for all participants.

Q: What are the differences between competitive and non-competitive Triathlon?

A: The policy sets out clearly the differences in competitive and non-competitive formats of our sport in its 'definitions' section.

Q: How will you ensure transgender participants and competitors have a good experience in Triathlon, whether in competitive or non-competitive Triathlon?

A: British Triathlon will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour towards or from anybody within the sport and will deal with any such incidents through our usual disciplinary policies. As part of our work to make the sport more equal, diverse and inclusive we will be adding transgender as a specific strategic focus from now onwards; alongside our other strategic focuses in this wider area. This inclusion will ensure that capacity, resource and expertise is in place to support those delivering our sport in all of our settings, both competitive and non-competitive, provide a high-quality and inclusive experience for all transgender participants, athletes and workforce.

Q: Will you change your policy in light of new scientific research?

A: We will review this policy every two years, or sooner if necessary, to ensure we stay across the latest developments, while ensuring any policy can be implemented in a practical and meaningful way within our sport.

Q: Why does this policy only apply to competitions for those aged 12 and over?

A: According to the NHS, it's perfectly normal for puberty to begin at any point between the ages of 8 and 13 in girls and 9 and 14 in boys. The average age for girls to start puberty is 11, while for boys the average age is 12.

Noting clause 195.4 in the Equality Act, we considered the age and stage of child competitors and the average age of puberty in boys and girls and concluded that the policy should regulate competitive activity from the age of 12.

Q: What political pressure was BTF under in developing this policy?

A: BTF was not under any political pressure. The policy was developed over several months and was the culmination of research, discussion and consultation.

Additional FAQs added 08.07.22

Q: Does this policy apply to triathlon and paratriathlon?

A: Yes. This policy is applicable to athletes across triathlon and paratriathlon.

Q: How will you make experiences for transgender athletes competing in the open category feel inclusive and how will you address transphobic behaviour?

A: Ahead of the policy being implemented on 1 January 2023 we will be working with our stakeholders, including transgender athletes to develop guidelines to support event organisers and clubs on ensuring all athletes competing at events, from entry through to competition and results, have a positive, inclusive and safe experience. This guidance will be published in Autumn 2022 to ensure it can be implemented when the policy comes into effect.

British Triathlon urges any person involved with triathlon who has experienced transphobic abuse to report it immediately. Please contact us via concern@britishtriathlon.org.

Q: Why are you putting a policy in place now?

A: The publication of the Sports Councils Equality Group (SCEG) Guidance in September 2021 indicated the need for the current policy to be reviewed. We felt it was important to provide clarity now and to provide time to develop guidance and understanding, before the policy becomes effective.

This is a policy for the whole sport, not just elite. Irrespective of whether there are currently any elite transgender athletes in Triathlon, we wanted to provide clarity now so that athletes at every level, know how they will be able to compete and participate, including those who may progress through a performance pathway as a transgender athlete.

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