



ENGLAND HOCKEY

TRANS & NON-BINARY PARTICIPATION POLICY GUIDANCE FOR THE GAME.

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PLEASE NOTE: This new policy will come into effect on 1 September 2025. Until 31 August 2025, our current policy remains in place across the sport in England.

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING THE TRANS AND NON-BINARY PARTICIPATION POLICY

In this section we explain in detail the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy. We give explanations as to why the policy has changed, and what forms of hockey are and are not affected by this policy. We also explain in detail how this affects transgender and non-binary hockey participants. If your questions are not answered here, please check the FAQs or contact us at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk

WHY WE HAVE CHANGED THE POLICY

England Hockey has had a trans participation policy in place since 2012, which was then reviewed in 2017. The Sports Councils' Equality Group (SCEG) Guidance was launched in 2021 since then we've taken the time to review our policy taking this guidance into consideration. We recognise that this is an evolving landscape of both policy and research, and that societal attitudes are ever-changing.

After a comprehensive review, and considering the SCEG guidance, it is important to note that there has been a change in the England Hockey trans participation policy position, and it is essential that all those involved in hockey recognise and understand these changes. We have developed guidance to support the policy which can be found below.

HOW TO APPLY OUR TRANS AND NON-BINARY PARTICIPATION POLICY

This guidance explains what you need to do to apply our Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy and how to support transgender and non-binary players to find the right hockey environment for them, as well as support all players, officials, umpires, coaches and volunteers to ensure we're developing inclusive environments in hockey. This guidance is relevant for everyone within the hockey community to understand, be it as a player, official, volunteer, staff member or spectator. England Hockey is committed to ensuring that the sport is visible, relevant, and accessible to everyone and to ensuring that any transgender or non-binary participant should be able to access and enjoy hockey without fear of discrimination, prejudice, or harassment, and any form of discrimination will be dealt with in line with our disciplinary procedures.

PLAYER PARTICIPATION POLICY ONLY

This policy is only applicable to those who participate as players of hockey. At England Hockey, we pride ourselves on the open and welcoming community for people from different backgrounds in our sport, ensuring anyone wanting to experience hockey has the right to do so. It is our responsibility to make sure everyone, no matter what their identity or background, feels supported and involved in hockey. There are multiple roles and ways to participate in hockey, and this policy only applies to those playing hockey.

WHEN THE POLICY TAKES EFFECT

The revised Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy will come into effect from the start of the 2025/26 hockey season on 1st September 2025. At such a time that this policy comes into effect, it will replace the old policy and guidance.



WHAT THE LAW STATES

The [Equality Act 2010](#) allows sports organisations to restrict or prohibit participation by transgender people as competitors in an event, or events, where the sporting activity is gender-affected. Any restrictions can only be made in order to secure fair competition or the safety of competitors at the event or events. All sports organisations need to have an evidence-based approach to making any decisions on whether the sport is gender-affected.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE STATES

Current available evidence (as available in the references of the policy) shows that hockey is considered a gender-affected sport, in that the physical strength, stamina or physique of average people of one sex would put them at a disadvantage compared to the average people of the other sex.

Whilst specific hockey-based evidence is still somewhat limited, based on the existing research available, competitive hockey requires the physical capabilities of strength, endurance, speed and acceleration as key factors for success. The evidence and research are continuing to develop in this sector, and England Hockey will seek to review its policy every two years, or sooner should relevant new information, guidance, legislation, policy direction from the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and/or significant scientific or medical evidence require consideration.

POLICY POSITION CHANGED BASED ON FAIRNESS

Based on the current available evidence, and that hockey requires the physical capabilities of strength, endurance, speed and acceleration as key factors for success, hockey is considered a gender-affected sport. Based on this evidence, we have determined that the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy should restrict trans participation in order to secure fair competition. We are committed to supporting all affected players to ensure they find the right path for them to continue to participate in hockey.

WHAT THE NEW POLICY STATES

The new Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy has been developed to ensure everyone can participate in the playing of hockey in a fair way. To enable this, we have created two categories of competition within hockey – a Female category and an Open category.

Female category:

- this category is for those participants recorded female at birth which includes trans men not undergoing hormone treatment.
- once a trans man or non-binary participant (whose sex is recorded as female at birth) has commenced hormone treatment then they will no longer be eligible to participate in the Female category in competitions/formats listed in Appendix A of the policy.

Open category:

- this category is open to all including those participants recorded male at birth, recorded female at birth (regardless of whether they have undergone hormone therapy), and those who identify as transgender or non-binary.
- participants will be unable to play across both categories in a single season (unless they become no longer eligible to participate in the Female category during a season).
- Note: it is not the intention of this policy that complete teams of players recorded female at birth enter the Open category.



As well as the two playing categories of Female and Open for hockey, England Hockey also offers a mixed hockey format of the game.

Mixed hockey:

- this format consists of a team of 11 players from a squad of 16. At any time during a match a team will consist of a minimum of five (5) outfield players recorded female at birth and are eligible for the Female category.

WHAT THIS POLICY MEAN FOR TRANS AND NON-BINARY PLAYERS

Everyone is welcome within the hockey community. England Hockey has developed categories to allow all players to participate regardless of their sex or gender. England Hockey wants to ensure we provide opportunities and enjoyment for everyone to participate in the game, and to achieve this, we need to create the fair playing conditions including all areas of the eligibility criteria, such as the age or experience of players. This has been done with the intention of creating fair and meaningful competition.

As a gender-affected sport, this means we have needed to consider the conditions around the Female category. For this category, England Hockey has placed necessary and proportionate restrictions on eligibility, in the spirit of fairness in competition. England Hockey supports the view of the IOC that no athlete should be pressurised by its Organisational Body (or any other party) to undergo any medically unnecessary procedure or treatment in order to meet the eligibility criteria of that sport.

Hockey has been split into two categories with some hockey affected by this policy, and some hockey falling outside of this policy. For a breakdown of this split, please see the section ***Hockey Affected and not Affected by this Policy.***

How trans and non-binary participants can continue to play

- **Trans women:** can participate in hockey affected by this policy in the Open category and in the mixed hockey format under their sex recorded at birth. They can also play in hockey that falls outside of this policy as the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.
- **Trans men:** can participate in hockey affected by this policy in the Female category under their sex recorded at birth as long as they have not or are not currently undertaking androgenising substances such as hormone treatment. They can compete in the mixed hockey format under their sex recorded at birth. They can play in the Open category under the gender they identify as. They can also play in hockey that falls outside of this policy as the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.
- **Non-binary (male at birth):** can participate in hockey affected by this policy in the Open category and in the mixed hockey format under their sex recorded at birth. They can also play in hockey not affected by this policy as the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.
- **Non-binary (female at birth):** can participate in the Female category and the mixed hockey format under their sex recorded at birth, unless or until they have started any androgenising substances such as hormone treatment. They can play in the Open category under the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth. They can also play in hockey that falls outside of this policy as the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.



The table below shows the affected and non-affected hockey per participant

Participant	Competitions Affected by the policy	Competitions Not Affected by the policy	Other
Trans Women	Can participate in Open category.	Can participate in the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.	<i>For Mixed Hockey, only the EH Mixed Hockey Championships is listed as Affected by the policy.</i>
Trans Men	Can participate in Female category if they have not taken androgenising substances for hormone treatment; can also participate in the Open category.	Can participate in the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.	<i>For Mixed Hockey, only the EH Mixed Hockey Championships is listed as Affected by the policy.</i>
Non-Binary (Male at Birth)	Can participate in Open category.	Can participate in the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.	<i>For Mixed Hockey, only the EH Mixed Hockey Championships is listed as Affected by the policy.</i>
Non-Binary (Female at Birth)	Can participate in Female category if they have not taken androgenising substances for hormone treatment; can also participate in the Open category.	Can participate in the gender they identify as, or their sex recorded at birth.	<i>For Mixed Hockey, only the EH Mixed Hockey Championships is listed as Affected by the policy.</i>
Trans and Non-Binary players aged 11 or under	Policy does not apply to anyone aged 11 or under, who does not reach their 12 th birthday in the current season. Therefore they should be 10 or under on 31 August of the preceding season. Can participate in any form of hockey in the gender they identify as.		

YOUTH PLAYERS / PLAYERS AGED 11 AND UNDER

The Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy only applies to participants aged 12 or over. Trans participants aged 11 or under can compete in the gender they identify with. Once a trans girl becomes 12, she will be unable to compete in the Female category. To be eligible, a trans girl must be 10 or under on 31st August preceding the season of participation.

To be eligible for the 2025/26 season, you have to be born ON OR AFTER 1st September 2015.

This age has been chosen based on the medical evidence of puberty (Tanner stage 2 in medical terms). The NHS advise that puberty can 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. Since the policy is about creating fairness assessed through averages between sexes, it is appropriate, and proportionate, to introduce the policy at the average age for boys' puberty, and therefore 12 years old.

Trans boys (players recorded female at birth) will be able to compete in the Female category so long as they have not or are not currently undertaking androgenising substances such as hormone treatment.

For any support on questions relating to trans youth players or exemptions, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk.

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL PARTICIPATION

All England and Great Britain international teams (including England U16, U18, U21, Great Britain Elite Development Programme, England / Great Britain Senior teams and England Masters) are governed by this policy. To be selected for an England or Great Britain women's international team, only participants recorded female at birth who have not or are not currently undertaking androgenising substances such as hormone treatment, and eligible for the Female category will be considered.

Should Hockey Wales and/or Scottish Hockey have different eligibility criteria for trans and non-binary participants, then this policy will take precedence for Great Britain team selection.

This policy does not currently affect the selection for the England Hockey Intellectual Disability Hockey (Hockey ID team).

HOCKEY AFFECTED AND NOT AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

To ensure everyone continues to have the opportunity to play hockey, we have split the classifications of hockey into activities affected by the policy, and those outside the policy. These two classifications can be found below. If you're unsure where your event or activity sits, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk for support.

HOCKEY AFFECTED BY THE POLICY

The following forms of hockey are affected by the policy and therefore restrictions of the Female and Open categories apply. This has been split into England Hockey national activity, Area level activity and County level activity. This can also be found in Appendix A of the policy:

England Hockey

- England & GB international teams
- England Hockey Leagues
- England Hockey Championships (Mixed, Junior, Adult, Masters, County)
- Area Masters Championships
- Indoor Competitions & Super 6s



- All Talent System Competitions (Talent Academy and Junior County Hockey)
- Schools Championships (Tier 1-3)
- State School Festivals (U12 and above)
- U13 In2Hockey Schools Championships
- U12 In2Hockey Club Championships

Area

- Adult Leagues – Grades 1-5
- Area Adult Cup Competitions
- Area Junior Leagues & Competitions
- Area Indoor Competitions
- Area Schools Championships (Tier 1-3)
- Area State School Festivals (U12 and above)
- Area U12 & U13 In2Hockey Schools Championships
- Area U12 In2Hockey Club Championships
- Area Masters teams including inter-county activity

County

- County Adult Cup Competitions
- County Junior Leagues & Competitions
- County Indoor Competitions
- County Schools Championships (Tier 1-3)
- County State School Festivals (U12 and above)
- County U12 & U13 In2Hockey Schools Championships
- County U12 In2Hockey Club Championships
- Adult County Championship teams
- County Masters teams and Cup competitions

Other key information for hockey that is affected by this policy:

- Development teams entered into Area Grade 5 leagues will be covered by this policy regardless of EH Regulation 7.2.1
- Any Hockey Wales or Scottish Hockey clubs that play in England Hockey leagues will be covered by this policy regardless of Hockey Wales and Scottish Hockey policies on trans participation in hockey.
- Junior Leagues – please note that participants aged 11 and under are not affected by this policy.
- Talent System Competition including all Talent Academy and Junior County Hockey Competitions are affected by this policy.



What does 'Hockey Affected by this Policy' mean for trans participants:

- Trans and non-binary participants recorded male at birth are able to play hockey in the Open category and in mixed hockey.
- Trans and non-binary participants recorded female at birth are able to play hockey in the Female category (so long as they have not or are not currently undergoing hormone treatment), the Open category or in mixed hockey.
- We encourage trans and non-binary participants recorded female at birth and have not or are not currently undertaking androgenising substances such as hormone treatment, to consider which category of Open and Female hockey is preferable for them. They may also play in mixed hockey competitions as a female competitor.

HOCKEY NOT AFFECTED BY THE POLICY

All forms and formats of hockey not listed in Appendix A are not affected by this policy and therefore trans and non-binary participants are eligible to participate as the gender they identify as.

We acknowledge that there are some competitions that are not directly governed by England Hockey. In these events, the organisers would make a separate decision on whether to align with this participation policy. In particular, event organisers include:

- BUCS (British Universities and College Sport)
- AOC (Association of Colleges)
- Independent Schools Selective State Schools

We encourage you to reach out to the specific competition and event organisers to understand their decision on the application of this England Hockey policy.

ADDITIONAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE

England Hockey has developed support and guidance for participants, clubs, leagues, Areas and Counties. We have expert safeguarding, inclusion and governance teams who can help you with any queries, concerns, or questions you have. You can reach Safeguarding on safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk, inclusion on inclusion@englandhockey.co.uk, or for specific advice on the trans and non-binary policy please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We have developed a list of frequently asked questions which can be found [HERE](#). If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk for support.

MEDIA ATTENTION

We occasionally get media enquiries on this policy. If you find you are receiving enquiries at your club, area, county or any other part of hockey, it's important that you pass all media enquiries to the England Hockey staff team. Please forward to Media@EnglandHockey.co.uk where we will centrally respond and support you as required.



DEFINITIONS AND USEFUL TERMS

Below is a list of useful terms and definitions that are used throughout the guidance and policy. For clarity on any term, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk

Birth Sex	The sex recorded at birth based on physical characteristics.
Gender-Affected Sport	A sport in which the physical strength, stamina or physique of average persons of one sex would put them at a disadvantage compared to average persons of the other sex as competitors in the activity.**
Gender Identity	A person's sense of self as a man, woman, non-binary person or other sense of gender (including no gender). A person's gender may match the sex they were recorded at birth, or it may be different.
Gender Reassignment	A person proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.**
Non-Binary	A person whose Gender Identity does not fit within a male/female binary.*
Season	means a standard EH hockey season, commencing in the 1 September of one calendar year and concluding on the 31 August of the following calendar year.
Sex	A biological or legal category where people are recorded as being either male or female, typically based on biological or physiological attributes.*
Transgender or Trans Person	A person whose gender is not the same as the sex that was recorded at birth.
Trans Boy / Man	A person who is recorded female at birth but identifies as male.
Trans Girl / Woman	A person who is recorded male at birth but identifies as female.
Transphobia	Deliberate behaviour aimed at disrespecting a transgender person's Identity or expressing irrational fears about transgender people.*

*(Definitions taken from * CIPD guidance, ** Equality Act 2010)*



REVIEW OF PUBLISHED STUDIES

This policy follows a review that has explored and considered the most up to date peer-reviewed and published studies, the specific studies used are listed in the policy as references. Please refer to the policy for the studies which were reviewed for this policy.

SECTION 2: POLICY COMPLIANCE

In this section, we will explain the compliance around this policy, how someone could be non-compliant with the policy, and concerns on discrimination and eligibility. Please ensure you have read the Understanding the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy section before understanding how the compliance of this policy should be upheld.

ANTI-DOPING

All participants, regardless of sex or gender, should be aware that they may be subject to doping control testing as per the UK Anti-Doping Rules. The use of hormones in most cases contravene the World Anti-Doping Agency Code and therefore any trans or non-binary participants using hormones for the purpose of gender reassignment, or any participant taking hormones as part of HRT, are encouraged to contact UK Anti-Doping in relation to any Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE).

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PARTICIPANTS

Any information regarding a person's transgender history must be handled with the greatest care, in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation/Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data of all members must be treated as confidential. It's crucial to refrain from disclosing details about a trans individual's transition or history to anyone, including other members, participants, officials, or volunteers, unless you have prior consent from the individual. Such disclosure could expose them to the risk of discrimination or harassment.

Regardless of age, you should not disclose someone's transgender status unless you have obtained explicit consent from the individual. For those under 18 years old, under data laws, the confidentiality of personal data concerning children is particularly safeguarded, emphasising the need for utmost discretion.

If you have any questions or concerns on confidentiality or how to handle a situation, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk.

DISCLOSURE TO OPPOSITION AND OR UMPIRES / OFFICIALS

A lot of clubs ask whether they should disclose having a trans player to the opposition and or umpires, usually as they see this as education for officials, and supportive of the player. They do not consider how the individual wants the matter to be handled, and this is the priority in this situation. Please remember that disclosure should not ever happen without consent.

HOW SOMEONE COULD BE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE POLICY

It is essential to respect and uphold the dignity of every individual, and everyone is encouraged to collaborate with this policy and guidance in a spirit of good faith, whilst meeting our [code of conduct](#) and living by England Hockey's values. England Hockey is dedicated to ensuring that members of the trans community can engage in and enjoy the sport without experiencing discrimination or prejudice.



Below are some examples of how someone (e.g. player, official, umpire, team manager) could be non-compliant with the policy:

- If a player is challenged on the basis that their appearance does not conform to gender stereotypes.
- If a trans or non-binary participant is challenged while participating in the Open category.
- If a trans or non-binary participant is challenged while participating in the Mixed Hockey format if participating as their recorded sex at birth.
- If a trans or non-binary participant is challenged while participating in a classification defined by Appendix B.
- If a trans or non-binary participant is the subject of any gender-based discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour.
- If a trans or non-binary participant recorded male at birth, is playing in the Female category as their gender they identify as.
- If a trans or non-binary participant is removed before or during a game without proof of their eligibility for the category they are playing in.
- If a female recorded at birth participates in the Female and Open category at the same time in the same season whilst being eligible for both.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK THE POLICY HAS BEEN MISINTERPRETED

We understand that not everyone is an expert on various forms of eligibility or on discrimination, and it's natural to sometimes feel uncertain about whether our policy has been misinterpreted or breached.

If you've observed or encountered any instances of individuals not complying with the policy or have concerns about how this policy is being interpreted, and you're unable to address the issue locally, it's important to reach out to the England Hockey team via email at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk.

If you feel there is a case of discrimination in a game, in training, in the club house or any other hockey environment, every incident, no matter how seemingly minor, should be reported to England Hockey. Even seemingly insignificant occurrences can have a detrimental effect on those involved. We're committed to supporting anyone who brings forth a concern, and those who advocate for another player, or confronts any form of discrimination – those who do will not face negative repercussions.

GENDER CRITICAL VIEWS

Having gender critical views is not considered unlawful discrimination, and merely holding such views is not inherently unacceptable behaviour. However, it's important to note that having these views does not grant individuals the right to express them in a discriminatory manner. The way in which these beliefs are expressed could potentially be deemed unacceptable behaviour or even unlawful discrimination.

If discrimination, prejudice, or harassment towards or about a player takes place, it is important that any offensive behaviour is dealt with. Such behaviours are wholly unacceptable and may be subject to disciplinary action under the England Hockey [Disciplinary Regulations](#). We would ask that any such incidences are reported in line with this discipline process. For any concerns or questions on reporting



a potential disciplinary action, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk for support and guidance.

WHEN TO REPORT A CONCERN OF ELIGIBILITY

Any participant that is challenged directly before or during an event on their eligibility should not be removed from the event at that time. If a player is challenged inappropriately then on pitch sanctions will be made in accordance with the disciplinary regulations. All incidents should be raised through the official process and reported to discipline@englandhockey.co.uk after such an event takes place. If you have any questions on eligibility, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk

HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN ON ELIGIBILITY

We are committed to supporting all players, clubs, coaches, officials, Areas, and leagues to find the best outcome of all players, and we know this can be a difficult policy to navigate. Therefore, England Hockey is committed to supporting on all eligibility concerns related to this policy to find the right outcome and solution for trans and non-binary players.

To report a concern or an issue, or to seek further guidance, please email England Hockey at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk with details of the case and the team will be in touch to support you through the process.

Any other form of eligibility concern should be dealt with through the normal process in your local Area. You can find the right contact information at the end of this guidance document.

WHEN TO REPORT A CONCERN ON DISCRIMINATION

If any individual, including trans or non-binary individuals, experiences bullying, harassment, or discrimination within the hockey community, it's crucial to address it as an issue. If you suspect such behaviour is occurring, it's imperative to report it. In the first instance please report the matter to your club welfare officer.

It's important to note that being transgender does not constitute a safeguarding risk for others. It is important to also note that transgender people, of any age, may be more vulnerable than other members of society. When considering reporting any bullying, harassment or discrimination against trans or non-binary people in hockey, please adhere to our [Safeguard](#) policy for guidance. In cases where there's a safeguarding concern and the wellbeing of a transgender member of the hockey community is at risk, disclosing their transgender status in accordance with safeguarding procedures may be necessary if it's relevant to the situation. It's essential to approach the needs of all involved with careful consideration and balance during safeguarding incidents.

Should you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a transgender individual or require advice or guidance, please don't hesitate to reach out to the club welfare officers or the England Hockey team at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk.

HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN ON DISCRIMINATION

If you suspect discriminatory behaviour is occurring, it's imperative to report it. All discrimination concerns linked to this policy should be sent through the dispute process to England Hockey at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk



WHAT HAPPENS IF NON-COMPLIANCE AMOUNTS TO A BREACH

England Hockey is committed to ensuring that any trans or non-binary participant should be able to access and enjoy hockey without fear of discrimination, prejudice, or harassment, and sometimes it can take time to find the right form of hockey for each individual. If a player is ineligible to participate in a form of hockey based on this policy or any other form of eligibility, it will be managed through the appropriate disputes process. England Hockey is committed to working with trans and non-binary players, and their clubs, to find the right hockey for each player.

APPEALS PROCESS

Any participant wishing to appeal a decision made by England Hockey in accordance with this policy or participation eligibility, should appeal in writing to England Hockey at discipline@englandhockey.co.uk outlining the decision, the grounds for the appeal and attaching any supporting documentation. The appeal will be heard by a panel of at least three people established for this purpose, to include a lawyer from one of England Hockey's existing panels (or in the alternative a person from Sport Resolutions where requested / agreed).

CODE OF CONDUCT

We have a Code of Conduct in place as well as other policies which we expect the hockey community to adhere to. And there are procedures in place for addressing concerns about people who may not be upholding those policies – this applies to all policies, not just the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy.

Hockey is a sport that should be enjoyed by all who participate, be it as a player, official, volunteer or spectator. England Hockey believes that the highest standards of integrity can be held at all levels of the game and can therefore ensure the sport is enjoyable for everyone. The code applies to everyone who is involved in hockey at all levels. England Hockey takes any breaches of the code of conduct seriously. If you believe that a breach has taken place, please view the [Inappropriate Behaviour page](#) for further information.

SECTION 3: HOW TO SUPPORT TRANS AND NON-BINARY PARTICIPANTS IN HOCKEY

In this section, we offer support and guidance to clubs and key roles within the sport on how to support trans and non-binary members of our community to find the right hockey for them, whilst ensuring compliance with the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy.

ADDITIONAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE

England Hockey has developed support and guidance for participants, clubs, leagues, Areas and Counties. This can be found below. We have expert safeguarding, inclusion and governance teams who can help you with any queries, concerns, or questions you have. You can reach Safeguarding on safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk, inclusion on inclusion@englandhockey.co.uk, or for specific advice on the trans and non-binary policy please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We have developed a list of frequently asked questions which can be found [here](#). If you have any other questions that are not found in the FAQs, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk for support.

MEDIA ATTENTION

We occasionally get media enquiries on this policy. If you find you are receiving enquiries at your club, area, county or any other part of hockey, it's important that you pass all media enquiries to the England Hockey staff team. Please forward to Media@EnglandHockey.co.uk where we will centrally respond and support you as required.

RESPECTING CONFIDENTIALITY OF TRANS AND NON-BINARY PLAYERS IN THE HOCKEY COMMUNITY

Some individuals within clubs may openly identify as trans, while others may prefer to keep this aspect of their identity private. It's essential to honour their decision and refrain from sharing any information without their explicit consent, regardless of their age.

Players, volunteers, officials, club members, young players, or parents of other children do not have the right to be informed about the trans status of an adult or child. Respecting confidentiality is paramount in safeguarding privacy.

There may be a situation where disclosure becomes necessary, such as when someone openly expresses a desire to use a different name and pronoun. In such cases, it's important to have a discussion with the individual involved and collectively determine what information, if any, should be shared and how.

Trans participants, whether adults or children (and their parents or carers) may wish to consult with their club (or a club's welfare officer) on whether to, and how to disclose their trans identity to other members of the club or teams. If you need guidance on handling such conversations, please don't hesitate to contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk for support.

SUPPORTING A TRANS PLAYER IN YOUR CLUB

For many, hockey is a safe, warm, and welcoming environment. We want hockey to be a place where everyone can be themselves and feel supported through a network of the hockey community. For a trans or non-binary person who is either new to hockey or could be transitioning whilst at a club, we want to support them to know that hockey is for them.

Transitioning is a deeply personal journey, and individuals may not always openly identify as trans in all aspects of their life. It's vital to cultivate a supportive environment within hockey where individuals feel free to express their true selves.

When joining your club (of if they transition whilst at your club), if a person chooses to disclose their trans identity, it may be necessary to discuss where they are in their transition, particularly if they interact with peers from other activity groups or communities within the club. This could be especially important if the person is a child.



By addressing this sensitively, individuals can better understand how their identity may intersect with other areas of their life, empowering them to make informed decisions about self-expression within a hockey environment.

The first step to supporting any person (whether an adult or a child) who tells you they are trans, or who is questioning their gender identity, is to listen without making any judgements or assumptions. Reassure them that hockey is an inclusive sport and that they'll always be welcome within the hockey community. Offer reassurance about their opportunities within hockey as a player, coach, umpire, official, volunteer, and more. For playing, please use this guidance document and the policy to outline the options available to them. Let them know their confidentiality will be respected and you will work with them to understand their needs and wants.

The next step is to ask if there is anything they might need to make them feel comfortable and included in the club. The person may want to talk about:

- what pronoun or name they'd like to use and when to use it (this may not be all the time). It can be hard to get this right sometimes, so if you make a mistake, apologise, and move on. It's important to respect their wishes to learn their name and pronouns just like with any other person.
- whether, when, and how they might like to share anything with other members in their team or the wider club.
- which toilets and facilities they'd like to use (a consideration for both home and away matches).
- changes to their [kit](#) and what they wear for matches and training to be comfortable.
- where to find [information or support](#) outside of their club or England Hockey.

A person might not want to do anything at all or may need some time to think about any adjustments they need, so let them know that they can always come back to talk to you.

For any specific questions or guidance, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk who will be able to support you.

SUPPORTING A TRANS OR NON-BINARY MEMBER TO UNDERSTAND THE POLICY

It's essential to ensure that individuals are aware of the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy and how it may impact their journey within the sport. For child members, it's crucial that both they and their parents or carers are informed about the policy and its implications as they progress in their playing journey.

For all trans and non-binary members, engaging in open and honest conversations is paramount to ensuring they have a positive hockey experience.

Start by sharing the policy and the full guidance, so they can start to understand what the policy means for them. Work with the player to understand the options available at your club to allow them to continue their playing journey. Continue to support the player to find the right opportunities and environment for them.

If you as a club member needs support to understand what adjustments or opportunities are available to your trans members, please reach out to the England Hockey team at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk – we will be able to support you on options for hockey in your area for your trans members aligned to the policy.



MANAGING NEW MEMBER ENQUIRIES FROM TRANS AND NON-BINARY PARTICIPANTS

A new member wishing to join your club does not have to disclose that they are trans or non-binary. Please see the *Respecting Confidentiality of Trans and Non-Binary Players in the Hockey Community* section for more information. It is important that everyone feels welcome and included in the hockey community. If there is a dispute based on a player's eligibility within a certain playing category, this should be raised through the official channels and processes as indicated in this guidance. Please see the *When to Report a Concern of Eligibility* section of the guidance for more information. If a player does disclose their identity to you on joining or whilst being a member of the club, it is important that you support them and make their hockey experience as positive as possible.

SUPPORTING YOUNG TRANS PARTICIPANTS

Ensuring appropriate support for all young players is paramount in hockey, with their wellbeing, health, and confidentiality placed at the forefront of our priorities. Sometimes, a member of the hockey club might be who the player chooses to confide in, and it's important to have a conversation with them to ascertain whether they have disclosed their gender identity to their parents or carers.

Respecting the confidentiality of young individuals is essential, in accordance with GDPR / Data Protection Act requirements. Discussing a young person's trans status with their parents or carers without their prior consent would constitute a breach of confidentiality. Some young members may feel anxious about disclosing their gender identity to their parents or carers (or indeed their fellow players and friends), so it's imperative not to disclose any information without obtaining their explicit consent beforehand. Work with the young player to understand what they would like and how you can support them in their hockey journey.

SUPPORTING PARENTS OR CARERS OF YOUNG TRANS PARTICIPANTS

Parents and carers can be reassured that hockey promotes a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying, discrimination, or harassment of any nature. The confidentiality of the young person is placed at the forefront of our priorities. If the young player is happy to disclose their identity to parents or carers and the club, then they can be reassured that the utmost care and confidentiality will be given to the player whilst the club supports them and make their hockey experience as positive as possible.

If you need any support or guidance on a particular situation, please reach out to your club welfare officer or the England Hockey team at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk.

SUPPORTING TRANS AND NON-BINARY PLAYERS COMPETING IN THE FEMALE AND OPEN CATEGORY AND IN MIXED HOCKEY

We understand that the changes in this policy may leave some players feeling disheartened by the future of their hockey playing opportunities, but we are committed to supporting each participant to find the right path for them to remain in the hockey community.

England Hockey has developed categories to allow all players to participate in hockey regardless of their sex or gender. We're committed to remaining inclusive and will ensure we provide opportunities and enjoyment for everyone to participate as a player in the game.



To achieve this in a fair way, we need to create the right conditions for hockey, including the eligibility criteria for different categories, such as the age or experience of players. This has been done with the intention of creating fair and meaningful competition. As a gender-affected sport, this means we have needed to consider the conditions around a Female category. For this category, England Hockey has placed necessary and proportionate restrictions on eligibility, in the spirit of fairness in competition.

The Open category has been developed to ensure there is a space for all players, regardless of gender, sex, age, or ability to continue their hockey participation. Those players recorded male at birth and female at birth can all participate in the Open category. Please note that restrictions do apply on participating in more than one per season. Please see *Understanding the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy* section for more information.

As well as the two playing categories of Female and Open, England Hockey also offers a mixed hockey format of the game. This format consists of a team of 11 players from a squad of 16. At any time during a match a team will consist of a minimum of 5 outfield players recorded female at birth.

If you need more guidance to support your players in your club to find the right category for them, please reach out to the England Hockey team at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk

SECTION 4: CLUB SUPPORT

*In this section will explain what steps to take as a club to remain compliant with this policy. We are committed to supporting clubs to understand and implement the policy so if you need any support at any time, please do reach out to us. Please take the time to read the full policy and guidance, especially the *Understanding the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy* section.*

We know this can be a difficult policy to navigate, and we're committed to assisting you to find the best outcome for all your players. England Hockey will support on all eligibility questions and concerns related to this policy to find the right outcome and solution for your trans and non-binary players.

QUERIES ON ELIGIBILITY

For any questions on eligibility related to this policy, please contact England Hockey at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk and we will guide you through the options for each player as well as what the policy means for them. Any other form of eligibility concern which falls outside of this policy should be dealt with through the normal process in your local league and Area.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IN YOUR CLUB IS NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE POLICY (ELIGIBILITY OR DISCRIMINATION)

We understand that not everyone is an expert on various forms of eligibility or on discrimination, and it's natural to sometimes feel uncertain about whether our policy is breached. It is our responsibility as England Hockey and as Clubs to ensure we're supporting trans members of our community to find the right hockey for them. We understand that not everyone is an expert on various forms of eligibility or on discrimination, and it's natural to sometimes feel uncertain about the details of the policy or whether the policy is breached.

Please review the *How to Support Trans and Non-Binary Participants in Hockey* section to know the steps to take to support your trans members to find appropriate hockey for them which is compliant with the policy.



If a situation occurs or you observe or encounter any instances of policy breach, or have concerns about how this policy is being interpreted by members of your club or any players, and you're unable to address the issue locally, it's important to reach out to our England Hockey team at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk who can help you with any issues you may be facing.

Sadly, sometimes you may witness some form of discrimination towards trans members. If you feel there is a case of discrimination, every incident, no matter how seemingly minor, should be reported to England Hockey. Even seemingly insignificant occurrences can have a detrimental effect on those involved. We're committed to supporting anyone who brings forth a concern, and those who advocate for another player, or confronts any form of discrimination – those who do will not face negative repercussions.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A PLAYER FROM ANOTHER TEAM IS IN BREACH OF THE POLICY DURING A MATCH (ELIGIBILITY OR DISCRIMINATION)

It is important not to assume eligibility, and it is essential that we respect the confidentiality of all participants. Therefore, we would not expect any participant to be challenged on their eligibility during an event. All incidents should be raised through the official process and reported to trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk after such an event takes place.

MONITORING ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS PRE, DURING, POST MATCH

In line with eligibility guidance, the responsibility for verifying a player's eligibility lies with the club. It is not the role of the umpire to monitor or enforce the eligibility of individuals on the team sheet, irrespective of any awareness of a player's circumstances. It is the duty of the club to field eligible players for any game. An umpire's primary responsibility is to apply the [Rules of Hockey](#) to ensure the game is conducted safely and fairly. Should a player engage in dangerous play, the umpire will take appropriate action in accordance with the rules. However, the umpire or official is not accountable for the enforcement of player eligibility policies.

HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN ON ELIGIBILITY

We are committed to supporting all players, clubs, coaches, officials, Areas, Counties and leagues to find the best outcome of all players, and we know this can be a difficult policy to navigate. Therefore, England Hockey is committed to supporting on all eligibility concerns related to this policy to find the right outcome and solution for trans and non-binary players.

To report a concern or an issue, or to seek further guidance please email trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk with details of the case and the England Hockey team will be in touch to support you through the process.

Any other form of eligibility concern should be dealt with through the normal process in your local area.



HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN ON DISCRIMINATION

We know that with eligibility queries can come discrimination. We do not tolerate any form of discrimination at England Hockey, and we urge you to follow the discrimination process if you feel such a case has developed. If you suspect discriminatory behaviour is occurring, it's imperative to report it. All discrimination concerns linked to this policy should be sent through the dispute process to England Hockey at trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk

GENDER CRITICAL VIEWS

Having gender critical views is not considered unlawful discrimination, and merely holding such views is not inherently unacceptable behaviour. However, it's important to note that having these views does not grant individuals the right to express them in a discriminatory manner. The way in which these beliefs are expressed could potentially be deemed unacceptable behaviour or even unlawful discrimination.

If discrimination, prejudice, or harassment towards or about a player takes place, it is important that any offensive behaviour is dealt with. Such behaviours are wholly unacceptable and may be subject to disciplinary action under the England Hockey Disciplinary Regulations. We would ask that any such incidences are reported in line with this discipline process. For any concerns or questions on reporting a potential disciplinary action, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk for support and guidance.

HOW TO MANAGE ON PITCH ISSUES RELATED TO ELIGIBILITY AND THIS POLICY

As a coach, club official or team manager you already implement many of England Hockey's policies. You are the first-line of support for standards of on pitch and off-pitch conduct. You may be the person to receive initial reports or complaints of harassment or discriminatory behaviour from your players or players/coaches from other teams. Everyone has the right to play hockey. If a player or team refuses to play against a team with a (suspected) trans player, this goes against England Hockey's principle of inclusion and is also discriminatory. There may also be associated consequences for a team should it refuse to play (regales of reason).

It is important not to assume eligibility, and it is essential that we respect the confidentiality of all participants. Therefore, we would not expect any participant to be challenged on their eligibility during an event. All incidents should be raised through the official process and reported to trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk after such an event takes place. Refusal to play would result in a forfeited match in line the existing England Hockey regulations.

England Hockey is committed to supporting on all eligibility queries or concerns related to this policy to find the right outcome and solution for trans and non-binary players. To report a concern or an issue, or to seek further guidance, please email trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk with details of the case and the England Hockey team will be in touch to support you through the process.



PLAYERS' ROLE IN UPHOLDING THE POLICY

Fellow players play a key role in creating the right culture and atmosphere for everyone to feel welcome and included in hockey.

How you behave as a player has a direct impact on creating an inclusive culture within your team and your club. Ensure your on-pitch conduct is within the rules, regardless of who your opposition is. Ensure your off-pitch conduct is in line with your Club, League and England Hockey policies, rules and regulations. For more information please review our [code of conduct](#).

If you have concerns about the participation eligibility of **any** player, including a player who may be trans or non-binary, these should be raised with your club in the first instance. The club will liaise with the league admins and England Hockey and should follow the eligibility concern process. We would not expect any participant to be challenged or sanctioned on their eligibility during or immediately before an event.

SECTION 5: SUPPORT FOR AREAS / COUNTIES / LEAGUES / OFFICIALS / UMPIRES

HOW TO WORK WITH LEAGUE ADMINS TO UNDERSTAND THE POLICY

Changes to any policy can be difficult to navigate, and we're aware that this policy might take some roles more time to understand the implications of the changes. The most important thing to note is that England Hockey is here to support with any questions or concerns you have at any time related to this policy.

Firstly, we recommend everyone reads this guidance to understand how the policy has changed and what it means for players and also for key roles who will implement this policy. Please review the *Understanding the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy* section and the *Policy Compliance* section of this guidance for initial support. We have also developed FAQs which will help you with any specifics related to the policy. For anything else please reach out to England Hockey on trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk

HOW TO WORK WITH OFFICIALS/UMPIRES TO UNDERSTAND THE POLICY

We know that sometime policies can be misinterpreted or misunderstood. England Hockey is committed to making our guidance as clear and supportive as possible for all those involved in the game. If there are any differences of opinion between key roles when discussing the guidance or policy, please reach out to England Hockey for clarification.

HOW TO WORK WITH YOUR CLUBS TO UNDERSTAND THE POLICY

Clubs and players have a key role in understanding the policy and what it means for them. For some players, this change could be substantial, and it's important we're able to support the players and their clubs through this change and ensure they continue to feel included and welcome in hockey by finding the right form of hockey for them. There are multiple ways to be involved in hockey, and we have avenues for all players regardless of ability, gender, sex, or age. We recommend firstly to ensure the club has read the guidance on offer, and then reaches out to the club Welfare Officer who will have a better knowledge of the player and their needs. If more support is needed, please reach out to England Hockey.



UMPIRES AND OFFICIALS' GUIDANCE TO UPHOLD THE POLICY

Umpires and officials and technical officials have a primary responsibility to uphold on-pitch rules and regulations of our game. It is important that those in a role of responsibility understand the policy regulations and what it means for player eligibility and compliance. Please review the *Understanding the Trans and Non-Binary Participation Policy* section and the *Policy Compliance* section of this guidance. It is equally important to know the signs and actions to take if you see or hear any discrimination or actions that bring in game into disrepute. Hockey is an inclusive and welcoming sport, and it is important that behaviour on the pitch lives up to this. Thank you for the role you play in upholding the welcoming spirit of the game.

MONITORING ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

In line with other eligibility guidance, the responsibility for verifying a player's eligibility lies with the club. It is not the role of the umpire or official to monitor or enforce the eligibility of individuals on the team sheet, irrespective of any awareness of a player's circumstances. It is the duty of the club to field eligible players for any game. The umpire's primary responsibility is to apply the Rules of Hockey to ensure the game is conducted safely and fairly. Should a player engage in dangerous play, the umpire will take appropriate action in accordance with the rules. However, the umpire is not accountable for the enforcement of player eligibility policies.

The below points give you guidance on how to manage any issue or dispute pre, during or post an event. What to do if:

- **Someone raises an eligibility concern directly before a match starts:** We would not expect any participant to be challenged on their eligibility directly before an event. If a member of team raises a concern, and the player is unknown to you through conversations with your area or England Hockey, you should direct the person to raise an eligibility concern after the match has taken place. All incidents should be raised through the official process. If you have any questions on eligibility, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk
- **Someone raises an eligibility concern weeks/days before a match:** We would not expect any participant to be challenged on their eligibility directly before an event. If there is a concern before an event takes place, please raise a concern through the eligibility process outlined above. All concerns should be sent to trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk where the England Hockey team will support you.
- **Someone raises an eligibility concern during or after a match:** We would not expect any participant to be challenged on their eligibility during an event. If a member of team raises a concern, and the player is unknown to you through conversations with your area or England Hockey, you should direct the person to raise an eligibility concern post-match. All incidents should be raised through the official process after such an event takes place. If you have any questions on eligibility, please contact trans.policy@englandhockey.co.uk
- **If a player is known to be participating in an ineligible category:** If it is confidently known that a player is participating in a category for which they are ineligible, the following steps should be taken. This should only apply if the umpire or official is aware of an ineligible player. If there is any doubt of ineligibility, the player should be allowed to participate, and follow up action taken through the correct channels.

Pre / during the match

- If the umpire or official feels confident and it is appropriate, they may raise the issue directly with the club at the time of the game. However, this approach should be undertaken with respect, as it may lead to confrontation during the game or accusations of prejudice. If there is any doubt of ineligibility, the player should be allowed to participate, and follow up action taken through the correct channels.



Post-Match

- The recommended and primary course of action is to report the matter to the league after the game. This ensures that the concern is managed through the appropriate processes and in accordance with established protocols for addressing eligibility issues.
- **You oversee or overhear cause for concern on bullying, harassment or discrimination against a known or unknown trans player before a match:** If you suspect discriminatory behaviour is occurring, it's imperative to report it whilst being mindful of our [Safeguard](#) policy. All discrimination concerns linked to this trans policy should be sent through the dispute process to England Hockey. Should you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a transgender individual or require advice or guidance, please don't hesitate to reach out to the club Welfare Officer or the England Hockey Safeguarding team at safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk. For any form of disciplinary issues, the disciplinary regulations process should be followed.
- **You oversee or overhear cause for concern on bullying, harassment or discrimination against a known or unknown trans player during a match:** If you suspect discriminatory behaviour is occurring, it's imperative to report it whilst being mindful of our [Safeguard](#) policy. All discrimination concerns linked to this trans policy should be sent through the dispute process to England Hockey. Should you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a transgender individual or require advice or guidance, please don't hesitate to reach out to the club Welfare Officers or the England Hockey Safeguarding team at safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk. For any form of disciplinary issues, the disciplinary regulations process should be followed.
- **You oversee or overhear cause for concern on bullying, harassment or discrimination against a known or unknown trans player after a match:** If you suspect discriminatory behaviour is occurring, it's imperative to report it whilst being mindful of our [Safeguard](#) policy. All discrimination concerns linked to this trans policy should be sent through the dispute process to England Hockey. Should you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a transgender individual or require advice or guidance, please don't hesitate to reach out to the club Welfare Officers or the England Hockey Safeguarding team at safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk. For any form of disciplinary issues, the disciplinary regulations process should be followed.