



# Gender Eligibility Guidelines for Competition

# Contents

---

Introduction .....	3
1. Categorisation of Competition Formats .....	3
2. Determining Gender Eligibility for Women’s (or Girls’) or Men’s Open (or Boys’ Open) Categories .....	5
3. Competition Entry .....	6
4. Changes to former ‘Men’s’ competition categories .....	6
5. Changes to former ‘Men’s’ ranking/rating lists .....	6
6. Changes to former ‘Open’ event formats .....	7
7. Mixed Competitions .....	7
8. TTE Membership .....	8
9. TTE Schools .....	8
10. Competing in an Ineligible Category .....	9
11. England/Great Britain Talent Pathway .....	9
12. Changes to Personal Details .....	10
13. Changes to Competition Category.....	10
14. Verifying Eligibility .....	11
15. Behaviour .....	11
16. General Enquiries .....	11
Appendix A1 .....	12
Appendix A2 .....	13

# Gender Eligibility Guidelines for Competition

---

## Introduction

Table Tennis England's Gender Eligibility Policy can be seen [here](#). These guidelines provide supporting information for the implementation of this policy in TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level. The purpose is to:

- Advise players, parents, coaches, clubs on the policy's application
- Assist anyone delivering a competition (volunteers, officials etc) to fulfil their role and duties effectively
- Provide practical illustrations of how the policy applies

Please also read this document in conjunction with the TTE Participation & Gender Eligibility Guidelines [here](#), which includes advice on:

- *Venues & Facilities including toilets, changing rooms and showers*
- *Pronouns and use of language*
- *Dress codes and playing kit*
- *Challenges faced by the transgender community*

## 1. Categorisation of Competition Formats

- 1.1 The TTE Gender Eligibility Policy applies to anyone who plays or seeks to play in a TTE Regulated Competition at a **national-ranked level** (*section A below*)
- 1.2 It applies at **all age-levels** of national-ranked competition, including U19 (Junior), U15 (Cadet) and U11 etc., and **all playing formats** – e.g. singles, doubles and teams.
- 1.3 It does not apply to a TTE Regulated Competition below a national-ranked level, including those organised by a TTE Affiliated Organisation, or to activity that is not regulated by TTE (*sections B-D below*)

1.4 The following table illustrates key competition formats and their category:

<b>Regulated Competition</b> <i>TTE membership required</i>	<b>A. National-Ranked level – all age-groups</b> This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Championships</li> <li>National Cups</li> <li>National Series</li> <li>British Clubs Leagues – Senior/ Veterans/ Women’s/Youth</li> <li>2* &amp; 4* Tournaments*</li> <li>County Championships</li> <li>English Leagues Cup Competition (ELCC)</li> <li>1* Tournaments*</li> <li>British Clubs Leagues – Cadet/Junior</li> </ul>	<b>Men’s Open (or Boys’ Open) or Women’s (or Girls’)</b> gender eligibility categories; this prioritises fairness
	<b>B. Below National-Ranked level – all age-groups</b> This includes activities by TTE affiliated organisations:** <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Leagues</li> <li>County Closed competition</li> </ul>	<b>Man and Woman</b> gender identities, on a self-identified basis; this prioritises inclusivity
<b>Non-regulated Competition</b> <i>No TTE membership required</i>	<b>C. TTE Schools programmes</b>	Eligibility determined by the relevant organisation
	<b>D. Everything that sits outside of TTE purview***</b> This includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterans’ English Table Tennis Society (VETTS)</li> <li>British Universities &amp; Colleges Sport (BUCS)****</li> <li>U3A</li> <li>Army/ Navy</li> </ul>	

Competitions in **Blue** = Compete Plus membership

Competitions in **Green** = Compete membership

\* including 1\*/2\*/4\* TTE-regulated tournaments delivered by Jersey TTA and Wales TTA

\*\* Affiliated Organisations, including Local Leagues and Counties, will continue to adhere to TTE regulations that allow self-identification at that level of play, and cannot – for instance – determine a different or separate approach for their activities

\*\*\* non-affiliated organisations are able to determine their own gender eligibility approach

\*\*\*\* any BUCS events that are agreed as TTE regulated will sit in Section A

## 2. Determining Gender Eligibility for **Women’s (or Girls’)** or **Men’s Open (or Boys’ Open)** Categories

2.1 The TTE Gender Eligibility Policy states that gender eligibility for a TTE Regulated Competition at national-ranked level is as follows:

Biological Sex	Gender Identity	Eligible Category
Male	Man/Boy	Men’s Open/Boys’ Open
Female	Transgender man (FTM)	Men’s Open/Boys’ Open
Male	Non-Binary	Men’s Open/Boys’ Open
Male	Transgender woman (MTF)	Men’s Open/Boys’ Open
Female	Woman/Girl	Women’s/Girls’
Female	Non-Binary	Women’s/Girls’

For the avoidance of doubt, this means that:

- **A player is eligible for one gender category only.** For instance, a player eligible in the *Women’s (or Girls’)* gender category cannot also choose to compete in the **Men’s Open (or Boys’ Open)** gender category, and vice versa
- **Transgender Men**, i.e., biological women who identify as men, **are eligible only to play in the Men’s Open (or Boys’ Open) gender category**
- Transgender Women, i.e., biological men who identify as women, who have previously been able to self-identify in a TTE Regulated Competition at national-ranked level, can no longer do so. **Transgender women are eligible only to play in the Men’s Open (or Boys’ Open) gender category**

2.2 Please refer to **Appendices A1 & A2** for diagrams that show eligibility for competition categories at a national-ranked level and how this relates to ranking.

### 3. Competition Entry

- 3.1 The settings in TT Leagues, for national league events, will **automatically validate** entrants against Age, Membership level and Gender eligibility. This means that players can only enter national league competitions for which they are eligible.
- 3.2 The TTE online entry system, which will be phased in for use from Season '26/27 for all regulated 1\*/2\*/4\* Tournaments and Cups/Series/Championships, will also automatically validate entrants, including Nationality (where applicable).
- 3.3 If your event – for instance, a 1\*/2\*/4\* Tournament – has a different entry process until the TTE online entry system is rolled-out for all regulated events, then entrants are expected in good faith to enter only the events for which they are eligible. Organisers will need to continue to check the validity of entrants with the TTE Membership department as usual.

### 4. Changes to former 'Men's' competition categories

- 4.1 The agreed naming conventions for TTE gender categories for competitions at a national-ranked level are now 'Men's Open (or Boys' Open)' and 'Women's' (or 'Girls').
- 4.2 Tournaments and leagues at a national-ranked level will no longer operate 'men's' and 'women's' (or 'boys' and 'girls') gender categories and will run 'Men's Open (or Boys' Open) ' and 'Women's' (or 'Girls') gender categories instead. This includes events such as 1\*/2\*/4\* and British Clubs League.
- 4.3 National Championships/ Cups/ Series will also have 'Men's Open (or Boys' Open) ' and 'Women's' (or 'Girls') gender categories. This means, for instance, that there will no longer be a 'men's national champion' – this will become 'Men's Open (or Boys' Open)' national champion'.

### 5. Changes to former 'Men's' ranking/ rating lists

- 5.1 The TTE national ranking/ rating lists will change in the same way as the gender categories for competition, as detailed in Section 4 above, to 'Men's Open (or Boys')' and 'Women's' (or 'Girls')

## 6. Changes to former 'Open' event formats

6.1 TTE has previously used "Open" to describe competition event formats in which any TTE member may enter, as follows:

**(Previous) Open:** A competition that can be entered by any individual affiliated to TTE, including reciprocal affiliations (members of other home countries) and visiting players (members of other ITTF associations) This includes 1\*/2\*/4\* Open Tournaments

**Invitation:** A nationally authorised tournament which complies with all the regulations for an Open Tournament except that it is not open to every Affiliated Member. This includes National Championships, National Series and National Cups.

**Closed:** A competition that is authorised and regulated by a TTE affiliated organisation (county, club or league) and restricted to its bona fide membership.

6.2 'Open' terminology will now be used as part of gender eligibility. An event format previously termed as an "Open" event will now be referred to as an **"All-comers"** event. The definition itself will not change.

6.3 'All-comers' has been chosen as it is a term in widespread use in the sporting landscape and is well understood in this context. Table Tennis England members also voted in favour of using this terminology.

6.4 TTE recommends that non-regulated and independent events, as shown in parts C and D of the Table in Section 1, follow similar definitions for event formats in order to avoid creating confusion with gender eligibility.

## 7. Mixed Competitions

7.1 There will be no change to mixed gender competitions. Mixed doubles at national- ranked level will comprise of one Men's Open (or Boys' Open)-eligible player and one Women's (or Girls)-eligible player.

## 8. TTE Membership

- 8.1 TTE Membership and the membership onboarding process will establish gender eligibility for competition **at a national-ranked competition level and below a national-ranked competition level.**
- 8.2 The competition categories for which a player may be eligible at different levels of competition may be the same or different e.g. a transwoman will be eligible for the 'Men's Open (or Boys' Open)' category.
- 8.3 All TTE membership applications will include a combination question of *biological sex and gender identity* to determine gender eligibilities at and below national-ranked levels, including for *Supporter, Club Play, Home Nations* reciprocal memberships/upgrades, and *International* reciprocal memberships/upgrades. 'Visiting players' (e.g. Home Nations and International reciprocal memberships) will be eligible for TTE competition according to TTE policy, which may be different to their home association.
- 8.4 Existing TTE members will be required to submit new gender eligibility information at the point of membership renewal, and to sign updated Terms & Conditions including changes relating to this policy.
- 8.5 Bulk membership applications from, for example, clubs and leagues, will need to use updated templates that are available from Table Tennis England, which include the required new information.
- 8.6 The TTE membership type required for a Regulated Competition (e.g. *Compete or Compete Plus*) is determined by the specific competition and is not affected by the Gender Eligibility policy.

## 9. TTE Schools

- 9.1 TTE Schools activity, including those organised with the support of the Jack Petchey Foundation, are unaffected by this policy (see Section 1 above).
- 9.2 However, competitions that require a TTE membership profile for the purposes of practical support and delivery – such as competition management in the 'TT Leagues' platform or future tournament management functionality – will include a combination question of *biological sex and gender identity* as per the standard process for TTE membership.

## 10. Competing in an Ineligible Category

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of a player to accurately disclose their biological sex and to compete in the correct gender eligibility category.
- 10.2 If, after a competition, a member is found to be ineligible to have competed in a particular gender category at a regulated event, then typically the player's match results will be expunged and, where relevant to a team/league event format, retrospectively recorded as a match loss by an unnamed player. This is the same process followed for when a player is declared ineligible because of, for example, age or nationality. Please refer to the event documentation for each competition format for further guidance.
- 10.3 Other amendments may also be necessary to correct and update the results or records of an ineligible player.

## 11. England/Great Britain Talent Pathway

- 11.1 Should a player participate in an ITTF regulated event at youth or senior level (either through self-funding or through selection), the player will be eligible to compete in the category specified by the relevant International Policy, which may align directly with their biological sex.
- 11.2 These events include England representation (e.g. World Championships), Team England representation (e.g. Commonwealth Games), and Great Britain representation (e.g. Olympic Games), and when a player is competing as an individual in a WTT competition.
- 11.3 When a player is selected to the first tier of the England national pathway (the national U13 training programme; 'England Hopes'), the player will be informed that should they reach a stage where they are selected or their application to compete in an International event is endorsed by Table Tennis England, they will be required to compete in the category specified by the relevant International Policy. The same approach applies for the subsequent GB programmes that players will feed into after England Hopes.
- 11.4 If TTE national ranking eligibility conflicts with ITTF competition eligibility, such as differences in age or gender eligibilities, then the ITTF competition results will be ineligible for inclusion in TTE domestic rankings.
- 11.5 Schools', Universities' and VETTS' international representative programmes fall under the control of other regulating bodies and are separate to this policy.

## 12. Changes to Personal Details

- 12.1 Once a TTE membership is created, only a TTE administrator can update key data fields including date of birth, nationality and gender. It is important for Rankings/Ratings that this process is carefully managed to ensure that an error-correction is appropriately back-dated, or that a new change takes effect only from a specific point onwards.
- 12.2 If a member's gender identity has been recorded incorrectly and needs updating, please contact [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk).

## 13. Changes to Competition Category

- 13.1 If a member assigned female sex at birth and competing in the Women's (or Girls') category chooses to change their gender identity to transman, the member can move from the Women's (or Girls') category to the Men's Open (or Boys' Open) category at a national-ranked level without a stand down period. The member must notify TTE of the change in gender identity by contacting [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk).
- 13.2 If a member assigned female sex at birth and competing in the Women's (or Girls') category, chooses to change their gender identity to non-binary, the member continues to compete in the Women's (or Girls') category at a national-ranked level. The member must still notify TTE of the change in gender identity by contacting [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk).
- 13.3 If a member assigned female sex at birth and competing in the Men's Open (or Boys' Open) category, chooses to change their gender identity and wishes to move into the Women's (or Girls') category, the member must apply to TTE for approval to move using the procedure outlined in 14.2. There may be a 2-year stand down period that applies before the member can compete in the Women's (or Girls') category. The 2-year period is calculated from the last game in which the member played in the Men's Open (or Boys' Open) category.
- 13.4 If a member assigned male sex at birth and competing in the Men's Open (or Boys' Open) category, chooses to change their gender identity, there is no change to the competition category for which the member is eligible and no stand down period applies. The member must still notify TTE of the change in gender identity by contacting [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk).

## 14. Verifying Eligibility

- 14.1 If a player wishes to check which competition category they are eligible to compete in, they can contact the TTE membership team for advice on [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk).
- 14.2 If a player seeks to change competition categories into the Women's (or Girls') category or a player's eligibility requires verification, following receipt of a written request, TTE will carry out a sensitive and confidential review of the circumstances and may take any appropriate steps to determine the player's eligibility. Ordinarily, TTE will request a copy of a birth certificate and any other relevant information to verify and determine a player's gender eligibility.
- 14.3 If a person disagrees with a TTE decision regarding their gender eligibility, then an appeal can be made to a TTE Appeals Panel. The appeal process can be found [here](#).

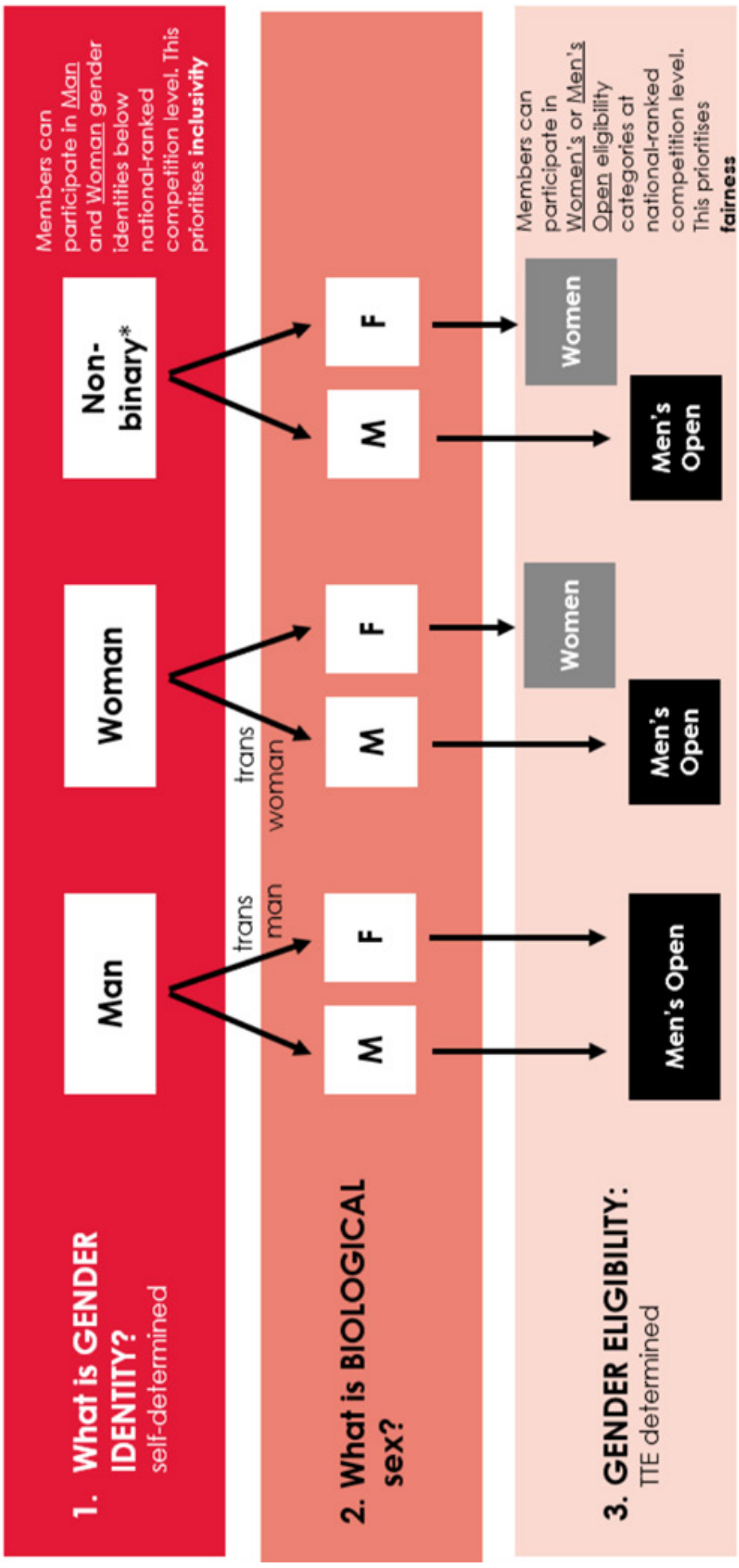
## 15. Behaviour

- 15.1 Behaviour that intimidates, humiliates or makes a participant feel unsafe does not represent the values that TTE seeks to promote and will not be tolerated in table tennis. If you witness inappropriate or bullying behaviour and wish to make a complaint, or tell us about something that has happened, please use this [form](#).
- 15.2 The eligibility of a player shall not be questioned during any event or competition. Any instances of such behaviour or concerns must be reported to [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk).

## 16. General Enquiries

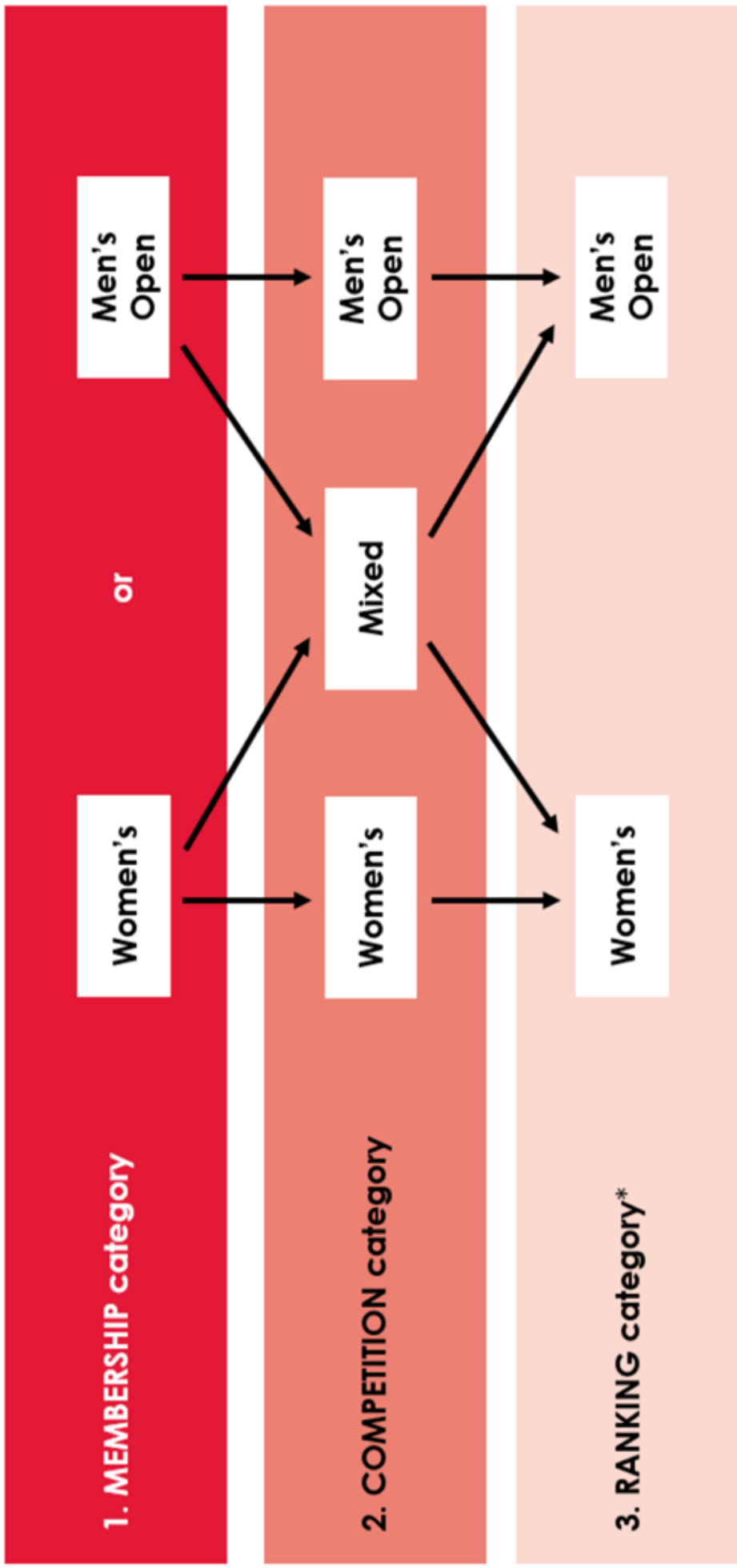
- 16.1 If you have a query about these Competition Guidelines or their application, please contact [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk).

# TTE Gender Eligibilities



\* individuals who identify as non-binary will be eligible for their biological sex below national-ranked competition level

# TTE National-Ranked Competitions



\* mixed gender head-to-head matches only eligible for national ranking if both participants <=600pts