

GENDER ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Contents	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Definitions and Interpretation	2
3. Scope	3
4. Eligibility Requirements for TTE Regulated Competition at a National-Ranked Level	4
5. Personal Responsibility	4
6. Contacting Us	4
7. Continued Involvement	4

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Table Tennis England (TTE) wants to ensure that the sport is welcoming, accessible and attractive to everyone. We celebrate diversity in our sport and are committed to developing a culture that is as inclusive as it can be, and which reflects TTE's core values: Rally Together, Everyone's Game, Play to Win. Behaviour that intimidates, humiliates or makes a participant feel unsafe is not welcome in table tennis and we encourage participants to report concerns to TTE at: help@tabletennisengland.co.uk.
- 1.2 In 2025 a working group formed of people with relevant technical knowledge and expertise concluded that table tennis was a 'gender affected' sport. This term is defined in the Equality Act 2010, and applied to table tennis means that it is a sport in which the physical strength, stamina or the physique of an average person of one Sex would put them at a disadvantage compared to the average person of the other Sex, if they were both to compete against each other in a table tennis match. TTE engaged in an extensive consultation, inviting submissions from all involved in table tennis. It carefully considered the replies, and reviewed the Equality Act 2010, a UK Supreme Court decision on the definition of Sex, other Applicable Laws, and relevant scientific evidence. The review concluded that with respect to the fairness of competition, eligibility criteria were required for a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level, in which a Player may be awarded ranking points for participation. This policy is the outcome of that review.
- 1.3 The purpose of the policy is to provide clear eligibility criteria which enable a Player to compete in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level in a competition category that provides fairness for all Players. TTE's position is that Gender Identity should not be a barrier to participation except where necessary. This policy balances the openness and accessibility of table tennis with the necessity to ensure fairness of competition in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level. The scientific and legal considerations regarding gender eligibility in sport are continuing to develop and TTE will monitor these developments, including any guidance published by the International Table Tennis Federation, and will make changes, where required, consequent to those developments.
- 1.4 This policy is to be read in conjunction with the TTE Participation & Gender Eligibility Guidelines, and the TTE Gender Eligibility Guidelines for Competition.
- 1.5.1 This policy will come into effect on 1 August 2026 for the 2026/27 Season.

2. Definitions and Interpretation

- 2.1 Capitalised terms in this policy, including in the Introduction, have the following meaning or interpretation:
- a) Affiliated Organisation means a County Association, Local League, club or other organisation that is affiliated to Table Tennis England (TTE)
 - b) Applicable Laws mean any, and all, laws, statutes, regulations, decisions, rulings, directives, codes of practice, government policies, enactments or instruments (including national, regional, local or principal laws, regulations or by-laws of any kind whatsoever) relevant to this Policy
 - c) Gender Identity means a person's self-identified sex, which may be the same as, or different to, the person's biological sex
 - d) "Men's Open" refers to a category of competition in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level

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- e) Non-Binary means a Gender Identity that does not fit into the binary definition of male or female
 - f) Player means someone who plays in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level
 - g) Regulated Competition means a competition regulated by TTE
 - h) Sex means biological sex, either male or female, and is usually assigned at birth. This policy uses the word Sex and the term “biological sex” interchangeably
 - i) Talent Pathway Activity means an activity that provides support or development opportunities to an athlete who is on the TTE performance and talent pathway
 - j) Transgender or Trans means a person whose Gender Identity is different from their assigned sex at birth. This can include:
 - i) Transgender or Trans girl/woman: someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a female. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF (which is an abbreviation for male-to-female)
 - ii) Transgender or Trans boy/man: someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a male. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM (which is an abbreviation for female-to-male)
 - k) TTE means Table Tennis England, which is the governing body of table tennis in England
 - l) “Women’s” refers to a category of competition in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level
- 2.2 Unless the context otherwise requires, words denoting the singular include the plural and vice versa.
- 3. Scope**
- 3.1 This policy applies to anyone who plays or seeks to play in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national- ranked level.
- 3.2 This policy does not apply to:
- a) coaches, match officials, volunteers or any other role in table tennis
 - b) a TTE Regulated Competition below a national-ranked level
 - c) a TTE Regulated Competition below a national-ranked level that is delivered by a TTE Affiliated Organisation
 - d) a Talent Pathway Activity that is not a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level
 - e) recreational or community table tennis
- 3.3 This policy does not apply to any competition that is not a TTE Regulated Competition. TTE acknowledges that other table tennis competition organisers may adopt TTE policies as part of their own rules and regulations and participants should check the eligibility criteria of a competition that is not a TTE Regulated Competition before entering.

4. Eligibility Requirements for TTE Regulated Competition at a National-Ranked Level

- 4.1 There are two categories of competition in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level: the Women's category and the Men's Open category.
- 4.2 A Player whose biological sex is female **and** whose Gender Identity is woman or Non-Binary is eligible to participate in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level in the "Women's" category.
- 4.3 A Player whose biological sex is male or female, **and** whose Gender Identity is man, Trans man, Trans woman or Non-Binary is eligible to participate in a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level in the "Men's Open" category.
- 4.4 The Eligibility Criteria for each category is shown in the following chart:

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR REGULATED COMPETITION OR EVENTS AT NATIONAL-RANKED LEVEL		
Biological sex	Gender identity	Eligible category
Male	Man / Boy	Men's Open
Female	Transgender man (FTM)	Men's Open
Male	Non-Binary	Men's Open
Male	Transgender woman (MTF)	Men's Open
Female	Woman / Girl	Women's
Female	Non-Binary	Women's

5. Personal Responsibility

- 5.1 It is a Player's personal responsibility to ensure that they enter a competition category for which they are eligible.
- 5.2 It is a condition of entry into a TTE Regulated Competition at a national-ranked level that a Player agrees to cooperate and provide TTE with the information required to monitor eligibility under this policy. A Player consents to the lawful collection, processing, disclosure and use of information, including sensitive personal data, to enable TTE to fulfil its responsibilities under this policy.

6. Contacting Us

- 6.1 If you have any enquiries about this policy, please contact TTE using the following [form](#). All enquiries will be treated sensitively in accordance with TTE's regulations and procedures, and data protection legislation. A copy of TTE's privacy policy can be found [here](#).

7. Continued Involvement

- 7.1 Everyone has a place in table tennis and TTE encourages individuals who decide not to play, to be involved in table tennis through coaching, officiating and volunteering.