

SPORTS

The concept of fair play, the bedrock of all competitive sport, is undermined by transgender sport policy. It is a long-established principle that fair and meaningful competition is achieved by grouping different body types into different categories: age, weight, and importantly by male and female sex.

Males have a well-known physical performance advantage over females. Put simply, male bodies are **bigger, faster and stronger** on average than female bodies. In mixed-sex competition women would simply never win and our best sportswomen would be unheard of.

In both UK and international law it is lawful to exclude the male sex from female competition to uphold fairness and safety for women. However, recently, we have seen the female category being opened up to transgender athletes who were born male by most sport governing bodies throughout the world. This sort of transgender sport policy is hailed as inclusive, even when it works against the inclusion of females in safe and fair sport, denying team places and podium wins to women.

In Scotland many sports clubs now allow males to compete as female if they show a doctor's note confirming that they have lowered testosterone into the 'female range'. Others require no evidence at all. From 2015 to 2021 the **Olympic guidelines** stated that males who identify as women should be eligible for female competition if their testosterone is $<10\text{nmol/L}$ for 12 months. There was no good evidence and no system in place to **monitor compliance**. In late 2021 the **IOC made a new statement** moving away from testosterone suppression to a position of "no presumed advantage", to widespread ridicule.



Hannah Mouncey

These policies do not guarantee safe and fair competition for female athletes and are based on [flawed science](#). Seventeen peer reviewed studies show that even [testosterone reduction for twelve months](#) does not eliminate male advantage.

In 2021 the Sports Councils Equality Group published [revised guidance](#) for sport governing bodies across the UK concluding that **female sports could either be inclusive of males, or uphold fairness, but not both**. Last month [UK Athletics](#) announced they will follow World Athletics in restricting the female category to those born female, and it is hoped other governing bodies will follow.

The Scottish Government's school guidance for trans pupils still allows boys to play in girls' sport and it has also funded trans groups LEAP Sports and Equality Network for a [Charter Award](#) for sports clubs to allow trans athletes to compete in their self-identified gender.

We must keep sport single-sex to maintain fairness, safety and equality of opportunity.

Please visit our website and follow us on social media to learn more.



For Women Scotland

W: forwomen.scot T: [@ForWomenScot](https://twitter.com/ForWomenScot)

