

FEBRUARY 2025

FENCING IRELAND

# TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY INCLUSION POLICY



[www.fencingireland.net](http://www.fencingireland.net)

# Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Fencing Ireland's values	2
Scope	2
Consultation	2
<b>General regulations .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Gender data collection and registration of gender	3
Competition organisers	3
Pronouns	3
Transphobia and other prejudices	3
Education, engagement, and feedback	4
<b>Transgender and non-binary regulations .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Anti-doping	5
Ranked competitions	5
Transgender men	5
Transgender women	5
Updates to regulations	5
Unranked events	5
<b>Queries .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Appendix - 2015 IOC Policy .....</b>	<b>7</b>

## Introduction

### Fencing Ireland's values

Fencing Ireland is committed to fostering a respectful, open, and inclusive environment in Irish fencing without discrimination. We respect and value the diversity both of our members and society and feel that everyone has a place in sport and should be treated with dignity.

This policy sets out Fencing Ireland's regulations regarding gender and identity in Irish fencing including competition. The issue of gender identity is a very important one to many people and it is one which has particular implications in sport.

Fencing Ireland recognises our inability, given our resources, to undertake bespoke research in the area and so, for competition regulations, we must remain largely guided by relevant international bodies such as the FIE and the IOC.

Fencing Ireland also recognises the power of sport as a means for integration and finding a community of like-minded individuals and so wish to provide a route for everyone to engage in fencing who wishes to do so.

### Scope

This policy applies to competitions organised in the Republic of Ireland under the auspices of Fencing Ireland from the Cadet age category and older.

It is common and normal in fencing for training sessions to occur without splitting genders, there is no need for this to change and this document does not set any regulations regarding gender in training.

### Consultation

This policy was approved by the board of Fencing Ireland and was written after consultation with both the Fencing Ireland Diversity and Inclusion and Women in Fencing committees.

## General regulations

### Gender data collection and registration of gender

When collecting information on members, Fencing Ireland will ask for a member's gender giving the following options:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other

A fencer's stated gender when registering on our membership system and the category in which they compete do not need to match.

Where a fencer wishes to compete in a category different to their sex assigned at birth, they should register that information with Fencing Ireland and submit all relevant documentation to support the change.

This can be done by emailing [gender@fencingireland.net](mailto:gender@fencingireland.net) - if you are unsure about what should be submitted, please get in touch and Fencing Ireland will work through it with you.

In keeping with the structures set out below, fencers will be asked to declare their category for ranked competitions for a season and may only change it between seasons or a maximum of once mid-season and only if they fulfil all the regulations set out below.

Any required medical records submitted will be treated with the utmost sensitivity and will not be shared with any party unnecessarily. Fencing Ireland's privacy policy is available here: <https://www.fencingireland.net/wp-content/uploads/DATA-PROTECTION-AND-PRIVACY-NOTICE-FENCING-IRELANDRev122393.pdf>

### Competition organisers

Where a competition organiser has a query related to the eligibility of a fencer to compete in a specific event, their step should be to email [gender@fencingireland.net](mailto:gender@fencingireland.net) for clarification.

It is our aim that the fencers themselves are not requested to state their eligibility multiple times to different competition organisers, rather the centralised Fencing Ireland system should be utilised.

### Pronouns

Fencing Ireland recognises each person's right to be addressed in a manner that fits their identity. Fencing Ireland will endeavour to ensure that all members of our community are referred to with the pronouns which they feel best represents them.

### Transphobia and other prejudices

In keeping with our dignity and respect policy, Fencing Ireland has a no tolerance policy to any form of abuse or prejudice. This includes transphobia. Fencing Ireland aims to ensure that Irish fencing provides a welcoming and

accepting community to all members of the LGBTQIA+ community as well as to any other minority communities.

### **Education, engagement, and feedback**

Fencing Ireland recognises that the writing and approval of a policy like this is the start of a process rather than its conclusion. We are committed to using the launch of this policy as an opportunity for engagement - Fencing Ireland members will have the opportunity to provide feedback and receive clarification on any questions they may have.

As part of this policy, Fencing Ireland will engage in and promote an ongoing programme of education and inclusion training for our administrators, volunteers, officials, clubs, and any other member of our community who is interested.

We are also always open to feedback on any area of our operations. If you have feedback on this specific area you may get in touch via email on [gender@fencingireland.net](mailto:gender@fencingireland.net) or via one of our relevant subcommittees. Details on our subcommittees are available on [www.fencingireland.net/contacts-officials/](http://www.fencingireland.net/contacts-officials/)

# Transgender and non-binary regulations

## Anti-doping

All members of the Fencing Ireland community must act in accordance with anti-doping regulations at all times. If hormonal medications taken for the purposes of gender transition appear on the WADA prohibited list, they must be covered by a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) as with any other medication on the prohibited list.

All queries regarding anti-doping regulations should be addressed to [antidoping@fencingireland.net](mailto:antidoping@fencingireland.net)

## Ranked competitions

The regulations in this section are applicable in competitive events carrying Fencing Ireland ranking points or in any other event with a national title, e.g. National Club Championships. In these events, fencers may compete in the category corresponding to their sex assigned at birth without restriction.<sup>1</sup> For those fencers who wish to compete in a category different to their sex assigned at birth, the following regulations apply.

Members wishing to change the category of event they enter may do so either in between seasons or a maximum of once mid-season.

## Transgender men

There will be no restrictions on transgender men taking part in their choice of event unless they have undergone or are undergoing Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) in which case they will be eligible for the men's category only.

## Transgender women

For transgender women to take part in women's events the relevant FIE regulations will apply. Currently, this is the 2015 version of the IOC regulations. The crucial part of these regulations is: "The athlete must demonstrate that her total testosterone level in serum has been below 10 nmol/L for at least 12 months prior to her first competition." See the Appendix for the full document of regulations as they stand.

Transgender women may take part in men's events with no restrictions.

## Updates to regulations

Fencing Ireland will normally adapt our regulations on this matter to stay in line with FIE norms. Such adaptations will require the approval of the board of Fencing Ireland

## Unranked events

Organisers of non-ranked competitions may, if they so choose, apply to Fencing Ireland for their events to run in a manner where fencers may take part in whichever gender they wish with no additional requirements or regulations. This can be a different gender to that in which they compete normally. Fencers may only compete in one gender of events at a competition.

---

<sup>1</sup> Except in the case of transgender men undergoing HRT, see below for more information.

Applications for competitions to be run in this manner must be made before the start of the season (1 September) each year and entry forms should clearly state that this is the case.

This structure is not permissible for ranked events or events carrying national titles (e.g. as a team event the National Club Championships is not ranked but it does carry a national title and so is not eligible to be run with this set of regulations).

## Queries

All queries related to this policy may be addressed to [gender@fencingireland.net](mailto:gender@fencingireland.net)

# Appendix - 2015 IOC Policy



INTERNATIONAL  
OLYMPIC  
COMMITTEE

## IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism November 2015

### Participants:

Prof Dr Uğur Erdener	Chairman, IOC Medical & Scientific Commission
Prof Arne Ljungqvist	Former Chairman, IOC Medical Commission
Dr Stéphane Bermon	Monaco Institute of Sports Medicine & Surgery, IAAF Medical & Scientific Senior Consultant
Michael Beloff, QC	Barrister, Blackstone Chambers
Prof Gerard Conway	Professor of Clinical Medicine, University College London
Prof Myron Genel	Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics and Senior Research Scientist, Yale Child Health Research Center Yale University School of Medicine
Ms Joanna Harper	Chief Medical Physicist, Radiation Oncology, Providence Portland Medical Center
Prof Angelica Linden Hirschberg	Department of Woman & Child Health, Division of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Karolinska Institutet
Prof Dr Maria Jose Martinez Patino	Faculty of Sport Sciences, University of Vigo
Prof Martin Ritzén	Professor Emeritus, Dept of Woman and Child Health Karolinska Institutet
Dr Eric Vilain	Professor of Human Genetics, Pediatrics and Urology Director, Center for Gender-Based Biology Chief, Medical Genetics, Department of Pediatrics Co-director, Clinical Genomic Center David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
Jonathan Taylor	Partner, Bird & Bird
Liz Riley	Barrister, Bird & Bird
Dr Robin Mitchell	Vice-Chair, IOC Medical & Scientific Commission
Dr Rania Elwani	Member, IOC Medical & Scientific Commission
Dr Vidya Mohamed-Ali	Member, IOC Medical & Scientific Commission
Prof Yannis Pitsiladis	Member, IOC Medical & Scientific Commission
Dr Richard Budgett	IOC Medical & Scientific Director
Dr Lars Engebretsen	IOC Head of Scientific Activities
Christian Thill	IOC Senior Legal Counsel

Château de Vidy, 1007 Lausanne, Switzerland | Tel +41 21 621 6111 | Fax +41 21 621 6216 | [www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org)



## 1) Transgender guidelines

- A. Since the 2003 Stockholm Consensus on Sex Reassignment in Sports, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of autonomy of gender identity in society, as reflected in the laws of many jurisdictions worldwide.
- B. There are also, however, jurisdictions where autonomy of gender identity is not recognised in law at all.
- C. It is necessary to ensure insofar as possible that trans athletes are not excluded from the opportunity to participate in sporting competition.
- D. The overriding sporting objective is and remains the guarantee of fair competition. Restrictions on participation are appropriate to the extent that they are necessary and proportionate to the achievement of that objective.
- E. To require surgical anatomical changes as a pre-condition to participation is not necessary to preserve fair competition and may be inconsistent with developing legislation and notions of human rights.
- F. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to undermine in any way the requirement to comply with the World Anti-Doping Code and the WADA International Standards.
- G. These guidelines are a living document and will be subject to review in light of any scientific or medical developments.

In this spirit, the IOC Consensus Meeting agreed the following guidelines to be taken into account by sports organisations when determining eligibility to compete in male and female competition:

- 1. Those who transition from female to male are eligible to compete in the male category without restriction.
- 2. Those who transition from male to female are eligible to compete in the female category under the following conditions:
  - 2.1. The athlete has declared that her gender identity is female. The declaration cannot be changed, for sporting purposes, for a minimum of four years.
  - 2.2. The athlete must demonstrate that her total testosterone level in serum has been below 10 nmol/L for at least 12 months prior to her first competition (with the requirement for any longer period to be based on a confidential case-by-case evaluation, considering whether or not 12 months is a sufficient length of time to minimize any advantage in women's competition).

Error! Reference source not found.

Page 2/3

INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

Château de Vidy, 1007 Lausanne, Switzerland | Tel +41 21 621 6111 | Fax +41 21 621 6216 | [www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org)

2.3. The athlete's total testosterone level in serum must remain below 10 nmol/L throughout the period of desired eligibility to compete in the female category.

2.4. Compliance with these conditions may be monitored by testing. In the event of non-compliance, the athlete's eligibility for female competition will be suspended for 12 months.

## 2) Hyperandrogenism in female athletes

In response to the interim award dated 24 July 2015 in Chand v AFI and IAAF CAS 2014/A/3759, the IOC Consensus Meeting recommended:

- Rules should be in place for the protection of women in sport and the promotion of the principles of fair competition.
- The IAAF, with support from other International Federations, National Olympic Committees and other sports organisations, is encouraged to revert to CAS with arguments and evidence to support the reinstatement of its hyperandrogenism rules.
- To avoid discrimination, if not eligible for female competition the athlete should be eligible to compete in male competition.

Error! Reference source not found.

Page 3/3

INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

Château de Vidy, 1007 Lausanne, Switzerland | Tel +41 21 621 6111 | Fax +41 21 621 6216 | [www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org)