



LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND
CRICKET FOUNDATION

Transgender Policy

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Policy

Following an extensive consultation, the ECB Board has agreed an updated policy position in relation to transgender participation in women's professional cricket.

In reaching its conclusions, the ECB has considered the interaction between fairness, safety and inclusion, all of which are considered important.

The consultation process was extended last year following the decision of the International Cricket Commission (ICC) to move to a model whereby eligibility for women's international cricket will be determined by whether an individual has undergone male puberty.

Having considered wide-ranging views gathered during the consultation, as well as in consultations conducted during 2023, and the relevant science and medical evidence, the ECB has decided that from 2025 it will adopt the same approach as the ICC for women's professional domestic cricket. This provides consistency, given that a primary purpose of the top end of the domestic structure is to produce international players.

The detailed policy will now be developed over the coming months, in consultation with stakeholders, and is due to be formally in place in time for the 2025 domestic season. It will apply to Tiers 1 and 2 of the new women's domestic structure from 2025, as well as The Hundred Women's competition.

The ECB is striving to become the most inclusive team sport, and recreational cricket and Tier 3 of the domestic structure – which comprises National Counties – will continue to use the existing social model, where individuals are accepted in the gender they identify as. A Disparity Policy is already in place to ensure safety whereby clubs and leagues across the country are able to address the disparity between players participating in a match well above or below their ability where there is a concern that a serious injury could occur, irrespective of their gender.

Considerable time has been taken to reach this policy position. The ECB recognises that transgender participation is a complex area, with many strongly held views, and it is impossible to balance all the considerations. We want everyone to feel included and welcome in our sport, and believe the position reached strikes an appropriate balance by ensuring fairness in the elite game while ensuring inclusivity at a recreational level, with specific safeguards in place to manage disparities and ensure safety.

Reactive Q&A

Why have you made this decision?

We have made this decision after considerable consultation. Given the professional domestic game is the direct pathway for international cricket, this decision ensures we will have a domestic professional structure that mirrors eligibility for international competition and maximises the pool of eligible international players from the domestic setup.

What were the views of people in your consultation?

There were a range of different views as you would expect, given the impassioned views which are held around this issue. Generally, people leading the administration and delivery of the women's professional game within the ECB and Regions were in favour of being synchronous with the ICC policy and adopting a medical model based on male puberty instead of the current social model.

Some of those consulted cited increased fairness for cis gender women and girls by protecting the women's game for those assigned female at birth. Concerns cited in previous consultations were raised again, about the perceived biological advantage of transgender women conferred from going through male puberty.

However, some stakeholders also argued that a male puberty model is less inclusive for transgender people and that it limits the upper pathway for talented transgender cricketers and may impact further down the pathways and academies where selectors have an eye on regulations for professional contracts.

Who did you consult with?

We consulted with a range of representative stakeholders and organisations including Cricket administrators across ECB and Women's Regional Structure, Professional female cricketers and support staff (e.g. coaches), LGBTQ+ and sex-based rights advocacy networks and organisations, as well as academics. Additionally, we spoke with a range of NGBs across cricket and other sports to understand and learn from their approach. Our Science & Medical team conducted a detailed review of existing scientific literature.

How will you determine who has been through male puberty?

The detailed policy is being developed over the coming months, to be ready for the 2025 season. Given the ICC only published its detailed policy on 30 September 2024, we will be reviewing that to understand how we can best align our approach.

What medical evidence have you considered as part of this?

The ECB's Chief Medical Officer has produced a separate review of medical evidence, which should be used as the official perspective on medical evidence relating to transgender and non-binary athletes.

Medical evidence is clear that going through male puberty results in profound differences in athletic performance through strength, speed and stamina. There are an increasing number of peer reviewed articles that describe the multiple advantages for those born male and who have been through male puberty. These functional differences are evident across almost all sports with multiple performance differences.

What does this mean for non-binary people?

Subject to approval of the full policy by the Regulatory Board in January 2025, non-binary people assigned female at birth, and who have not gone through male puberty, will be eligible to play in women's cricket.