



## **OUR STATEMENT ON THE NEW GUIDELINES FOR TRANSGENDER PARTICIPATION IN SPORT PUBLISHED BY THE UK SPORTS COUNCILS**

Today, the five Sports Councils have jointly published guidance on a new approach to transgender inclusion in sport, following a lengthy process in which they consulted widely with all stakeholders including Fair Play For Women.

The independent review concluded that the inclusion of transgender people into the female sex category cannot guarantee fair and safe competition for women and girls.

The new guidance states *“This is due to retained differences in strength, stamina and physique between the average woman compared with the average transgender woman or non-binary person recorded male at birth, with or without testosterone suppression”*.

Dr Nicola Williams, director of Fair Play For Women said:

*“It is now increasingly recognised that the existing approach to transgender inclusion in sport is out of date and no longer fit for purpose. We commend the Sports Councils for taking the lead to address this difficult and sensitive issue.”*

*“This comprehensive review confirms what we all know: sex matters in sport. That’s why we have always needed a separate protected category for females, and still do.”*

*“It’s good to see all the UK’s sports councils confirming that reserving a sport category for biological females is both lawful and necessary to guarantee the fair and safe inclusion of women in sport.”*

*“This guidance puts an end to the idea that it is possible to allow people who were born male into the female sports category without women and girls paying the price.”*

The new guidance makes clear that if a sport is sex-affected, it will now need to decide whether to either prioritise transgender inclusion or to prioritise fair and safe competition for females. Where possible, it should offer more than one version of their sport to deliver both priorities.

Dr Williams said:

*“We welcome the new clarity regarding science and the law, but we are disappointed that the Sports Councils have failed to give a clear signal that sport must always provide safe and fair access for women and girls”.*

*“The option for trans people to play **in the sex category of their choice**, despite clear evidence that this is unfair and, in some sports, unsafe for women, should have been clearly ruled out.”*

*“It cannot be right that a sport could continue to prioritise trans people’s wishes over fairness and safety for women.”*

*“The Sports Councils have put forward an option that is fair and inclusive for everyone in sport: an Open category for all alongside a fair and safe female sex category. If sports really want to be maximally inclusive, that’s what they’ll do”.*

*“We now look forward to working with sports bodies to help them refresh their approach and choose the option put forward by the Sports Councils that ensures there is a place for everyone in sport.”*

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

[Fair Play For Women](#) is a campaigning and consultancy group which raises awareness, provides evidence and analysis, and supports policy makers to protect the rights of women and girls in the UK. We have been consulted on sport policy by national and international sports bodies including the International Olympic Committee, World Athletics, World Rugby, England Rugby, Wales Rugby, Sport England, and UK Sport, as well as for this latest review.

Dr Nicola Williams is a research scientist specialising in human biology. She is regularly called upon for expert scientific and legal input on issues relating to sex-based rights, especially sport, prisons, language and data, in national and regional media including BBC TV and radio, Sky News, GB News, national newspapers, and radio in the USA, Australia and elsewhere.

Dr Williams is available for interview and comment.

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