

ISA Principles for Gender Questioning (trans) – Participation in Sporting Events

ISA recognises the legal definition of "sex" under the Equality Act 2010, as clarified by the UK Supreme Court, to mean biological sex as assigned at birth. In the context of competitive sport, this may impact how participation categories are defined and applied.

- Participation in ISA sporting events must first and foremost ensure the safety and fairness of all competitors. Schools are required to assess these factors before entering teams or individuals into events and must refer to the eligibility criteria set out by the ISA in respect to individual events. The ISA eligibility criteria will be decided in accordance with guidance provided by Sport England and the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) for sport-specific rules where that guidance has been updated following the Supreme Court decision of April 2025.
- For Prep and Pre-Prep ISA sporting events, ISA will provide biological sex-based team categories. However, in certain sports and at younger ages where physical development is less differentiated, mixed biological sex-group participation may be appropriate. ISA will assess the suitability of this on an age and sport-by-sport basis and will support flexibility where it enhances inclusion and development, provided safety and competitive fairness are preserved.
- ISA reserves the right to discuss eligibility with any school before, during or after an event where concerns arise regarding physical safety, competitive advantage, or eligibility under NGB rules, especially where participation does not align with an athlete's biological sex. Any questions about the participation of any athlete in an event should be reported in the first instance, to the ISA via email through isasport@isaschools.org.uk.
- While ISA respects the identity of all pupils, including those who are transgender or gender-questioning, the inclusion of such pupils in sex-specific sporting events may be limited where necessary under the Equality Act 2010 exemptions (Section 195 and Schedule 3, Part 7), which permit restriction of participation by biological sex to ensure fairness or safety.
- Schools must seek advice if there is any uncertainty, and any decisions should be made in consultation with ISA and, where necessary, with parental involvement and safeguarding leads.
- The ISA remains committed to fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all individuals attending our events. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying. Please refer to our Safeguarding policy and Code of Conduct for Sport.

- We will not tolerate any behaviour that demeans, marginalizes, or intimidates individuals based on (but not limited to) sex, gender, sexual orientation, or any other protected status under applicable law.
- All attendees, including staff, contractors, parents and pupils are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times. Any incidents of discriminatory, harassing, or bullying behaviour will be taken seriously and may result in removal from the event and further action as appropriate.
- We encourage anyone who experiences or witnesses such behaviour to report it promptly to an ISA representative. All reports will be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- ISA will continue to monitor and review this policy in response to changes in legal guidance and sporting body regulations, always placing the well-being and fairness for all pupils at the core of our practice.

Approved by ISA Executive Council, 14 June 2025

Review date June 2028