

British Orienteering Transgender Policies Consultation

"Transgender competition within sport is an emotive subject."

Final October 2023

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. British Orienteering is committed to creating an inclusive environment that will provide opportunities and enjoyment for everyone.
- 1.2. This issue is complex, emotive and involves incompatible, competing rights.
- 1.3. On one hand, is the right of female athletes, who are relevantly biologically disadvantaged vis-à-vis male athletes, to be able to compete against other female athletes and not against male athletes and to achieve the benefits of athletic success, such as positions on the podium and titles and on the other hand, is the right of every athlete to compete in sport, to have their legal sex and gender identity respected.
- 1.4. It is not possible to give effect to, or endorse, one set of rights without restricting the other set of rights.
- 1.5. We accept that the new Policy will lead to some criticism from individuals/groups who feel that we have not gone far enough and or that we are restricting opportunities for transgender groups.
- 1.6. The survey took into the views of all members when considering the [Trans Policy Appendix B](#)
- 1.7. In July 2023 the IOF published their [Transgender Policy](#) which impacted on the British Orienteering Trans Policy.

2. Legal Framework

- 2.1. British Orienteering is responsible for regulating within its jurisdiction (the United Kingdom and the Isle of Man) the participation of persons as competitors in Foot Orienteering, Ski Orienteering and Trail Orienteering. Foot Orienteering and Ski Orienteering are gender-affected activities within the meaning of [section 195 of the Equality Act 2010](#) in the United Kingdom and section 154 of the [Equality Act 2017](#) in the Isle of Man ("the Equality Acts"), because they are sports of a competitive nature in which the physical strength, stamina or physique of average persons of one sex would put them at a disadvantage compared to average persons of the other sex as competitors.
- 2.2. The Equality Acts provide for exemptions in relation to participation by trans people as competitors in a gender-affected activity where this is necessary to secure either fair competition or the safety of competitors. Participation by trans people in orienteering does not present an increased risk with regards to the safety of competitors. This policy therefore aims to balance the inclusion of trans participants within orienteering with the need to secure fair competition.

3. Consultation

- 3.1. All adult members were emailed on 21 October 2022 and given ten days to respond – this coincided with the IOF consultation.
- 3.2. The Consultation was via Microsoft Forms.
- 3.3. In total 7,400 invitations were sent out. This did not include juniors and within the communication there was a request to pass it on younger members of the family.
- 3.4. A notice on the British Orienteering website was also posted inviting responses.
- 3.5. 511 responses were received via the Microsoft Forms route which represented approximately 7% of those invited. Two responses via email were received directly from members.
- 3.6. In addition to member consultation in the development of the British Orienteering Trans Policy, we have taken account of scientific research, the [International Orienteering Federation \("IOF"\) Transgender Policy](#), the [UK's Sports Councils Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport](#), discussions that we have had with several partner NGBs, and legal advice.

4. Executive Summary from the membership survey

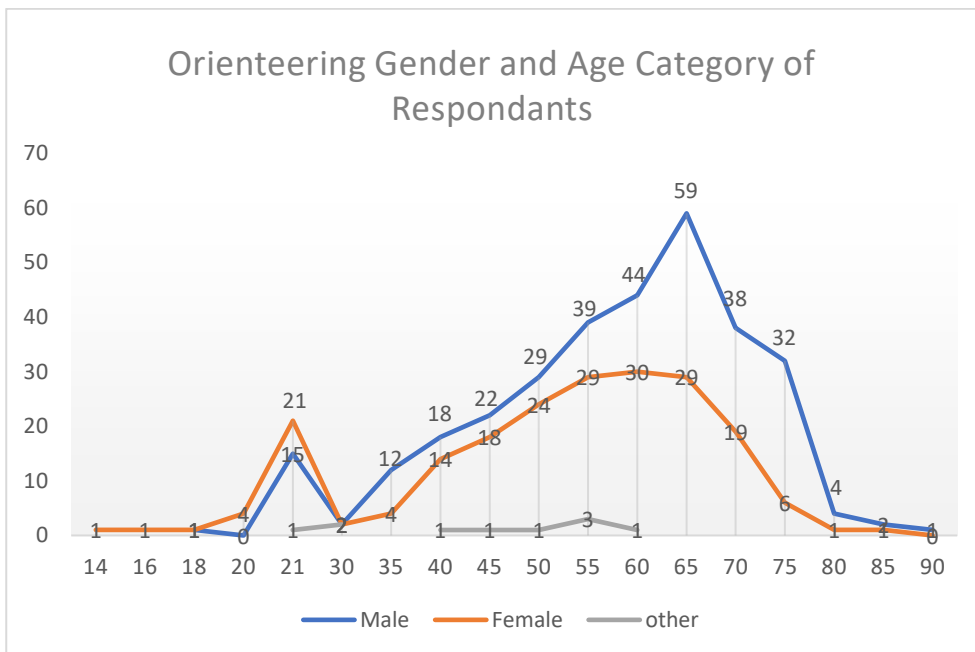
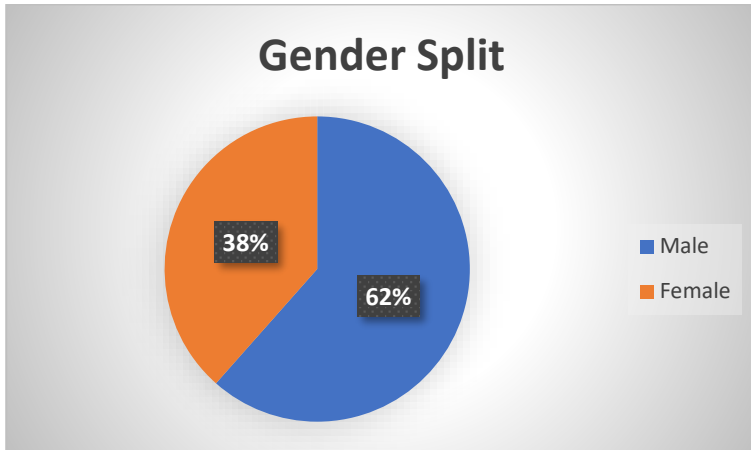
- 4.1. The consultation confirmed that there was not a single solution which would resolve all the identified issues, or that would satisfy all stakeholders which balances the inclusion of trans women in female sport while guaranteeing competitive fairness.
- 4.2. In competitions fairness should be prioritized over inclusiveness – there was a similar response to this question from all responses.
- 4.3. There was a majority of respondents who suggested that we should have a different Policy for Club competitions.
- 4.4. There were a number of suggestions regarding replacing the "Men's" category with "Open"
- 4.5. Management of any new Policy was raised by a number of respondents.

5. Other observations from responses

- 5.1. There was little in terms of responses from young people to understand their views which reflected in the lack of responses about the management of pre puberty or junior/youth competitions and athletes. However, there were a couple of relevant responses:
- 5.2. There could be a separate policy for young people (under 18).
- 5.3. Don't mess up junior teams' ability to run competitively in YBT and PPR just because they include a transgender or non binary participant
- 5.4. How should overnight accommodation be arranged? e.g. squad/club hostel rooms? This is particularly relevant for Under 18s, where safeguarding considerations are paramount.

Appendix A – Consultation Results

Current British Orienteering demographics

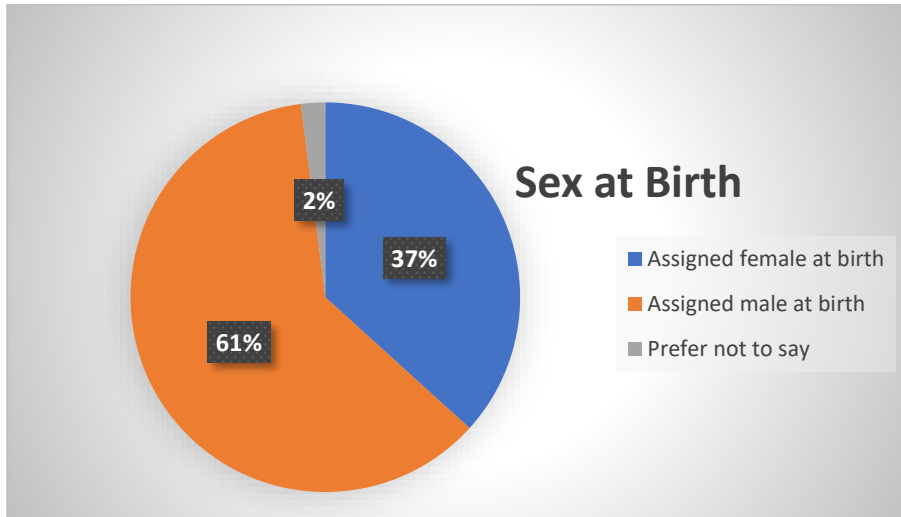


The responses reflect the demographics (age, sex and orienteering involvement) of the membership with the exception of under 21s.

Findings

Number of responses = 511

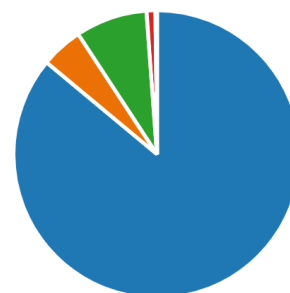
Sex at Birth



Row Labels	Count of Gender Identity
Agender (a person who has an internal sense of being neither male nor female nor some combination of male and female)	2
CIS Female (my gender identity matches the sex I was assigned at birth)	161
CIS Male (my gender identity matches the sex I was assigned at birth)	295
Don't know	1
Non-binary	3
Prefer not to say	10
Transgender - Female to Male	1
Transgender - Male to Female	4
Other	25
Grand Total	502

Which Orienteering Disciplines do you participate in?

Foot Orienteering	511
TrailO	28
Mountain Bike Orienteering	48
SkiO	6
I do not participate	1



At what level have you competed in the last 24 months

● Club/Local	472
● Regional/National	405
● Major (JK, British Championships)	297
● International (including masters)	85



The proportion of respondents were from those that compete in the full range of competitions – currently in the membership 48% only compete in local competitions.

Transgender Policy

52% of the respondents were aware of the British Orienteering Transgender policy.

In the case of competitions, what should be the basis of a new Transgender policy?

We have split the responses into three main groupings below.

Statement	All Responses	Male Only	Female only (plus any prefer not to say)	M/W21 or below
Fairness	311	182	122	7
Inclusiveness	45	25	14	6
A balance between the above	157	88	59	10
Total	513	295	195	23

One response stated *“The views of CIS female competitors should take precedence over my own views.*

How could we balance between being inclusive and being fair in competitions?

A total of 134 responses were received.

In summary the responses fell into four categories:

1. At Club Level, anybody identifying as transgender should be able to identify in the category, they feel most comfortable in.
2. A decision needs to be taken as to where to draw the line - whether this is at national level, regional level, club level, ranking points (frequently this was identified as Level D & C or colour coded).
3. An "Open" gender category where anybody can enter regardless of gender identification / assignment. I would envisage this at Major / National champs predominantly.
4. No suggestion just a comment – these are placed in “other”.

Statement	All Responses	Male only	Female only (plus any prefer not to say)	M/W21 or below
Have a balance where trans athletes MTF can compete in events but the “Policy” is applied for Regional competitions or above - similar to current Policy	78 (65%)	44 (64%)	28 (54%)	6
To have an open category	28	17	10	1
Other	120	68	51	1

Overall

As one response stated, *“participation inclusion versus competition fairness, reflected in the level of the event”*.

A number of responses suggested *“For local events you could drop M and W classes entirely and maybe just have age categorisation”*.

If a line is drawn the majority of responses (in having a balance) were suggesting level C&D self-identify and thereafter athletes run non-competitively.

It is difficult for competitors to know if a trans woman, competing in a major event, has complied with the policy, especially if the event organiser is unable to check. A major event organiser needs to be certain before the competition and be able to reassure other competitors.

Please explain why you think this

321 Responses

Statement	All Responses	Female only (plus any prefer not to say)	M/W21 or below
Fairness of competition is one of the most fundamental aspects of sport / I believe the female category in competition needs to be protected.	174 (53%)	75 (64%)	10
Everyone has a right to decide their gender	5 (1%)	18 (15%)	3
Basing inclusion of transwomen on levels of testosterone is unscientific	5 (1%)	45 (39%)	
Other	114 (35%)	116	

Fairness was the key output from female respondents although this changed the younger the athletes although it was a small sample of the overall return.

In the case of the different disciplines, how should the policy for competitions be applied?

- Same for all disciplines 335
- Specific to each discipline 89
- Unsure 89

Please explain why you think this

356 Responses

Overriding responses were suggesting that the Policy should be for all disciplines as having different ones would be confusing.

If you have any further comments relating to this subject, please add them below.

Selected responses

No	Response
1	Please think about the stress and transphobia that many trans people will face throughout their lives. As someone who uses sport as an escape and has made so many incredible friends through orienteering, I would hate to think about trans becoming stressed and feeling discouraged in taking part in the sport because they feel unwelcome.
2	I agree with the current Transgender policy, but it does create extra barriers and mental charge and admin for trans women.
3	Banning trans women would not preserve the integrity of women's sports. It enforces the harmful policing of all women's bodies and the continued degradation and othering of trans people who already experience massive discrimination.
4	I do understand that we want to be inclusive for trans athletes, but we also needs to protect woman's sports.
5	Orienteering is generally not a sport where you are competing face to face and so it's not obvious that you are competing against a trans participant. Everyone's running around in different directions and the majority of the time (unless you know the person) you don't know who's on your course. In orienteering anyone can run any course at any time regardless of age and gender, sometimes non competitive but that's by choice. No one would bat an eyelid on the start line if a male to female participant ran the 'male' course as women do this all the time. An option is for anyone born male to compete in Men's / Open category and anyone born female to compete in the Women's category. The only issue I can see with asking trans participants to be non competitive if not competing as the gender they were born is that should a woman want to 'run up' and compete in a men's course then technically they should be non competitive otherwise this could be seen (wrongly) as unfairness against trans participants.
6	I am disappointed that British Orienteering is pursuing this review, and its outcome may well become a barrier to my own choice to participate and support the sport in future.
7	I think it should be accepted by the majority and should recognise that not everyone will be 100% happy. If only 1% are unhappy that should be accepted
8	With the onset of people being able to choose their gender the only fair method is to have a third Mixed category for all age groups. i.e. X10-X90. Level A and Level B events should be required to cater for the Mixed category. Perhaps voluntary phased into Level C. There will need to be some guidelines for organisers but planners should be able to plan on the old basis with no more courses required and then the X category can choose which course they want to do.

9	Sport in general is about natural advantage - as a cis female i could still have higher testosterone levels than my competitors and this would put me at an advantage to them. Therefore I think that trans people should be allowed to compete in whichever class they feel most comfortable in; orienteering is a reasonably small sport which therefore has a wonderful caring and close community, and trans people should be allowed and welcomed into this community with open arms.
10	Sport and competition is based on natural physical differences/advantages between cis gendered people of the same gender anyways.
11	That testosterone isn't the only 'advantage'. Strength, muscle composition, bone density, limb length etc are all 'advantages' that are retained to some degree in male to female transition. There are now numerous peer reviewed studies that prove this.
12	Even if a male to female were to lower their testosterone to the acceptable level their testosterone levels would still be much higher than those of a female. If a female were to raise their testosterone to the same level then they would be banned for doping.
13	Please follow the science and be clear in any communication that i is not possible to be both inclusive and fair
14	Sport is not the place for gender identity. I'm quite happy for people to identify however they want, but some things are fact. I can't, for example, identify as a W50 (despite feeling like one). Orienteering is naturally a very inclusive and individual sport, and there is nothing currently stopping people (at least at a club level) entering whichever course they want - so it shouldn't matter what "class" they enter as.
15	Women's sport is a very important space - it has taken many people many years to fight for women's competitions and that should not be erased.
16	Orienteering has great opportunity to be inclusive without having to compromise fairness and integrity in competition. Open/colour coded classes at all events are possible as are additional categories and non competitive inclusion. Inclusion in recreational sport and participation is a reasonable right for all, but there should be no rights to unfair advantage in competitive classes. All transgender athletes have by default the right to compete in alignment to their biological sex, or to opt for non competitive participation, if truly fair participation is not possible for the individual in their identified gender category.
17	This is currently a hot trend topic, and it would be nice to see British Orienteering taking a measured approach rather than a reactionary or populist one. One route truly radical and inclusive route forwards, would be to remove gendered age classes from Orienteering altogether. At colour coded events, there is no problem with orienteers of different ages and genders competing on the same course, and all orienteers are used to this system of course categorisation. Why not use that as the basis for a more inclusive system at a higher level, and become true champions of inclusivity in sport?

18	Including biological males identifying as females to compete in the women's category denies women the right to meaningful competition. This could be very damaging and put a lot of women off competing seriously. UK equality law is actually quite clear and it is lawful to restrict male participation to uphold fair and safe competition in sport. Colour coded orienteering already is inclusive.
19	Nobody goes through the painful, drawn out process of transitioning to get ahead in sport.
20	Have an Open category.
21	Recent research makes it clear that testosterone suppression does not remove male advantage. Plus it is totally impossible to monitor below elite level. Better to scrap it entirely and use an unrestricted Open category. Lots of our events are run that way already, in practice.
22	BOF should do everything possible to welcome those whatever their gender identity. However, not at the expense of fair competition for cis-females.
23	You should be aware of the potential for differences in the law in Scotland. If Scottish competitors have the right to self identify a gender and not to disclose their sex, how will you ensure fair competition in Scotland?
24	It is crucial to maintain the inclusion of female competitors in male categories and gender-inclusive competitiveness in TrailO. Noone should ever be excluded from competing in the best sport of all.
25	There doesn't need to be a distinction pre-puberty. It is already clear from orienteering results that girls very favourably compare to boys in MW10 and MW12, but a performance difference becomes pretty obvious in MW16. The data suggest that even after reducing testosterone levels for 1 year, this does not fully remove the physical advantages of having gone through male puberty. Therefore, we would discourage women from training to compete at the highest level if they then face competitors with an unfair competitive advantage.
26	The sport should welcome anyone, allow anyone to compete and be inclusive whilst being fair
27	That allowing men who identify as being female is utterly unfair and is simply a made up ideology and has no scientific backing.
28	I think in the case of people born intersex that is different and needs a policy of inclusiveness for this very small minority.
29	My little girls should not have to share female changing space with male competitors no matter what they identify as. They certainly should not have to face a future competitive career racing with such a clear disadvantage either.
30	Clearly distinguish between competitive and recreational contexts (for which participants can participate non-competitively and gender is irrelevant)

31	Male-bodied people should not compete against female-bodied people - many more women are put at disadvantage by policies that permit physiological males who identify as female to compete in the womens categories than would occur if each athlete was required to compete in the category that matches their physiological sex.
32	The protection of women's sport participation must be paramount. Sporting classifications have taken the labels from binary sex classifications historically. Consideration must be given to how you choose to label these. Open and Women (restricted to entrants assigned female sex at birth) would be fair. Note that transgender people are not being excluded from sport. Everyone can complete in their classification at birth. Trans women should compete in the open category.
33	Truthfully I'm probably not well-informed enough to answer this question.
34	policy should be proportionate to the number of transgender people in the sport.
35	Proper scientific research with decisions based solely on that.
36	If there are enough competitors 4 categories.
37	Maybe colour coded champions at major events as well as age and gender
38	Orienteering has always had genetic based categories to ensure fairness. This should not be changed just because a current trend in Gender ideology is presently being forced on organisations. If you wish to create an 'Open' category purely based on age then so be it, but for Women in sport it is unfair to allow trans individuals to participate in their 'self identifying' category.
39	Transgender people have the right to be accepted for who they are, and to compete in any event. Clearly they are just like the rest of us in wanting to have fun at sporting events.
40	A man does not become a woman by lowering their testosterone alone. Other substantive differences remain. As such measuring testosterone does not lead to fairness any more than measuring any hormone would. I think it is reasonable for a person choosing to transition to have to consider how this will impact on their future rather than assuming their rights will naturally supersede others rights.
41	Supporting the enormous population of women to enjoy fair competitive sport is vital.
42	Trans men who experience puberty as women are unlikely to have an unfair advantage and consideration could be given to allow them to compete as men, or in an open race.
43	Females who decide to identify as men and boys should also be in the M class if they are taking testosterone. Females not taking testosterone can choose the F or M class.
44	Women and girls will stop competing if they see the top places being awarded to people born male.
45	Orienteering has always been very inclusive of both sexes and all ages, it is a shame if it starts to be less inclusive of women and girls by including males who aren't happy being male in the W class so they feel more validated.

46	I believe a policy should be the same regardless of level of competition. Those that compete at local events should be able to do so fairly.
47	Fairness for women and girls in sport should be the first priority. Female sport should be for females only. Other categories should be open (as they are at present). This policy provides competition space for everyone while keeping women's sport fair.
48	To be absolutely clear, when I refer to women and girls I am talking about a biological definition only. People can identify however they want, but only biological females should be eligible to compete in the female categories.
49	There is a difference between somebody who has totally transitioned and someone who is self-identifying. I can't see how allowing someone who has self-identified as female would be in anyway fair to other competitors.
50	Whatever is decided upon, it must be clear and manageable. The sport runs on volunteers, and this is a controversial area that could be difficult to manage in practice. Who would have to handle the medical proof if needed - and would it be for each event? Do BOF have the time / experience to handle this?
51	Older people like some age competitions as they cannot compete against a younger person. In the same way, women would either have to always compete at a disadvantage, or have their own competition. I think the colour coded scheme works well - you choose your course based on ability and compete at that level. Maybe. If there are issues, we stop dividing people into classes by gender and age. Just stopping divisions of gender would be unfair.
52	Using testosterone levels as a marker for when Trans women can compete in female sports is a non-starter. If a person who has been observed to be male at birth is allowed to go through puberty they retain anatomical and physiological advantages over a female despite what their testosterone levels are. They generally have bigger hearts, bigger blood vessels, bigger lungs, larger VO2 Max not to mention muscle mass. Studies have shown that even after taking cross-sex hormones for 2 years males are still faster than females as they retain these anatomical and physiological advantages. The whole reason we have separate competitions for males and females is because we all know that males outperform females and to try to make them compete together is unfair. Lowering testosterone levels does not reverse the anatomical and physiological differences I have cited above and there are now scientific papers to show this.
53	Talking of testosterone, the IOC have never explained where they got the figure of 10 nmol/l from. So a Trans woman can compete within female sports with up to 10nmol/l of testosterone but a female cannot compete in female sports if she has more than 5nmol/l of testosterone. How is that fair?
54	Even in pre-pubescent males there are sex advantages- in a nationwide Greek study using 425,000 children between ages 6-18, they found that 6-7 year old males have a higher VO2 max than females; and an Australian study using 85000 children aged 9-17 showed that 9 year olds boys could sprint 9.8% faster than girls; run 16.6% faster over one mile than girls and could jump 9.8% further than girls. So the male advantages in sports precede puberty.

55	So the big consideration you should think hard about is that this policy is not going to affect the male category for fairness or inclusivity at all. This policy is really only about the female categories of our sport (affecting 50% of the population) and whether our sport is willing to sacrifice the fairness of females to compete and win against other females or if you are willing to throw this out to accommodate a tiny minority of men who identify as women. With female participation in sports already very low this should have a big bearing on your decision.
56	Don't mess up junior teams' ability to run competitively in YBT and PPR just because they include a transgender or non binary participant
57	Experience/skills matter just as much as physical capabilities in orienteering Foot/MTB/Ski O.
58	How about a qualification-based approach for major competitions in order to be eligible for prizes, e.g. you need to demonstrate consistent high placings in x number of non-competitive events to be invited to compete (like entry to certain marathons is done.) Individuals can then "find their level" regardless of gender and compete accordingly.
59	Males are stronger and faster than females. I am a doctor, any medical student can tell a male from a female pelvis as the female is structurally compromised to allow child birth. In my view only girls and women assigned female sex at birth should be allowed to compete in the female category at an level or age group. Everyone else is welcome but can be assigned a male or open category.
60	Disadvantage of those who grow up with a female skeleton and musculature, in men's competition. How about an intersex class?
61	Human physiology. It might be OK for those who are born female but identify as male to compete in Men's classes but because of the physiological benefits those who are born male have, I don't think it is fair the other way around.
62	How many people will this positively affect. How many will be negatively impacted. Impact on attraction to the sport of young (&old for that matter) females. What is the impact at international level. Ease of monitoring at local level i.e. self identification nonsense. The accepted level of testosterone for trans women is far above the normal level for females.
63	If women and girls are forced to compete against male bodied people in the female category many will give up as they will have no chance of winning. That is why many sports have separate male and female categories
64	The same policy should apply across all levels of competition, not least to avoid confusion. BO should be aware that leagues at local level events are important to people and are very competitive. Some participants only ever go to their local level D events.
65	Consider the majority in fairness of competition.
66	The numbers involved. Trans inclusivity risks detrimentally impacting all women whilst benefiting only a very few.

67	There is a need to consider the impact on the young. Without fairness, young girls may be discouraged from taking part if they find they're at a biological disadvantage.
68	Inclusiveness can be achieved by having an open category (rather than men') and seems the best solution given the complexities of the issue and the need to balance all views.
69	Add a transgender category, ie M21, W21 & TG21.
70	TG could run same course as M or W, could compare themselves with M or W, but would compete against TG
71	No one with the physical advantages of having been through male puberty should be able to participate competitively in any female class. (Non competitive participation is fine.)
72	The policy should be simple and easy to implementation. Therefore, while it would be nice to factor in a combination of fairness and inclusiveness, I don't see this as a practical option. Male to female people can always still compete in the M category - I don't think anyone could justifiably complain about that.
73	I consider that the fair inclusion and support of women in the sport is much more important than granting trans women full rights to compete at all levels. Yes, ok for Level D, but from C upwards, they should compete either in the male category, fair enough being listed as W, or should be non-comp.
74	When it comes to ranking points, perhaps a separate category for transgender competitors both male and female in order to be inclusive.
75	Only those assigned female at birth should be allowed to compete in the female category. This should be the key statement in the new policy.
76	Perhaps there should be a transgender category rather than just M or W.
77	Be completely fair to the 50% of the population who are female bodied while welcoming and allowing male bodied competitors of any gender to compete in an open class.
78	I am not knowledgeable enough to comment on this
79	In reality I have not noticed anyone competing where this is an issue. Maybe we should just add a category of undisclosed sex so that people can take a view on that in results.
80	I am aware that similar debates are underway in cycling where there has been a direct challenge. It would make sense for those physical sports including foot orienteering, MTBO, Ski O to align their policies and not have different approaches. This cannot be discriminatory, but must not undermine the fairness of competition.

81	I think the guidelines should be the same for all events. I think that they should be driven by participants not having an unfair advantage in the group in which they participate. However, it may be (?) impractical in Local events for participants to "demonstrate that her total testosterone level in serum has been below 10 nmol/L for at least 12 months prior to her first competition". Perhaps for local events participants could be advised of the rules and be trusted to enter the appropriate category.
82	It could be appropriate to have some competitions which are open to all without age or sex being brought into the equation, but they would need to be promoted as such.
83	Should we just follow the decided policy decided by IOF ?
84	The best way to resolve this is to have two categories: Women (biological) and Open (men and women)
85	Good luck, this is a very emotional subject. I'm a fan of FINA's approach.
86	Other sports are making separate allowances for competitive events already for transgender individuals. As should orienteering.
87	Orienteering should align it's policies with other gender affected athletic sports as far as possible, subject to any specific issues dictated by UK law.
88	Glad to see BOF are consulting members
89	The views of young people are particularly important on this issue All bar one were under 21 when they made their choices. Young people have far more exposure to this than old folk like me, so will have more knowledge and can speak more authoritatively. Listen to them.
90	I feel that the average membership age BOF is skewed in such a way that your survey feedback won't be representative of the population as a whole and certainly not represent younger age groups where transgender issues are perhaps more likely to arise.
91	We should be welcoming to all, but not undermine the competitive fairness element for CIS female.
92	To improve inclusiveness, you might like to drop the designation 'M' from age classes, ie have just 60 and W60 or O60 and W60 to indicate the categories are open or women.
93	Unlikely that anyone will go through the hoops to change their birth identity simply to do well at an Orienteering event. It will be impossible to arrive at a policy that everyone feels comfortable with, some compromises will be needed across the board.
94	Event organisers could probably do with some help from your categories to avoid mid-stepping. When someone has been entered as an M21 but has the physical appearance and a name ordinarily associated with a woman you risk causing offence. Removing to focus on the gender from our class names would help in this regard.

95	Please protect women in sport, Transgender people have a place in our sport but not at the expense of other women.
96	Low key competition should not be subject to the same rules and should all self assigned gender participation
97	I don't envy you having to make these decisions, it would be brilliant if sport could be both fully inclusive and completely fair. My concern is that if we don't ensure fairness is paramount over other factors, we risk the disillusionment of generations of female athletes. Sounds a bit dramatic I know, but this issue is unprecedented and important to get right now before it creates problems, unlike other sports where this has already happened. All the best
98	I think staying aligned with IOF is crucial. Making up our own rules is a very bad idea.
99	Pls publish the results of the survey. People's views and in particular who identified with which gender. It would be helpful to inform members how much of an issue this is, or is not.
100	Firstly, it's great to see such a progressive and open approach from BO. It's undoubtedly difficult and new territory. From my own limited perspective, all I can add is that I would have no problems competing with trans athletes - though as a male I am the least likely to be 'adversely' affected by such competition, so it's easy for me to say. I think at the very least, the fact that dialogue is occurring is a huge positive step. Keep up the good work.

Appendix B – British Orienteering Trans Policy

British Orienteering Trans Competition Policy

Introduction and policy statement

British Orienteering is committed to creating an inclusive environment that will provide opportunities and enjoyment for everyone.

British Orienteering has developed this competition policy with respect to participation by trans individuals. This includes anyone whose gender identity or expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth, including (but not limited to) people who identify as transgender, transsexual, gender-fluid or non-binary.

In developing this policy, we have taken account of scientific research, the [International Orienteering Federation \(“IOF”\) Transgender Policy](#), the [UK’s Sports Councils Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport](#), discussions that we have had with several partner NGBs, and legal advice.

Legal framework

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The Equality Acts provide for exemptions in relation to participation by trans people as competitors in a gender-affected activity where this is necessary to secure either fair competition or the safety of competitors. Participation by trans people in orienteering does not present an increased risk with regards to the safety of competitors. This policy therefore aims to balance the inclusion of trans participants within orienteering with the need to secure fair competition.

Policy scope

This policy governs participation by trans people as competitors in Foot Orienteering and Ski Orienteering events that are registered with British Orienteering and are held in accordance with the [British Orienteering Rules of Orienteering](#).

Trail Orienteering is not a gender-affected activity and does not have male and female categories. This policy therefore does not apply to Trail Orienteering.

Date of implementation

This policy has effect from 1 January 2024.

Policy review

British Orienteering recognises that policy relating to participation by trans people in sport continues to develop. This policy will therefore be reviewed annually to ensure best practice is continued.

Privacy and data sharing

Everyone involved in determining an individual's eligibility to compete under this policy will respect the confidentiality of the matter and the individual's right to privacy. All information about a person's past or present gender identity will be managed in accordance with British Orienteering's Privacy Policy and with the requirements of the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and, where relevant, the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

Applying for eligibility to compete in the female category

Any trans individual whose sex assigned at birth was not female and who wishes to compete in the female category at an Identified Major Event will be required to provide evidence that they meet the requirements of this policy, such as:

- Evidence that they have not experienced any part of male puberty beyond either [Tanner Stage 2](#) or age 12 (whichever comes first)
- Evidence that they have maintained since puberty, and are continuing to maintain, the concentration of testosterone in their serum below 2.5 nmol/L
- Details of any relevant medical treatment (such as type of treatment, dosage and periodicity)

Evidence must be submitted to the British Orienteering Safeguarding Manager via safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk prior to entering an Identified Major Event.

Where the trans individual is under the age of 18, the evidence must be submitted by or with the written agreement of a person who has parental responsibility for the trans individual.

Evidence must be certified by a fully registered medical practitioner. British Orienteering may contact the medical practitioner directly to verify the evidence or clarify any details.

Appeals process

Any individual has the right to appeal any decision made by British Orienteering about their eligibility to compete under this policy. An appeal must be made in writing to the British Orienteering Safeguarding Manager via safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk, setting out the grounds for the appeal.

The appeal will be heard by a panel established for this purpose. This panel will comprise a minimum of three people appointed by British Orienteering who are independent of the case. At least one member of the panel will have relevant expertise.

Contact details and reporting

British Orienteering welcomes feedback on this policy via safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk.

British Orienteering urges any person involved within orienteering who has experienced or witnessed transphobic abuse to report it immediately. Please contact us via safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk.

All enquiries regarding participation by a trans person as a competitor at an orienteering event should be made via email to safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk. Event officials, volunteers or other participants must not in any circumstances challenge an individual's participation as a competitor at an event under this policy at the event itself.

Policy

The results of orienteering events and competitions distinguish between male and female sex categories.

Individuals are free to self-identify their sex on the British Orienteering database or when entering an event without a requirement for further evidence.

At all events and competitions, the male category in all age classes is open to all without restriction.

At the Identified Major Events, individuals will be eligible to compete in the female category in all age classes if and only if they are eligible to compete in the female category under the [IOF Transgender Policy](#).

For the purposes of this policy, the Identified Major Events are:

- World Ranking Events held in accordance with the IOF Competition Rules
- British Championships, including Long, Middle, Sprint, Night, Relay and Sprint Relay
- JK Sprint, Individual Cross-country and Relays
- Area Championships (South, Midlands, North, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales)
- any event held specifically for the purpose of determining international selections under the British Orienteering selection policies

Any trans individual whose sex assigned at birth was not female and who wishes to compete in the female category at an Identified Major Event must, before entering the event, provide evidence to British Orienteering that they meet the requirements of the [IOF Transgender Policy](#), in accordance with the process set out in [Appendix A](#). This evidence must be certified by a fully registered medical practitioner (as defined in the Medical Act 1983). The British Orienteering Safeguarding Manager will consider the evidence on a case-by case basis.

At the Identified Major Events, any trans individuals who are not eligible to compete in the female category under the [IOF Transgender Policy](#) may nevertheless be able to participate in that category, but must declare themselves to be non-competitive and will not be eligible to win titles, medals, prizes or trophies, either individually or as part of a team.

At all competitions, events and activities other than those listed as Identified Major Events, trans people will be able to compete in the sex category aligned to their gender identity. However, it is recommended that any athletes participating in the female category who would not be eligible to compete in the female category under the [IOF Transgender Policy](#) should not be eligible to win titles, medals, prizes or trophies, either individually or as part of a team. Competitors may assume that a competition will be following this recommendation unless the organiser has explicitly stated otherwise.

Individuals will be ranked on the British Orienteering Ranking List in the sex category recorded in the British Orienteering database.

Any person seeking selection to the British Orienteering Performance Pathway Programme in the female category and/or seeking selection by British Orienteering for international competitions in the female category must be eligible to compete in the female category under the [IOF Transgender Policy](#) in order to be eligible for selection. This is to ensure that selected individuals are eligible to compete

in the relevant international competition(s).

All participants may be subject to doping control testing as per the UK Anti-Doping Rules. Hormone treatments used for the purpose of gender reassignment may be prohibited under the World Anti-Doping Agency Code. Any participants using hormone treatments for the purpose of gender reassignment are therefore encouraged to contact UK Anti-Doping to determine whether they are required to apply for a Therapeutic Use Exemption.