

Scottish Golf Transgender & Non Binary Policy – FAQs

<u>General Policy:</u>	
What process has Scottish Golf undertaken to implement this policy?	Scottish Golf carried out an extensive consultation with stakeholders, academics and other relevant organisations, alongside reviewing the available scientific literature. We are committed to providing opportunities for all who wish to play golf. At the same time, we must also ensure that fair and level competition is achieved as far as possible, within the context of competitive events. Scottish Golf recognises that there are limitations to the information available to it. For example, it is acknowledged that scientific evidence regarding Transgender and gender diverse participation in sport is incomplete and continually developing and there is currently insufficient evidence to unequivocally inform policy development. Scottish Golf is committed to keeping this policy, and its impact, under review and will continue to take account of the developing evidence around the issue of Transgender and gender diverse participation in sport and any impact upon the issue of fairness in competition.
When does the policy come into effect?	Scottish Golf's policy will come into effect for all Scottish events immediately and for the start of the 2025 season.
Why does the policy differ between different types of competition? i.e. Handicap competitions and Scratch competitions.	Following a scientific review of literature, it was determined that the evidence sufficiently indicated that golf is a gender-affected sport, in line with the definition within the Equality Act (2010) regarding 'gender-affected activities'. Guidance from The R&A states that the WHS™ enables players of different abilities to compete in a fair way, therefore the eligibility criteria for Handicap competitions and Scratch competitions are different.

	We are committed to monitoring and reviewing this policy annually or more frequently as appropriate.
Why does the policy differ between male and female scratch events?	Following a scientific review of literature, it was determined that the evidence sufficiently indicated that golf is a gender-affected sport, in line with the definition within the Equality Act (2010) regarding 'gender-affected activities'. We are committed to providing opportunities for all who wish to play golf. At the same time, we must also ensure that fair and level competition is achieved as far as possible, within the context of competitive events. Therefore, the policy differs between male and female scratch competitions. We shall monitor and review this annually or more frequently as appropriate.
How does the World Handicapping System enable players of different abilities to compete in a fair way?	The World Handicap System provides golfers with a unified and inclusive handicapping system. Developed by the R&A and USGA in close coordination with existing handicapping authorities, the system offers competition organisers with the ability to run events that involve more than one set of tees – be they mixed gender competitions and/or events where a single gender plays from different sets of tees. In order to promote a level playing field for all participants, the system incorporates something called equalisation strokes. To find out more information on how the World Handicap System achieves equalisation in mixed/multi-tee competitions, please access our quick guides - World handicap system - Scottish Golf
Will the policy be reviewed again in the future?	Yes – we will continue to monitor developments and are committed to reviewing the policy annually or more frequently as appropriate.

Was Differences in Sex Development (DSD) part of the scope of this review?	No, DSD was not part of this review. Where there is a question or concern regarding DSD please contact governance@scottishgolf.org
Is there an age limitation to the policy?	No – currently the policy applies to all ages. The WHS™ enables golfers of all ages to obtain a valid HCI and thus, participate in competitive golf.
What is the difference between competitive and non-competitive golf?	In response to the Sports Councils' Equality Group 2021 guidance, Scottish Golf has reviewed the concept of 'meaningful competition'. Therefore, the following definitions of competitive and non-competitive golf have been devised: Competitive golf can be broken down as follows: • Handicap Competitions - competitions to which the Rules of Golf, Rules of Handicapping and Rules of Amateur Status apply. In Handicap Competitions a player's handicap is used to calculate the net score. • Scratch Competitions - competitions to which the Rules of Golf apply. The Rules of Handicapping may also apply in that the competition may count towards a player's handicap calculation, but a player's handicap is not used to calculate the player's score. The score is the player's gross score and is judged against the Course Rating™ (or "par") of the course being played. • Professional Golf - competitions played by golf professionals within the meaning of the Rules of Amateur Status. Clubs and Counties do not organise competitions for professional golfers. Non-competitive Golf can be defined as: • People participate in non-competitive golf for all sorts of reasons, including exercise, social reasons, for the benefits of being outside and seeking to improve their game, to name but a few. Participants in non-competitive golf may choose to apply

	rules to their game if they wish, but the Rules of Golf do not apply to non-competitive golf, and it is not the place of a governing body to seek to impose competitive fairness on non-competitive golf.
What is Scottish Golf's policy on use of changing facilities?	Scottish Golf does not create a policy regarding the use of changing facilities. Affiliated Golf Clubs should review the guidance offered by the EHRC as well as our member guidance note Policies and procedures - Scottish Golf.
Do affiliated golf clubs need to adhere to the Scottish Golf's Transgender and Non Binary policy?	Where competitions are qualifying stages for Scottish Golf events, we would expect members to adhere to our Terms of Competition and Transgender and Non-Binary policy. Affiliated Clubs and members are not obliged to adopt the Scottish Golf policy for their own competitions and are encouraged to consider the right approach that works for them, ideally having regard to the scientific and medical information available, the importance of complying appropriately with all relevant legal requirements (such as the Equality Act 2010) and the reputation and perception of Golf as a safe, inclusive and welcoming sport. Clubs can review our member guidance note for further information – Policies and procedures - Scottish Golf
What is the process under the WHS to reallocate a Handicap Index?	Within the WHS and local handicap software, there are two ways to reallocate a Handicap Index for a transgender golfer. Clubs should refer to our member guidance document for further information - Policies and procedures - Scottish Golf and can contact handicapping@scottishgolf.org for further support.
How can competition organisers manage events where players have traditionally played for both scratch and handicap prizes?	If the eligibility criteria differ between formats of play, competition organisers can run two separate competitions—one for Scratch and one for Handicap—rather than a combined event. This allows them to set specific eligibility criteria within their competition terms and conditions.

	Under the World Handicap System (WHS), CDH numbers are classified as either Male or Female. These classifications are currently used for both competition and handicapping purposes within competition software.
What should I do if I believe that somebody is competing in a category which they are ineligible for?	Scottish Golf passionately believes that golf belongs to everyone. This is a sensitive topic, and the welfare of all competitors is our primary concern. Our Terms of Competition provide further information - Events policies and procedures - Scottish Golf If someone has a concern regarding a participant's eligibility to compete in a particular category of a Scottish Golf Championship event, they should raise these concerns with a member of Scottish Golf staff present at the event. Volunteers and participants should ensure that any communication regarding eligibility is not shared wider than with Scottish Golf staff and due to the sensitive nature of these matters, the volunteer or participant who raised the concern will not be informed of any conclusion reached.
Does the policy apply to Scottish Golf's Performance Programmes?	Scottish Golf's performance programmes are in place to identify and support the development of golfers who will progress into the Scottish Golf squad/National teams and compete in scratch events internationally. Therefore, all golfers within our performance programmes must adhere to the eligibility criteria for scratch competitions.
What is included within the policy for non-competitive golf?	Scottish Golf remains committed to ensuring that golf belongs to everyone. All who play, and all who aspire to play, should have an equal opportunity to do so. Therefore, as it is not the place of a governing body to seek to impose competitive fairness on non-competitive golf, there are no eligibility criteria imposed.

Can gender diverse people participate in Get Into Golf initiatives?	Yes – Scottish Golf remain committed to ensuring that these non-competitive activities provide a supportive, inclusive and welcoming environment to play golf in.
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