

British Weight Lifting: Gender Identity Statement Q&A May 2026

Why has BWL updated its Gender Identity Statement?

BWL has updated its Gender Identity Statement to ensure competition categories remain fair, safe, and compliant with UK legislation, including Section 195 of the Equality Act 2010. The update reflects recent legal developments, including the UK Supreme Court clarification that 'sex' in the Equality Act refers to biological sex and provides clarity for clubs, members, and officials.

What does the updated statement say about the Female Category?

BWL confirm that their Female category is limited to competitors whose biological sex is female (i.e. female at birth). This approach aligns with provisions in the Equality Act that allow sports governing bodies to apply sex-based eligibility criteria where necessary for fairness or safety due to differences in strength, stamina and physique..

What does the updated statement say about the Male Category?

Trans men (individuals assigned female at birth) are eligible to participate in the Male Category. Eligibility requires compliance with UKAD and WADA Anti-Doping Regulations. All other aspects of the TCRRs for the Male Category remain unchanged.

Why are trans men eligible to compete in the Male Category?

Under Section 195 of the Equality Act, sports may apply sex-based eligibility rules where proportionate. As trans men are individuals whose biological sex is female, their participation does not raise the same competitive fairness considerations that justify restricting the female category under Section 195. Clubs are not expected to undertake routine verification but should refer any eligibility queries to BWL.

How does this update affect grassroots participation?

This update applies only to competitive categories. In all non-competitive settings—such as training, club activities, and general membership—BWL respects each individual's affirmed gender identity.

Do clubs need new checks or processes?

Clubs should continue with existing membership and competition entry processes. Sport80 terms of reference for membership and the Technical Competition Rules and Regulations have been updated.



What advice could clubs give members about UKAD and WADA Anti-Doping Regulations?

Details in relation to anti-doping and medication regulations can be found here [Anti-Doping - British Weight Lifting](#) or contact Lisa Smith, Operations & Governance Manager, British Weight Lifting, lisa.smith@britishweightlifting.org

How should clubs support members respectfully?

Clubs should use affirmed names and pronouns, maintain confidentiality, treat all members respectfully, and refer policy questions to BWL to ensure consistent application.

Who can clubs contact with questions?

For advice or clarification, contact: Lisa Smith, Operations & Governance Manager, British Weight Lifting, lisa.smith@britishweightlifting.org.

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