

Guidance on Scottish FA Participation Policy

This Guidance accompanies the Scottish FA's Participation Policy, published on 1 July 2025 (the "Policy").

Scope of the Policy (*Participation Policy, Paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3*)

The Policy applies to Association Football matches in competitions which are:

- (a) organised or promoted by the Scottish FA, including the Men's and Women's Scottish Cup competitions, and friendly or testimonial matches which require the approval of the Scottish FA;
- (b) included in the Scottish FA's Register of Competitions; or
- (c) under the jurisdiction of an Affiliated National Association or an Affiliated Association, including friendly or testimonial matches which require the approval of an Affiliated National Association or an Affiliated Association.

Details of the Affiliated National Associations, the Affiliated Associations and the Scottish FA's Register of Competitions can be found on pages 50 to 55 of the Scottish FA Handbook: https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/media/12499/sfa_handbook-2024-25_digital.pdf

(Participation Policy, Section 1.1)

The Policy does not apply to football activity outside of that referred to above. This means that the Policy does not apply to:

- (a) matches which are not governed by, or do not require the approval of, the Scottish FA, an Affiliated National Association, an Affiliated Association or a recognised football body of the Scottish FA; or
- (b) training or other activity outside of matches in the competitions referred to above, including 5-a-side activity and similar small-sided formats, whether competitive or not.

(Participation Policy, Section 1.2)

Eligibility Requirements (*Participation Policy, Paragraph 2*)

From U13s competition onwards, a person whose biological sex is male (i.e. those born with testes), including those who identify as transgender female or non-binary, will only be eligible to play in matches within the scope of the Policy in the boys' pathway or the men's category. Conversely, a person whose biological sex is male shall not be permitted to play in the girls' pathway or the women's category from U13s competition onwards.

From U13s competition up to the age of 15, a person whose biological sex is female (i.e. those born with ovaries) will be eligible to play in matches within the scope of the Policy in the boys' or girls' pathway, or both, subject to (i) seeking permission from the relevant competition organisers where any such person wishes to play in both pathways and (ii) there being no material safety concerns in relation to them playing in the boys' pathway.

After the age of 15, a biological female will only be permitted to play in matches within the scope of the Policy in the women's category. This is subject to the proviso that a biological female who is using, or has used within the preceding four years, testosterone as part of gender-related treatment shall not be permitted to play in the women's category.

Any such person, or any other biological female whose gender identity is male or non-binary, shall be permitted to play in matches within the scope of the Policy in the women's category if they can provide a Declaration in the form annexed to the Policy. Such Declaration must include confirmation from a medical professional that the relevant person's level of circulating testosterone is in the normal adult male range (7.7 to 29.4 nmol/L) and that there is no medical reason why they should not play competitive football with and against adults whose biological sex is male.

Supporting Provisions (*Participation Policy, Section 3*)

The Scottish FA is aware that cases may arise which are not covered by the Policy. The Scottish FA will deal with such cases as it sees fit.

Similarly, there may be questions about a player's eligibility. In the first instance, those questions should be sent to edi@scottishfa.co.uk.

The Scottish FA reminds every participant in football to treat others with dignity, kindness and compassion.

July 2025