

BLDSA Transgender Policy 2018

The BLDSA is an inclusive Association and welcomes transgender swimmers and volunteers.

Transgender people have a deep conviction that their birth gender is incorrect. That conviction will often lead them to take steps to present themselves to the world in the opposite gender. This may involve hormonal or surgical treatment, to bring their physical identity into line with their preferred gender identity.

This is not something people undertake lightly or in order to gain a competitive advantage

Many transgender people will wish to keep their condition private and confidentiality should be respected.

Transgender people should be treated as members of their acquired gender.

It is illegal to discriminate against transgender people, except within narrow exceptions.

Swimming is recognized as a “gender-affected sport”, which means that on average men swim faster than women. BLDSA swim records confirm this although the differences can be small.

To ensure fair competition it is legal to have some restrictions and conditions.

BLDSA Policy is that people should be treated and swim as a member of their acquired gender. All swimmers will have the right to compete in the Championship and Grand Prix.

All our swims are open to both sexes.

In the event of a transgender woman, (that is defining herself and swimming as a woman but with birth gender male), having a BLDSA Record for a swim, the Amateur Swimming Association Policy* will be adopted. This would involve the woman providing evidence that hormone treatment has reduced her blood measured testosterone level to that of the affirmed gender for an appropriate length of time.

Should there be concerns that a transgender woman has an unfair advantage in the championship swims this evidence could also be sought.

The privacy of all swimmers will be respected.

Changing facilities where provided should have private areas.

It is recognized that for many swims, swimmers change using robes and towels shoreside, local club facilities or public conveniences, and this is acceptable.

Should any transgender person be discriminated against, or bullied this will be dealt with under existing BLDSA rules and policies.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and amended as necessary.

*ASA Organisational Policies Swimming section Ref S1110 Date 30.03.2015