

UniSport Australia Guideline

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Introduction

UniSport's vision of 'Active Students: Lifelong Success' encompasses a commitment to provide a safe, fair, and inclusive environment for all student-athletes, regardless of ethnicity, location, religious or political beliefs, cultural background, sexuality or gender identity.

Underpinning all that we do, our inclusion and diversity strategies reflect our status as an inclusive organisation and our commitment to the sector. We recognise that sport is a powerful tool to promote inclusion and acceptance of a diverse university sport community.

As such, we celebrate diversity of sex, gender, identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, intersex status, ability, skill, cultural background, ethnicity, location, religious or political beliefs and welcome all to gain a positive experience through the platform of sport.

UniSport has zero tolerance to any form of bullying, harassment and vilification towards any person. This includes homophobia, biphobia and/or transphobia.

UniSport recognises that our competitions are primarily promoting participation, however students at a sub-elite level will also participate in our competitions. As such, UniSport is committed to consideration of the rules and regulations of the different sport offerings, and the variances in the level of competition to ensure equal opportunity for all in a safe and inclusive environment.

Guiding principles

UniSport have the authority to rule over all domestic competitions, programs and events delivered. All decisions regarding participation within our competitions will be made in good faith and driven by the desire to create a truly inclusive sporting environment.

UniSport will work closely with delivery bodies to ensure that competitions are delivered in a fair and inclusive manner for all participants and that our decision on inclusion is paramount.

While we may consult with various NSOs and sporting bodies for their guidelines, our primary guiding principle will be to ensure the best outcome for university members and student-athletes.

All ability, Indigenous and multicultural persons

We aim to provide opportunities for people with all abilities and people from multicultural and Indigenous backgrounds to participate in university sport, UniSport events and its organisation. The organisation will wherever possible draw expertise from and/or lobby the appropriate National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) or State Sporting Organisations (SSOs), university faculties and bodies, all ability organisations as well as multicultural and Indigenous groups to maximise opportunities for student athletes.

This is achieved by addressing the following areas:

- Determine the accessible expertise and assistance available from the appropriate organisations within all ability, multicultural and Indigenous sectors and utilise a volunteer and staff base that are appropriate pertaining to the group.
- Consult with organisers of UniSport events to determine their capability to cater for people with all abilities. This includes issues of facility accessibility and field of play requirements. A

venue audit will be conducted of any potential facility considering entry points, signage, facilities, and equipment.

- Determine the interest from students with all abilities or who are from multicultural or Indigenous backgrounds.
- Provide a networking and informational service that allows individuals and groups to be further linked with related organisations, as well as informing them of current university sport opportunities that are available.
- Promote and encourage all activity for all people related to the participation in UniSport events.

Gender

UniSport understands that gender diversity refers to a diverse range of gender expressions and identities. Anyone can compete at UniSport events in a manner which best reflects their gender identity.

UniSport recognises under federal and state anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation that it is against the law to discriminate against people on the basis of gender identity or intersex status in a sporting activity.

UniSport adopts a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination against another person, member or player on the grounds of gender in a sporting activity including:

- Refusing or failing to select a person in a sporting team;
- Excluding the other person from participating in a sporting activity.

UniSport will refer to the NSO rules, regulations, and policies as a guideline in relation to gender (where these are available) and in line with anti-discrimination laws. UniSport recognises gendered divisions which may be men's, women's, open and/or mixed:

- Men: participation is restricted to those who identify as male
- Women: participation is restricted to those who identify as female
- Open: participation is unrestricted on the basis of gender
- Mixed: participation is restricted to the proportion of male and female participants as prescribed in the rules of the particular sport. Student-athletes will be required to declare their gender choice, when participating in mixed competitions.

Transgender, non-binary and gender diverse participation

Numerous NSOs have established policies for transgender and gender diverse participation in sport, and this continues to be an evolving area. In relation to its competitions, UniSport will refer to each specific sport NSOs community sport transgender and gender diverse policies as a guideline to direct the approach to inclusion of gender diverse participants within our competitions.

For NSOs that don't have an existing transgender policy for community sport, the student-athlete may participate in accordance with their gender identity.

Participants who identify as non-binary are able to compete in all open competitions, and/or the competition they feel aligns best with their status.

Additional information regarding transgender participation can be found via the following partners:

- [The Australian Sports Commission](#)
- [Pride in Sport](#)

Relevance of strength, stamina and physique – Competitive sporting activity exemption

Sports are diverse. Different sports require different skills and physical input from participants. There may be times when participation on the basis of affirmed gender identity alone is not possible and consideration needs to be made for the requirements of a sport. If strength, stamina and physique are relevant and an individual's strength directly affects their ability, and the ability of others, to effectively compete then UniSport may apply the competitive sporting activity exemption to exclude a person from a particular competition.

This will be done in consultation with the participant and/or their representative and in line with anti-discrimination laws and the direction outlined in the *'Australian Human Rights Commission's Guidelines for inclusion of transgender and gender diverse people in sport, 2019.'*

Competitions that progress to international representation

Any UniSport competition that provides the winning team(s) with progression to international representation will be delivered in accordance with the international federations' policy and sport guidelines/laws. This also applies to the inclusion of gender diverse participants within the competition.

Uniforms

Uniform codes should enable all athletes and sports participants to dress in accordance with their gender identity. Wherever possible, uniforms should be gender neutral and comfortable for all members of the team. As such for all UniSport competitions:

- If gendered uniforms are necessary, then UniSport will allow participants to choose which uniforms they would prefer to wear
- Member universities should:
 - Ensure appropriate sizes are available for selection
 - Design options are suitable for different body types and shapes

Sexuality

UniSport welcomes all persons to compete in UniSport events. UniSport at all times promotes acceptance and inclusion regardless of sexuality and encourages all participants and members to instil this ethos into best team management practices. UniSport recognises that under federal and state anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation it is against the law to discriminate persons on the basis of sexuality.

Collection of personal information

UniSport recognises that student-athletes feel more included when an organisation's registration system and data collection is more inclusive. UniSport will collect data based on a participant's gender rather than biological sex. Other information collection will include a participant's pronouns and preferred name, however it is optional for the participant to provide these details. This information is only collected when necessary and is secured to ensure the privacy of the student athlete.

For all events under the auspices of UniSport, the following questions are asked as part of the registration process:

- Which of the following best describes your gender identity?

- Female
 - Male
 - Non-Binary
 - Prefer not to say
- Please identify the gender-based competition you would like to participate in?
 - Men’s competition
 - Women’s competition
 - Open competition
 - Mixed competition

Facilities

UniSport recognises that a barrier to participation can be a lack of facilities at venues. UniSport undertakes an extensive audit of its preferred competition venues to ensure that change and bathroom facilities offer capacity, privacy and that there are unisex or gender-neutral facilities available. If facilities are not adequate, UniSport will liaise with the venue provider regarding the lack of facilities or seek an alternate venue.

Where possible, UniSport recommends the provision of gender-neutral facilities at all venues under the principles of universal design.

Dispute resolution process

Any disputes relating to the information contained in this guideline will be managed via the UniSport Member Protection Policy and relevant Sport Integrity framework policies. Information relating to these policies can be found via the [UniSport website](#).

Definitions

Sex	A person’s biological sex traits. Sex is recorded on the basis of anatomical, chromosomal and hormonal characteristics. Sex has historically been understood as binary (that is, as exclusively female or male). It is now known that biological sex characteristics include many variations, and that sex is not binary.
Gender identity	A person’s internal sense of self and how they identify, understand or perceive their gender. It is important to recognise that sex and gender identity are different and separate concepts.
Transgender	‘Transgender’ or ‘trans’ is a term for someone whose gender identity does not exclusively align with their sex as recorded at birth. Some transgender people may use different terms to describe themselves. These terms may be cultural (for example, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may use the terms brotherboys or sistergirls) or they may differ between generations (for example, some older people may use the term transsexual).
Gender diverse	This term refers to the diverse range of different binary and non-binary gender identities and expressions. It can include people questioning their gender, those who identify as trans/ transgender, genderqueer, non-binary, gender nonconforming and many more.

Non-binary	'Non-binary' is a term used to describe a person who does not identify exclusively as either a man or a woman.
Pronouns	Pronouns are a way of referring to other people. Common pronouns are 'she/her' and 'he/his'. Some non-binary people may have gender neutral pronouns like 'they/them', use their first name instead of a pronoun, or use another pronoun. It is important to respect a person's pronoun and it is best not to assume it.
Gender expression	How a person presents themselves in behaviour and dress. Gender expression and gender identity are not necessarily correlated.
Transition /affirmation	'Transitioning' or 'affirming' refers to the process where a trans or gender diverse person takes steps to live as the gender they identify as. This process is different for every trans or gender diverse person. For some, changing their gender expression is enough and they may not want or need to seek medical assistance. This is sufficient for a person to be protected from discrimination on the basis of gender identity under the Equal Opportunity Act.
Intersex	'People with intersex variations' is an umbrella term for those born with congenital atypical sex characteristics, whether chromosomal, hormonal or anatomical. People with intersex variations experience different issues and have different life experiences to trans and gender diverse people. For this reason, this guideline does not address discrimination against people with intersex variations.
Sexual orientation/ Sexuality	'Sexual orientation' or 'sexuality' refers to sexual and emotional attraction to people of a particular gender or genders. Sexual orientation also has a specific meaning under the Equal Opportunity Act, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the basis of their sexual orientation. It is important to recognise that sexual orientation is different to a person's sex or gender identity. Some trans and gender diverse people may encounter difficulties or experience discrimination because of myths and misconceptions about a correlation between their gender identity and their sexual orientation.

Relevant Policies and Guidelines

- [UniSport Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy](#)

Previous amendments

July 2020 | December 2021 | June 2023 | May 2024