

Fiona McAnena

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Semantic Summary

British gender-critical sports policy specialist. Former Fair Play For Women director, now Sex Matters director alongside Maya Forstater and Helen Joyce. Core focus: excluding trans women from women's sports based on biological advantage arguments. Lower public profile than Forstater/Joyce — operates in legal/policy spaces. Connected to Sex Matters network (JK Rowling funding, LGB Alliance, For Women Scotland). Represents the sports-policy specialisation within the UK gender-critical movement.

Overview

- **Full Name:** Fiona McAnena
- **Role:** Director at Sex Matters; former director at Fair Play For Women
- **Nationality:** British
- **Known For:** Legal advocacy for single-sex sports policies; media appearances on trans participation in women's sport

Background

Fiona McAnena is a gender-critical campaigner who works on legal and policy advocacy around trans inclusion in women's sport. She previously served as a director at Fair Play For Women, one of the early UK gender-critical organisations focused specifically on excluding trans women from women's sport. She later moved to Sex Matters as a director alongside Maya Forstater, Helen Joyce, and Helen Staniland.

Timeline

- **2018–2022:** Director at **Fair Play For Women** — focused on sports policy and trans exclusion from women's competition

- **2024:** Joined **Sex Matters** as director (announced Feb 2024: "Sex Matters welcomes two new team members")
- **2025-2026:** Active in Sex Matters' campaigns on single-sex spaces, sports policy, and Conversion Practices Bill opposition

Ideology & Positions

- Primary focus: trans women should be excluded from women's sports
- Argument: biological advantages of male puberty are not fully mitigated by hormone therapy; fairness in women's sport requires sex-based categories
- Broader gender-critical positions aligned with Sex Matters: opposition to self-ID, GRA reform, conversion therapy bans

Funding & Affiliations

- **Sex Matters** — director
- **Fair Play For Women** — former director
- Part of the interconnected UK gender-critical network alongside Sex Matters, LGB Alliance, For Women Scotland

Online Presence & Reach

- Lower public profile than Maya Forstater or Helen Joyce — operates more in policy/legal spaces than as a public-facing spokesperson
- Media appearances focused on sports policy debates
- Cited in Sex Matters press releases and legal submissions

Sources

- [Sex Matters — "Sex Matters welcomes two new team members" \(Feb 2024\)](#)
- [Yahoo News — "Who are Sex Matters?"](#)
- [Spiked — "How TERF Island took on the trans juggernaut" \(Aug 2025\)](#)
- Fair Play For Women website (archived)

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