



## BUCS gives boost to women's table tennis with top tier

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**Posted On:** March 14, 2019

British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) are bringing women's table tennis into line with men's for the first time by introducing a Premier Division from September.

The change was announced by BUCS following its Sports Review, a wide-ranging consultation with National Governing Bodies and other stakeholders, including Table Tennis England.

Until now, the top level in women's table tennis has been Division 1 whereas the men have had a Premier Division at the top of their structure.

It is not just about the name – a Premier Division operates across a much larger north and south geographical area, whereas Division 1 was regionalised, and the Premier division carries more points in the BUCS standings. It also ensures the performance pathway matches up across both genders.

Table tennis was the only one of around 40 sports in the BUCS system in which the women did not have a Premier Division, and Table Tennis England's Head of Development and Volunteering, Greg Yarnall, is delighted at the development.

Yarnall, who sits on the BUCS Sports Advisory Group for Table Tennis said: "This is fantastic news as it brings the Women's competitions in line with the Men's and ensures equality across the competition structure and in player development opportunities.

"This was something we were very keen to see happen, as it fits within the ethos of our Women and Girls Action Plan, which includes the aim to develop programmes to support women at different stages of their lives and playing careers, as well as create welcoming and appealing environments and engaging with new participants.

"We're grateful to BUCS for the opportunity to input into the Sports Review and pleased that they have taken the groups views on board."

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