



Transgender Inclusion Guidance (April 2025)

Why is trans equality and inclusion important?

Trans people should be treated with the same dignity, fairness and respect as everyone else and be able to live, and be respected, according to their gender identity. However, trans people often face serious discrimination and mistreatment at work, school and in their families and communities. For statistics about these types of discrimination, go to the <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-trans-report>

Living without fear of discrimination and violence and being supported and affirmed in being who they are is critical to enabling trans people to live healthy, safe, and fulfilling lives.

What does it mean to be trans?

Trans people are people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were assigned with at birth. When we're born, a doctor usually says that we're male or female based on what our bodies look like. Most people who were assigned as male at birth will typically identify as a man, and most people who were assigned female at birth will typically identify as a woman. But some people's gender identity – their innate knowledge of who they are – is different from what was initially expected when they were born. Most of these people describe themselves as trans.

It is also important to remember that some trans people identify as neither male nor female, or as a combination of male and female. There are a variety of terms that people who aren't entirely male or entirely female use to describe their gender identity, like **non-binary** or **genderqueer**. Everyone – trans or not – has a gender identity.

How does someone know they are trans?

People can realise that they are trans at any age. Some people can trace their awareness back to their earliest memories – they just knew. Others may need more time to realise that they are trans. Some people may spend years feeling like they don't fit in without really understanding why or may try to avoid thinking or talking about their gender out of fear, shame, or confusion.

Trying to repress or change one's gender identity can be very painful for some people and can be damaging to their emotional and mental health. As trans people become more visible in the media and in community life across the UK, more trans people are able to name and understand their own experiences and may feel safer and more comfortable sharing it with others.

What's the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity?

Gender identity and sexual orientation are two different things. Gender identity refers to a person's internal knowledge of their own gender – for example, their knowledge that they are a woman, a man or another gender. Sexual orientation has to do with who someone is attracted to. Like non-trans people, trans people can have any sexual orientation. For example, a trans man (someone who lives as a man today) may be primarily attracted to other men (and identify as a gay man), may be primarily attracted to women (and identify as a straight man), or have any other sexual orientation.

What's the difference between being trans and being intersex?

People sometimes confuse being trans and being intersex. Intersex people have reproductive anatomy or genes that don't fit typical definitions of male or female, which is often identified at birth.

Some people think that determining who is male or female at birth is a simple matter of checking the baby's external anatomy, but there's actually a lot more to it. Every year, an estimated one in 2,000 babies in the UK is born with a set of characteristics that can't easily be classified as 'male' or 'female'.

People whose bodies fall in the continuum between male and female are often known as **intersex** people. There are many different types of intersex conditions. For example, some people are born with XY chromosomes but have female genitals and secondary sex characteristics. Others might have XX chromosomes but no uterus or might have external anatomy that doesn't appear clearly male or female. To learn more about what it's like to be intersex, check out this [video](#) or click [here](#).

What does it mean to have a gender that's not male or female?

Most trans people are men or women. But some people don't neatly fit into the categories of 'man' or 'woman' or 'male' or 'female'. For example, some people have a gender that blends elements of being a man or a woman, or a gender that is different than either male or female. Some people don't identify with any gender. Some people's gender fluctuates over time.

People whose gender is not male or female may use many different terms to describe themselves. One term that some people use is non-binary, which is used because the gender binary refers to the two categories of male and female. Another term that people use is genderqueer. If you're not sure what term someone uses to describe their gender, you should ask them politely.

Why don't trans people get counselling to accept the gender they were assigned at birth?

Counselling aimed at changing someone's gender identity, sometimes known as conversion therapy, doesn't work and can be extremely harmful. The belief that someone's gender identity can be changed through therapy runs counter to the overwhelming consensus in the medical community. Telling someone that a core part of who they are is wrong or delusional and forcing them to change it

is dangerous, sometimes leading to lasting depression, substance abuse, self-hatred and even suicide. However, many trans people find it helpful to get counselling to help them decide when to tell the world they are trans and deal with the repercussions of stigma and discrimination that may occur.

What does 'gender transition' mean?

Transitioning is the period during which a person begins to live according to their gender identity, rather than the gender they were assigned at birth. While not all trans people transition, a great many do at some point in their lives. Gender transition looks different for every person. Possible steps in a gender transition may or may not include changing clothing, appearance, name, or the pronoun people use to refer to themselves (like 'she', 'he' or 'they'). Some people undergo hormone therapy or other medical procedures to change their physical characteristics and make their body better reflect the gender they know themselves to be.

Transitioning can help many trans people lead healthy, fulfilling lives. No specific set of steps is necessary to 'complete' a transition – it's a matter of what is right for each person. All trans people are entitled to the same dignity and respect, regardless of which legal or medical steps they have taken.

What are some of the official records trans people may change when they're transitioning?

Some trans people make or want to make legal changes as part of their transition, for example by changing their name or updating the gender marker on their identity documents.

Not all trans people need or want to change their identity documents, but for many it's a critical step in their transition. For many trans people, not having identity documents like driver's licenses or passports that match their gender means that they might not be able to do things that require an ID, like getting a job, enrolling in school, opening a bank account, or travelling. Some trans people who use an ID that doesn't match their gender or their presentation face harassment, humiliation, and even violence.

In the UK, trans people may need to change a number of documents in order to live according to their gender identity, such as their:

- Driver's license
 - Passport
 - Bank accounts and records
 - Credit cards
 - Employment related documents
 - Medical records
 - Birth certificate
 - Academic records
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What medical treatments do some trans people seek when transitioning?

Some, but not all, trans people undergo medical treatments to make their bodies more congruent with their gender identity. While transition-related care is critical and even life saving for many trans people, not everyone needs medical care to transition or live a fulfilling life. Different trans people may need different types of transition-related care. People will make decisions about their care based on their individual needs. Medical procedures can include:

- Hair growth or removal treatments
 - Hormone therapy
 - Various surgeries to make someone's face, chest, and anatomy more in line with their gender identity
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What is gender dysphoria?

For some trans people, the difference between the gender they were assigned at birth and the gender they know themselves to be can lead to serious emotional distress that affects their health and everyday lives if not addressed. Gender dysphoria is the medical diagnosis for someone who experiences this distress.

Not all trans people have gender dysphoria. On its own, being trans is not considered a medical condition. Many trans people do not experience serious anxiety or stress associated with the difference between their gender identity and their gender of birth, and so may not have gender dysphoria.

If we support the rights of trans people will this impact on the rights of women?

There has been debate in some sections of the media about trans rights and how they may impact on the rights of women. This has been amplified by news and social media, with a small minority of people publicly stating their opposition to issues such as the rights of a person to self-declare their chosen gender. As a result, it is understandable that trans people, who have been under attack in the media, and their allies, have sought to defend themselves. But some conversations which are not transphobic, but rather seek to ask questions about gender or the detail of policy, have been shut down as well.

It is important at WFHA that there is space to express concerns and ask questions about a complex issue, and we hope that the publication and implementation of our Transgender Inclusion Policy and these guidelines will help us to come together as allies to find ways to work together on this and wider issues.

Why do people include their pronouns in their email signatures?

It is becoming more commonplace for people to state their pronouns within their email signatures such as stating: 'my pronouns are she / they / them'. Indicating preferred pronouns in email signatures allows trans, non-binary and intersex colleagues to be clear on how they want to be addressed and is also a way for colleagues to show their support for their trans, non-binary and intersex colleagues. It can also be helpful for anyone whose name is not necessarily readily associated with a particular gender.

The Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 protects people on the basis of their gender reassignment status from direct and indirect discrimination and harassment. This includes discrimination by association and discrimination against people perceived to have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Within the Act, the protected characteristic of gender reassignment has a specific meaning:

- It covers someone who proposes to go through, is going through or has gone through a process, or part of a process, to change his or her gender from a man to a woman or a woman to a man.
- Gender reassignment (transitioning) does not have to involve any medical supervision or procedure. For example, a person who chooses to reassign his or her gender and lives permanently as the opposite sex without having any hormonal or surgical therapy is protected by the Act.
- Section 16 of the Act provides protection for those who take time off from work when they are transitioning.

Gender Recognition Act 2004

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 was developed for people who want to legally change their gender from the one stated on their birth certificate. This process involves the person applying to the Gender Recognition Panel (GRP) for a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC).

To qualify, a person has to have been living in their chosen gender for two years, have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria, and be able to satisfy the panel that they intend to live in their chosen identity permanently. If the application is successful, they are then entitled to use the gender stated in the GRC 'for all purposes'.

Under the Gender Recognition Act, any information relating to a person's gender recognition application is 'protected information'. It is a criminal offence for anyone acquiring this information in a public capacity to disclose it to a third party without consent. Exceptions are made in a few instances, for example if the information is required for the investigation or prevention of crime.

Data Protection Act 2018

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018, gender reassignment and any information relating to an individual's gender history would constitute 'sensitive data' which can only be processed for certain specified reasons, as set out in the Act.

Glossary of commonly used terms in relation to trans people

Androgyne / polygender	Those who have gender identities and do not identify as male or female, and others who may define themselves as gender variant.
Acquired gender	The gender of a person who has had their gender reassigned and/or legally recognised. It is possible for someone to transition fully without surgery.
Binary gender	The <i>gender binary</i> , also referred to as <i>gender binarism</i> , is the classification of sex and gender into two distinct opposite and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine.
Cisgender	Cisgender refers to someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were 'assigned' with at birth.
Gender	A person's perceived sociological status as either a woman or a man, and an individual's own psychological sense of self as either a woman, a man or other. The terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' are gendered terms denoting these categories.
Gender dysphoria	When a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the gender they were assigned with at birth.
Gender expression	How a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.
Gender fluid	Being gender fluid means a person doesn't have a set gender. The term acknowledges that gender is a spectrum and not binary, and that how someone experiences their gender can change over time.
Gender identity	A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

Genderqueer	<p>Genderqueer describes a person who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders.</p> <p>Non-binary and genderqueer are often used interchangeably by some, but not everyone considers them the same thing. Others consider the term genderqueer as an umbrella term to cover an identity that isn't cisgender. It's important to understand that gender identity is relative to each individual and how they identify.</p>
Gender-variant/gender nonconforming	<p>Gender variance, or gender nonconformity, is behaviour or gender expression by an individual that does not match masculine and feminine gender norms. People who exhibit gender variance may be called gender variant, gender nonconforming, gender diverse, gender creative, gender atypical or genderqueer, and may be transgender or otherwise in terms of their gender identity.</p>
Gender Recognition Act 2004	<p>The UK law which allows trans people to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate.</p>
Gender Reassignment / Gender Confirmation	<p>Another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo gender reassignment usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in a self-identified gender.</p> <p>Gender reassignment is a characteristic that is protected by the Equality Act 2010, and it is further interpreted in the Equality Act 2010 approved code of practice.</p>
Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC)	<p>A GRC enables trans people to be legally recognised in their affirmed gender and to be issued with a new birth certificate.</p>
Gender Recognition Panel (GRP)	<p>A panel of legal and medical professionals appointed to consider an application for a gender recognition certificate Apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Intersex	<p>Intersex is a biological condition that people are born with. Intersex people can have a combination of male and female anatomy and as a result, their biological sex cannot easily be classified as either male or female.</p> <p>Until recently, the medical profession encouraged surgery on intersex babies so that the child would conform to stereotypical male or female appearances. Subsequently, many intersex people encountered difficulties later in life as the gender prescribed by the medical profession and society was different from the gender with which they associate.</p> <p>Not all intersex people opt for surgery, and many will consider themselves to be intersex rather than male or female. While transgender issues are different from intersex issues, intersex</p>

	people who had their gender incorrectly prescribed at birth may decide to transition to the gender with which they identify later in life.
LGBT / LGBTQ+ / LGBTQI	Acronym for lesbian gay bisexual and transgender people. Other acronyms include LGBTQ, which includes 'Q' for either queer or questioning or both; LGBTQI, which includes 'I' for intersex and: LGBTQIA, includes 'A' for ally or asexual or both; LGBT+, which includes '+' encompassing all forms of gender expressions.
Non-binary	Non-binary people are those who don't feel female or male. They may be both or somewhere in between. They may have a gender that changes over time or they may not relate to gender at all.
Pronouns	The use of the appropriate pronouns when talking to someone who is trans is important and shows respect for the individual. Generally, the name the person chooses to use indicates their gender preference. Some people may also prefer to use pronouns to refer to them in gender neutral language, such as they / their.
Titles / Honorifics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ind (abbreviation of individual) • Mx (pronounced 'mix' or 'mux') • Misc (for miscellaneous) • Mre (for mystery) • Msr (a mix of miss / sir) • Pr (pronounced 'per' for person)
Transgender / trans person / people / man / woman	An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned with at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) Transgender, Transsexual, Genderqueer (GQ), Gender-fluid, Non-binary, Gender-variant, Crossdresser, Genderless, Agender, Non-gender, Third gender, trans woman or trans man. Some may prefer to be regarded simply as women or men.
Transition	Transition includes some or all of the following: cultural, legal and medical adjustments; telling one's family, friends, and/or colleagues; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) some form of surgical alteration.
Transgender FtM	A female to male trans person. Someone who is changing, or has changed, gender role from female to male. Also described as a 'trans man'.
Transgender MtF	A male to female trans person. Someone who is changing, or has changed, sex characteristics from male to female. Also described as a 'trans woman'.
Transsexual	This is term used in the past as a more medical term to refer to someone who transitioned to live in the 'opposite' gender to the one they were assigned with at birth. This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender.

Transphobia / transphobic	Comprises various forms of negativity towards trans people or as a social group and is the irrational hatred, intolerance dislike and fear of trans people.
Transvestite / cross dresser	An older (outdated) term used to describe a person who dresses in the clothing of the opposite sex. Generally, transvestites / cross dressers do not wish to change their body and do not necessarily have gender dysphoria.
Sex	A person's perceived biological status as either female or male.
Sexual Orientation	Describes an individual's enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person of the same sex. Trans people may be heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual or asexual.

Further information and guidance

GIRES: The Gender Identity Research & Education Society

GIRES is a charity that hears and gives a voice to trans and gender nonconforming people, including those who are non-binary and non-gender, as well as their families. It provides resources on a range of areas relating to being trans and offers training for educational and medical professionals.

Equality Act 2010. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Equality and Human rights: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

The Equality and Human Rights Commission seeks to identify and tackle areas where there is still unfair discrimination or where human rights are not being respected.

Gendered Intelligence: <https://genderedintelligence.co.uk/>

Gendered Intelligence is made up of a range of freelance workers who are facilitators, practitioners, youth workers and mentors.

The Gender Trust: www.gendertrust.org.uk

The Gender Trust supports all those affected by gender identity issues.

Intersex UK

The UK Intersex Association (UKIA) is an education, advocacy, campaigning, and support organisation which works on behalf of intersex people.

Mermaids: www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/

Mermaids work to raise awareness about gender nonconformity in children and young people amongst professionals and in wider society.

Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/come-out-trans-equality

Stonewall is the UK's leading LGBTQ+ equality and inclusion charity. It undertakes campaigning work UK-wide and supports employers that are seeking to be more LGBTQ+ inclusive in their day-to-day working practices and service delivery.