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*Trans is an umbrella term encompassing all those who do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth, including but not limited to those who are transgender, transsexual, and non-binary*
Introduction

The University has a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations for all of the 9 protected characteristics including gender reassignment.

This guidance aims to raise awareness of this aspect of gender equality and therefore ensure that Trans* staff and students do not suffer discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Definitions

Trans is an umbrella term encompassing all those who do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth, including but not limited to those who are transgender, transsexual, and non-binary. The word trans can be used without offence to identify:

- People whose gender differs from the sex they were assigned at birth
- People undergoing a social gender transition (often referred to as 'transition' or 'social transition') – this will include things such as name change and pronoun change
- People undergoing a medical gender transition (often referred to as 'transition' or 'medical transition', sometimes incorrectly referred to as a 'sex change' - this is considered to be an offensive term by most trans people)
- People who express the intent to undergo any social or medical gender transition

Transphobia refers to the range of negative feelings and attitudes towards trans people based on their gender identity and/or gender expression. Whether intentional or not, transphobia can have severe consequences for the target of the negative attitude.

Gender reassignment can involve several procedures, some of which are medical (e.g. HRT), some legal (e.g. deed poll), and some social (e.g. telling others).

Legal

Current Legislation

The Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999 protects a Trans* person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment from the moment they decide to start the process. It is unlawful for the University, or anyone at the University, to treat a person less favourably because of gender reassignment, or to harass them because of it. The person also must not be treated less favourably by reason of their absence from work or study while undergoing gender reassignment, in comparison to someone absent due to illness or for some other similar reason.

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**Gender Recognition Act 2004** - Gender Recognition Act 2004 allows people who meet certain criteria to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate. This certificate allows people to obtain certain specific legal documentation, for example birth, death, and marriage certificates, in their new legal gender. The Gender Recognition Act makes it illegal to disclose someone's trans status to someone else without explicit permission from the trans person in question.

**The Equality Act 2010** - Gender reassignment is one of the nine distinct protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act. A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if that person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process for the purpose of reassigning the person’s sex by changing the physiological or other attributes of sex.

Such a person is referred to under the act as a Transsexual person and it is unlawful to discriminate against such a person in work and in the provision of goods, facilities, services and public functions.

It is not necessary to be under medical supervision and those perceived as Transsexual people along with those associated with Transsexual people such as family, friends and colleagues are also protected from unlawful treatment. Under the Equality Act, it is unlawful for an employer to:

- Discriminate **directly** by treating a job applicant or employee less favourably than others because of gender reassignment;

- Discriminate by treating an employee less favourably in relation to **absences from work** because of gender reassignment;

- Discriminate **indirectly** by applying a provision, criterion or practice (PCP) that disadvantages Transsexual job applicants or employees without objective justification;

- Subject a job applicant or employee to **harassment** related to gender reassignment, to harassment of a **sexual nature**, or to less favourable treatment because they **reject or submit** to harassment;

- **Victimise** a job applicant or employee because they have made or intend to make a discrimination complaint, or because they have done or intend to do other things in connection with the Equality Act.

In addition, the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation against Transsexual people, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between Transsexual people and others.

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**Guidance**

The University recognises there can be many nuances of gender expression and identity and this guidance sets out the framework for how the University will support all Trans* staff and students.

The University aims to create an inclusive and Trans-friendly culture, workplace and learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation, where all Trans* people are treated with dignity and respect.

There are many ways the University aims to achieve this, this includes, but is not limited to:

**In general:**

- Ensuring this guidance is disseminated to all staff and students through the normal communication channels
- Respecting the confidentiality of Trans staff and students
- Not tolerating transphobic abuse or harassment eg. misgendering, use of slurs, use of someone’s former name, discrimination on basis of gender identity or trans status.
- Providing a supportive environment for staff and students who wish their Trans* status to be known. It is the right of the individual to decide whether they want to be open about their Trans* status or gender identity.
- Encouraging all staff and students to undertake the online training 'Diversity in the Workplace' or 'Diversity at Study' which covers Trans equality
- Ensuring all recruitment managers and staff on short listing panels are fully trained in Equality & Diversity issues
- Positive support given to staff and students undergoing or considering undergoing gender reassignment to meet their particular needs during this period and agree how the individual wishes to manage their transition.

No prospective or current student or member of staff will be treated less favourably than any other on the grounds of their gender identity and/or reassignment.

**In relation to staff:**

Ensuring that Trans* staff are not treated any less favourably than any other member of staff on the grounds of their gender identity and/or reassignment in relation (but not limited) to:

- the advertisement of jobs and recruitment and selection;
- training and development;
- opportunities for promotion;
- conditions of service, benefits, facilities and pay;
- health and safety;
- conduct at work including grievances and disciplinary procedures;
- termination of employment

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In relation to students:

Ensuring that Trans* students are not treated any less favourably than any other student on the grounds of their gender identity and/or reassignment in relation (but not limited) to:

- admissions;
- teaching;
- learning and research provision;
- the award of scholarships, grants and other awards under the University’s control;
- student support;
- University accommodation and other facilities;
- health and safety;
- student complaints and disciplinary procedures.

Supporting Staff and Students Going through Transition/Gender Reassignment.

If a student or member of staff is considering or undergoing the process of Transition/gender reassignment, they should contact Student Services or their local Human Resources team respectively. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the situation in confidence and to agree the process for handling the Transition.

A very important element of this meeting will be to determine who should be told what and when and how this should occur. This decision should be led by the Trans* staff member or student in question.

It can be helpful to draw up a confidential plan for the period of Transition and thereafter. The implementation of the plan should be reviewed regularly and reassessed at each significant part of the process. The plan could include the following issues:

- The expected timescale of any medical and/or surgical interventions and procedures and the time off required;
- Confidentiality – the University will respect the confidentiality of all Trans* staff and students and will not reveal information without their prior agreement;
- Any time off required for treatment and/or possible side effects from any medication and how this will affect job/study;
- The trans person’s preferred time for change of name and/or pronoun, personal details, gender and other relevant required amendments to records and systems
- Whether a student wants to continue their course of study, defer for a set amount of time or come to some other arrangement
- Whether a member of staff wishes to stay in their current post or be redeployed and if the latter, whether redeployment is possible;

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• Whether the individual wishes to inform line managers, co-workers/fellow students themselves, or would prefer this to be done on their behalf. When and how this should be done;
• Whether training or briefing of co-workers, fellow students or service users will be necessary, at what point and by whom this will be carried out;
• Signposting to additional services at the University such as Network Groups and the Counselling Service

Appendix 1 provides a useful checklist that covers most of the issues that need to be considered when an individual is going through this process.

It is important to understand that one of the most significant moments will be when the individual wishes to start presenting in their preferred gender publicly. It is crucial that this is managed and communicated in a thorough and appropriate manner to those that have a working or study relationship with the individual.

Practical Considerations

Some practical considerations will arise when a person is Transitioning, for example, single gender facilities and dress codes. When a person transitions, they usually start to use the facilities that are appropriate for their gender identity, eg. trans women use the female facilities, trans men use male facilities. Non-binary people will use the facility that seems most appropriate to them. It may be necessary to explain the situation careful to work/study colleagues after consultation with the trans person. Suggesting that the Trans* person use the disabled toilet is not acceptable unless the person is disabled and requires the use of those toilet facilities. However, it must be kept in mind that many of our campus toilets are labelled both gender neutral AND accessible. A full map can be seen here [insert new link]

Flexibility is required in dress codes while someone is early in transition, as they will often have to buy new clothes, and this should be discussed with the individual, taking into account what they are required to wear to work.

Records

No records should be changed without the permission of the staff member or student concerned. An agreed date should be made in which all records are changed.

Trans* people can change their legal name by making a statutory declaration of name change. However, some Trans* people choose not to change their name immediately or have no intention of changing their name.

Some records can be changed at the request of the individual (e-mail and directory etc.) with no official documentation needed. A written notification of intent to transition is sufficient. Other records (personnel, Occupational Health, student, pensions and degree certificates) can only be changed once official documentation has been received (see additional considerations for staff/students).

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A person’s file or record should always reflect their current name and gender. Any documents that need to be kept related to the person’s Trans* status should be kept confidentially in a sealed envelope and be only viewed by people when required, and with the permission of the individual concerned. If a Trans* person receives a GRC, they have the right to request that all references to their former name and gender are removed from old records. In this case all past records must be updated and replaced in their file. For example, their old birth certificate should be replaced with their new one; any letters for offers/acceptances should be replaced reflecting their new name. Nothing should remain in the file that would reveal to a third party that a change has occurred.

**Additional considerations for staff**

**Pensions**

For the purposes of state pensions, Trans* people without a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) are treated as the sex recorded at birth. Private pensions firms will require legal evidence of gender as well as name change. For this staff should be asked to provide a new birth certificate and if appropriate a statutory declaration of name change.

**Additional considerations for students**

**Degree Certificates**

A degree certificate should be issued in the name that the student is registered with at the completion of their studies. A degree certificate is a legal document and legal proof of change of name (such as statutory declaration of name change or a birth certificate) is required to reissue a certificate in a different name to which the student originally registered. Requiring a student or alumni to provide a GRC is unlawful and not appropriate. As not all Trans* people will be under medical supervision, The University does not recommend that they are asked to provide a doctor’s letter either, as not all Trans* people opt for medical assistance.

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Appendix 1

Suggested checklist when discussing a student or staff member’s transition

For each section of this suggested checklist timescales and dates and who is responsible should be considered.

Name change

Identification cards/name badges that may need changing (including, but not limited to):

- University ID card
- library card
- Student Union card
- National Union of Students card
- Trade Union membership card
- club and society cards
- professional membership cards
- accommodation access card
- volunteer or mentor identification

Documents/materials that may need to be replaced or altered (including, but not limited to):

- online records, academic biographies, staff & student directory
- all student/staff records and databases, enrolment forms, finance records
- programme and module lists
- personal tutor records
- occupational health/disability/counselling records
- committee minutes and records, e.g. boards of study, academic boards
- certificates, e.g. council tax exemption, training attendance, degree
- club and society membership records
- payroll (and banking details)
- pension: death in service and dependents’ benefits
- student loan company/local education authority
- company insurance
- volunteering or mentoring records

Some of the above may require legal proof of name change before amendments can be made.

When a Trans* person has received a Gender Recognition Certificate, they have the right to request that all references to their former name and gender are removed and replaced with their current name and gender. Given that it takes time to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate, it is good practice to regard those who have changed their gender as if a GRC was held, from the date of Transition onwards (subject to any other legal requirements).

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Process

You should also think about who should inform the following:

- students and other colleagues
- Human Resources
- support departments (finance, student records, accommodation, etc.)
- committee chairs/secretaries
- club and society members
- Volunteer or mentor groups

Questions to consider:

If the student/staff member is, or will be, undergoing surgery, do they know dates?

If the student/staff member requires time off for surgery and recovery, what process/support/adjustments are needed to ensure the student/staff member remains on their programme of study/in employment, or can return when they have recovered?

Are there any professional requirements or attendance requirements that may be affected by the person’s absence for medical treatment? For example, absence trigger points, or number of hours in a school or on a hospital placement? How will students be supported to ensure they can complete their programme of study on time?

Will additional cover be required during times of absence?

A person who is absent because of gender reassignment must not be treated less favourably than another person who is absent due to sickness or injury.

Training

What training is available at Staff Learning and Development (SLAD)?

Will there be a need to arrange training for fellow students, immediate team members and other university colleagues?

Who will deliver this training (SLAD, Equality & Diversity, LGBT Staff Network Group?)

What will the training cover?

Will the individual wish to attend the training?

Genuine Occupational Requirements (GOR’s)

Schedule 9 of the Equality Act provides exceptions where the requirement not to be a Transsexual person is a “proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim”. In

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general, a requirement that restricts an occupation to persons of a particular sex should also be open to Transsexual persons of that acquired gender. The onus is on the employer to prove that the exception applies and they will generally be rare and on a case by case basis.

Are there any genuine occupational requirements during the student’s programme of study or staff member’s work, e.g. counselling, social care, NHS, charities, schools?

Are there any GOR’s volunteer placements or work-based learning?

Ceremonies

During awards ceremonies...if the individual has not legally changed their name or is not out to everyone, which name would they prefer to be used?

Discrimination and harassment

Are staff and students aware of the Dignity at Work & Study Policy?

How is the individual made aware of these processes?

Other Support Available – internal:

- Counselling Service
- Student Support
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- LGBT Staff Network Group
- Occupational Health
- Dignity at Work & Study Policy

Other Support Available – internal:

- Sparkle
- Action for Trans Health
- LGBT Foundation

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