



## **Supporting transgender students and staff**

The University of Strathclyde is committed to creating learning, research and working environments that are inclusive and support the needs of all members of the University community.

We welcome individuals who have undergone or are undergoing gender reassignment or who consider themselves to fall within the transgender community. We will make appropriate efforts to ensure that students and staff identifying as transgender are not unfairly disadvantaged or treated differently.

Each member of the University community has a personal responsibility for their own behaviour and must treat their colleagues and peers with dignity, respect and fairness. Refrain from making comments (in person or via social media) that may be considered insulting and insensitive or engage in any conduct that would be against University policies and regulations. Where any breach occurs the University reserves the right to take appropriate action.

The University Equality and Diversity website provides information resources to enable anyone to learn and understand the complex issues around gender transitioning and transgender status.

### **Legal position**

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination, harassment or victimisation of all people irrespective of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Individuals are protected from discrimination on the grounds that they:

- intend to undergo gender reassignment,
- are undergoing gender reassignment,
- have at some time in the past undergone gender reassignment.

Protection from discrimination is extended to:

- any person who is associated with a trans person, for example his/ her partner.
- any individual who is assumed or thought to be transgender by another person.

It is also unlawful for any person to instruct someone else to discriminate against a trans person.

## **Confidentiality**

At point of enrolment for students and job application and post appointment for staff, the University invites you to provide information about your background including your gender status. The information you provide is voluntary and is protected by the [1998 Data Protection Act](#). This means that information is considered by the University in composite statistical form and not on an individual basis, and will be used in equality reports and planning processes.

The University will treat any information about the gender status or transition of an individual in strict confidence and will only share this information with others with the individual's permission.

## **Frequently Asked Questions and Guidelines**

The following Frequently Asked Questions provide:

- Advise trans students and staff
- Advise Head of Department/ Line manager/Adviser of Studies
- Information on specific University services
- List of useful contacts and resources

### **Trans students and staff**

- **Do I need to inform anyone at the University?**

At point of enrolment (students) and job application and post appointment (staff), the University invites you to provide information about your background including whether you identify as transgender. The information is voluntary.

The information provided will be used by the Equality and Diversity office to assess trends annually and to ensure the University has appropriate procedures and service provision in place.

- **I am considering or am undergoing transition/ gender reassignment and would like to inform the University/ receive support. What should I do?**

**Students** should inform their Adviser of studies or the Head of Department.

Members of **staff** should inform their line manager.

The following is the suggested protocol to follow, including:

- Regular meetings should take place between the transgender person and the adviser of studies (student) or the line manager (for member of staff). The discussion should cover the following aspects to agree an action plan to cover the period of transition:
  - Mutual understanding of the transition process that the trans person intends to follow and the key elements and milestones in the chosen process.
  - How best to communicate during any period of absence.

- Discussion with the trans person and plan on how, by whom and when best to inform colleagues/ peers of the anticipated point of gender transition in terms of: personal presentation, i.e. dress code / appearance, and the related communication content and style to fellow class students and relevant staff members. It is most likely that a period of absence would precede the point of presentation transition.
- Proposed date to resume studies and/ or return to work in the new gender.
- Agreeing commencement point for using facilities appropriate to the new gender. This may be a sensitive issue with some people and therefore mutual sensitivity and awareness is essential in order to reassure all parties and assist a smooth transition in this regard. The University supports people using facilities for the gender in which they present themselves.
- Access to information resources and identification of any awareness raising training for colleagues/ peers.
- Current students can make changes to their name via Pegasus. Evidence of Statutory Declaration of name change will be required to update records of former students and staff members where replacement parchment or information is requested)
  - Student Business and HR will ensure that students and staff are provided with a replacement identity card

**Adviser of studies/ Head of Department/ Line manager**

The duties of the person in a position of responsibility includes to:

- Discuss any awareness raising training requirements with the Equality and Diversity Office
- Encourage students and staff to read the [ECU guidance](#)
- Advise all relevant people about the return date for the transitioning student/ member of staff and the need to use their new name, including the correct use of pronouns such as him and her
- Provide any references in the new name and avoid any disclosure of former name.

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<sup>1</sup> This covers all information held about the individual at the institution.

## How do I record periods of absence?

### ▪ Students

Students should use the normal process for recording any period absence as mitigating/ personal circumstances on Pegasus.

- For absences of seven days or less:  
If the absence is for seven days or less you should record a self-certification online via PEGASUS using the Personal Circumstances link under the Services tab.
- For absences of more than seven days:  
Where absence is of more than seven days, you are required to submit a medical certificate (signed by a medical practitioner who is not a member of your family) to Student Business.
- For prolonged absence students may consider applying for voluntary suspension of studies. Please refer to relevant [Absence and Voluntary Suspension guidelines](#).

### ▪ Staff

Staff should follow the guidelines as suggested in the [Sickness Absence Management Policy](#).

## Does the University provide gender neutral facilities?

The University's Estates Services guide on equality and diversity makes specific reference to meeting the needs of trans students under sections on Accommodation/ Residences and Welfare facilities.

- [Accommodation/ Residences \(section 2.11\)](#)

Every effort should be made to be flexible in terms of accommodation provision for trans gender students and the arrangement of such should be treated with sensitivity and consideration. (Where the University refers students to private accommodation, it should make reasonable efforts to determine whether such providers have suitable processes in place to support transitioning students and inform students accordingly).

- [Welfare Facilities \(section 2.15\)](#)

The Accessible toilets will be gender neutral and hence can support the needs of disabled users, people going through gender reassignment and people requiring baby changing facilities.

Please refer to the full [Estates Services Equality and Diversity Guidance](#).

The University considered wider needs of all students including trans students in the refurbishments and redesigning of changing facilities at the sports centre in 2012.

### **Can I obtain a replacement graduation certificate in relation to my studies?**

Yes. You will need to provide a Statutory Declaration <sup>2</sup> confirming your new name.

Please check further information on the process for applying for a replacement certificate at: [www.strath.ac.uk/studentlifecycle/replacementparchments/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/studentlifecycle/replacementparchments/)

### **Is there a transgender staff or student support network at the University?**

To participate in a network, please contact the Equality and Diversity office: [equalopportunities@strath.ac.uk](mailto:equalopportunities@strath.ac.uk)

### **Who can I contact for further support on campus?**

#### **Students and Staff**

Equality and Diversity Office	0141 548 2811 <a href="mailto:equalopportunities@strath.ac.uk">equalopportunities@strath.ac.uk</a>
Estates Services	0141 548 2164 <a href="mailto:estates.helpdesk@strath.ac.uk">estates.helpdesk@strath.ac.uk</a>
Occupational Health Service	0141 548 4824 <a href="mailto:occupationalhealth@strath.ac.uk">occupationalhealth@strath.ac.uk</a>
Safety Services	0141 548 2726 <a href="mailto:safety@strath.ac.uk">safety@strath.ac.uk</a>

#### **Student specific support**

Student Health	0141 548 3916 <a href="mailto:studenthealth@strath.ac.uk">studenthealth@strath.ac.uk</a>
Student Counselling service	0141 548 3510 <a href="mailto:student-counselling@strath.ac.uk">student-counselling@strath.ac.uk</a>
University Student Advice Centre	0141 548 4104 <a href="mailto:infoandadvice@strath.ac.uk">infoandadvice@strath.ac.uk</a>
Students' Association Advice Hub	0141 567 5040 <a href="mailto:ussa.advice@strath.ac.uk">ussa.advice@strath.ac.uk</a>
LGBT students society	<a href="mailto:ussa.lgbt@strath.ac.uk">ussa.lgbt@strath.ac.uk</a>

#### **Staff specific support**

Employee counselling service	<b>0800 389 7851</b> <a href="mailto:ecs@empcs.org.uk">ecs@empcs.org.uk</a>
Human Resources	0141 548 4476 <a href="mailto:humanresources@strath.ac.uk">humanresources@strath.ac.uk</a>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/your-rights/transgender/trans-people-your-right-to-change-your-name/>

## External Useful Resources

Changing name	<a href="http://www.scottishtrans.org/?s=proof+of+name+change">http://www.scottishtrans.org/?s=proof+of+name+change</a>
Equality and Human Rights Commission	<a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/your-rights/transgender/transgender-additional-resources/">http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/your-rights/transgender/transgender-additional-resources/</a>
Gender Identity Research and Education Society	<a href="http://www.gires.org.uk">www.gires.org.uk</a>
LGBT Youth Scotland	<a href="http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/">www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/</a>
National Union of Students	<a href="http://www.nus.org.uk/en/nus-scotland/">www.nus.org.uk/en/nus-scotland/</a>
Press For Change	<a href="http://www.pfc.org.uk/">www.pfc.org.uk/</a>
Scotland Government	<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/SexualOrientation">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/SexualOrientation</a>
Scottish Trans	<a href="http://www.scottishtrans.org/link-categories/transgender-intersex/">www.scottishtrans.org/link-categories/transgender-intersex/</a>
The Equality Network	<a href="http://www.equality-network.org/">www.equality-network.org/</a>
The Gender Trust	<a href="http://www.gendertrust.org.uk/">www.gendertrust.org.uk/</a>
Transgender Scotland	<a href="http://www.transgenderscotland.org/">www.transgenderscotland.org/</a>
Transgender Zone	<a href="http://www.transgenderzone.com">www.transgenderzone.com</a>

## **Terminology**<sup>3</sup>

Some of the following definitions are open to debate especially among those to whom these definitions may be applied. Good practice is to ask the individual concerned for their preferred terminology.

### **Acquired gender**

The new gender of a person who has socially transitioned and had their gender reassigned and/or legally recognised ([through the Gender Recognition Certificate](#))<sup>4</sup>. It is possible for an individual to transition and receive legal recognition of their acquired gender without medical assistance.

### **Gender**

The social and cultural identification and perception of masculinity and femininity as opposed to physical/biological sex. Social gender is the gender in which an individual lives their day to day life. This is likely to affect the name they choose to be called by and their dress.

### **Gender dysphoria**

Describes a difference between mind and body in terms of gender and leads to an intense dissatisfaction with one's physical sex (male or female) as being in conflict with one's internal feelings of gender. Gender dysphoria exists from birth and is not obtained later in life through socialisation, at puberty or such other event. The term is usually restricted to those who seek medical and surgical assistance to resolve the conflict in their gender identity.

**Gender reassignment** refers to a process by which someone changes gender on a permanent basis. It is not necessary for a person to undergo surgery to be legally reassigned to a different gender.

**Gender Recognition Certificate** is the legal protection for a person who has fully transitioned. When a trans staff or student receives a gender recognition certificate, they have the right to request that all references to their former name and gender are removed from old records to ensure their former identity is not revealed. All records held must be replaced with new ones. Nothing should remain on the file that would disclose to a third party that a change took place.

### **Intersex**

Intersex is a biological condition that people are born with. Intersex people can have a combination of male and female anatomy; as a result, their biological sex cannot easily be classified as either male or female. Intersex people who had their gender incorrectly prescribed at birth may decide to transition to the gender with which they identify later in life.

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<sup>3</sup> The terminology section was developed from different websites including the Equality Challenge Unit, Northumberland County Council and advice from Letitia Davis.

<sup>4</sup> [www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/gender-recognition-panel/faqs](http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/gender-recognition-panel/faqs)

## **Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT)**

While trans status is different from sexual orientation, the forms of prejudice and discrimination directed against trans people can be very similar to those directed against lesbian, gay or bisexual people and historically the two communities have coexisted and supported each other. As a result, action and support groups often have a broader remit than sexual orientation.

## **Real-life experience or test**

Real-life experience is a phase during gender reassignment in which the individual must live, work and study in the gender with which they identify before they can start hormone therapy and/or undergo surgery.

## **Sexual orientation**

Direction of one's sexual interest toward members of the same, opposite, or both sexes. Sexual orientation is entirely different from gender identity, and the two are not related. Trans people, like any other people, can be heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.

## **Trans**

An inclusive term for those who identify themselves as transgender, transsexual or transvestite. The term 'trans' can be used without offence but should only be used as an adjective, for example 'a trans person'. Following gender transition, people prefer to be referred to as men and women without reference to their historical transition status.

## **Tranny**

Is a derogatory term that is not welcome to trans men and women and is offensive. It is most often used to refer to transvestites and may even be welcome between transvestites who are familiar with each other.

## **Trans man**

A person may describe themselves as a trans man – that is whilst transitioning, or has transitioned from female to male.

## **Trans woman**

A person may describe themselves as a trans woman – this is a person who is transitioning, or has transitioned from male to female.

## **Transgender**

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/ or gender expression differs from their birth sex. Transgender people may or may not alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically. The term transgender should only be used as an adjective, for example, 'transgender people'.

## **Transitioning**

Transitioning is the term used to describe someone changing from one gender to another, with or without medical intervention.

## **Transphobia**

Fear and dislike of transgender people, which can lead to discrimination or hatred resulting in verbal or physical attacks and abuse.



**Transsexual person**

Term used to describe people who feel a consistent and overwhelming desire to transition to their preferred gender. Individuals should be referred to as 'transsexual people' not 'transsexuals'.

**Transvestite or cross-dresser**

a person who dresses and acts intermittently in a style or manner traditionally associated with the opposite sex. Generally, people who are transvestites/cross-dressers do not wish to alter their body.

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