

University of Oxford Transgender Guidance

1. Contents

University of Oxford Transgender guidance	1
1. Contents	1
2. Introduction	2
3. Gender transition.....	3
4. Legal protection	3
5. What to expect if someone plans to transition	4
6. Checklist on supporting staff and students who are transitioning.....	6
7. Practical arrangements.....	10
8. Name and gender identification.....	11
9. Student admissions.....	13
10. Staff recruitment and selection.....	13
11. Pensions	14
12. Consultation and monitoring.....	15
13. Raising awareness of transgender issues	15
14. Unfair treatment	16
15. Further resources	17
16. Glossary	19

This document was drafted by Caroline Moughton, Equality & Diversity Unit.

Feedback from students and staff, divisions, departments and colleges and OUSU is gratefully acknowledged.

Please send any further comments to Caroline.Moughton@admin.ox.ac.uk

June 2013

This document is available online at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/transgender/>

2. Introduction

This guidance has been developed to support members of the University in meeting the requirements of the University's Transgender Policy. The policy applies to transgender students and staff, with a particular focus on those who are seeking to transition from one gender to another.

Transgender is used to apply to the following groups:

- People covered by the Equality Act definition: "A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex."
- People who do not wish to transition permanently to a new gender role, but who identify as genderqueer, gender variant or intersex or who choose to live permanently with a more fluid gender identity.

The aims of the policy and associated guidance are:

- to assist members of the University in understanding gender diversity in relation to the activities of the University;
- to clarify roles and responsibilities for supporting students and staff who are planning, are in the process of, or have undertaken gender reassignment;
- to ensure that the University has protocols for changing student and staff records following gender transition and for storing confidential information relating to gender identity.

The guidance is informative, not prescriptive and is intended to form the basis for sensitive support of transgender individuals.

Numerically, this is likely to apply to a small number of students and staff at the University but has a major impact on the experience of those individuals. Responses to the Government Equalities Office's Transgender Survey showed that

- 50% of transgender employees said they had been harassed or discriminated against because of their gender identity in their current or previous job.
- 88% of respondents said that ignorance of transgender issues was the biggest challenge they faced in employment;
- Transgender people highlight transitioning at work as one of the most significant triggers for discrimination.¹
- 22.6% of transgender students responding to a survey of LGBT students and staff conducted for the Equality Challenge Unit reported experiencing harassment during their higher education.²

Data are not available for the number of transgender students and staff at the University.

¹ GEO (2011). Transgender survey #3. 414 respondents.

² Valentine (2009). The experiences of LGBT students in higher education. 4,205 student and staff respondents

3. Gender transition

People are identified at birth as male or female on the basis of their sexual characteristics. For most people, our **sex**, **gender identity** (how we feel inside) and our **gender role** (how we behave in society) are consistent with each other. Some people see gender as a spectrum, not a binary choice, and express their gender identity in ways that reflect this.

Occasionally individuals find that the way they look outside and are expected to behave doesn't fit how they feel inside. Also the way they are expected to behave may be different from the way they want to behave. This causes a feeling of deep discomfort described as **gender dysphoria**. This is not a mental illness, but is a recognised condition for which medical treatment may be appropriate.

Transition (or gender confirmation) is the process of changing from the gender assigned at birth to a gender with which the individual identifies. This may, or may not involve medical or surgical treatment. Gender transition is a journey that is different for everyone. Every individual is unique and will experience gender variance to a different degree that also depends on social circumstances. Some may attempt to suppress their discomfort, while others may live permanently in the gender role that is most comfortable for them, but without seeking any medical treatment. Some people choose to follow a medical process called **gender reassignment**.

There is some confusion about how these terms are used. Our usage in this guidance is based on consultation with transgender people. The Equality Act 2010 uses 'gender reassignment' in a broader sense to refer to what in this document is termed 'transition'. See section 16 Glossary for further information.

4. Legal protection

The **Equality Act 2010** lists gender reassignment as one of the 'protected characteristics' on the grounds of which people are protected against unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. This applies in education, employment and the provision of goods and services.

It is not necessary for an individual to be under medical supervision, or to undertake reassignment surgery, to benefit from the legal protection, which commences from the point at which they first indicate their intention to transition. Employers have a responsibility to protect their employees from harassment and bullying, including in relation to gender reassignment.

It is unlawful to discriminate against someone because they are perceived to be transgender, whether or not the perception is accurate. It is also unlawful to discriminate against someone because they are friends with a transgender person.

The University, as a public authority, also has equality duties to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The **Gender Recognition Act 2004** allows individuals who have undergone gender reassignment to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). This means that they are legally recognised for all purposes in their confirmed gender. It is a criminal offence under this legislation to disclose information relating to the individual's gender history obtained in an official capacity (i.e. as part of a person's work role).

To obtain the GRC an individual must provide evidence to satisfy the Gender Recognition Panel that they are at least 18 years of age, have or have had gender dysphoria, have fully lived in their confirmed gender for at least two years, are not married or in a civil partnership and intend to live permanently in their confirmed gender. Obtaining a GRC means that a person is:

- entitled to be issued with a new birth certificate reflecting their changed gender;
- legally recognised as belonging to their confirmed gender 'for all purposes' including the criminal law;
- entitled to state benefits and occupational pension schemes on the basis of their acquired gender;
- able to marry someone of a different gender, or enter into a civil partnership with someone of the same gender.

It is illegal to ask to see a Gender Recognition Certificate. If they need to prove identity, university and college officers should request other documents, such as a birth certificate or passport.

5. What to expect if someone plans to transition

Diagnosis of gender dysphoria is carried out by a specialist and may take place over months or years. Someone may not seek diagnosis until they are profoundly distressed by the discrepancy between the way they feel inside and the sex assigned to them at birth.

Transitioning is a lengthy process, which may take some years. The individual is likely to have counselling and may need time away from work or study to attend assessment by a specialist medical professional. Much of the transition process is about social aspects such as name, clothes, appearance and personality rather than medical aspects.

If an individual wants to go through the medical gender reassignment process it is a requirement for National Health Service (NHS) treatment that they first spend a period living in their desired gender – the 'real life experience'. Often an individual chooses to take paid or unpaid leave from the workplace and return presenting as a different gender.

This may then be followed by hormone treatment to alter physical characteristics: physical appearance will typically start to change after six months. Some people opt to have further medical interventions, including possible genital surgery, breast removal/augmentation surgery, cosmetic

surgery and laser hair removal. Having surgery is a personal choice and is not a key criterion for the process of gender transition.

Since each individual's transition is different, good communication between the individual, college and departments is essential. It is recommended that a single point of contact is identified, to agree detailed arrangements with the individual. All plans should be flexible, and subject to revision. The checklists in Section 6 are intended to provide some prompts for things to discuss, but are not exhaustive.

'The individual needs to engage with the university. Communication needs to be respectful and responsive in both directions.'

[Personnel Department]

Where a member of staff is transitioning, consideration should be given to balancing the needs of the individual against the requirements of the employing department or college. The University does not attempt to prescribe the amount of additional leave that may be appropriate in each case; departments have discretion to authorise additional paid or unpaid leave according to individual circumstances. It is expected that individuals may take a mixture of annual leave, sickness leave (for any medical procedures) and additional paid or unpaid leave. It is not possible to predict in advance how much leave may be needed for medical procedures and recovery.

6. Checklist on supporting staff and students who are transitioning

These checklists are intended to signal some of the main areas to be considered when an individual indicates that they intend to transition. Detailed arrangements should be agreed between the individual, department and college.

6 a Checklist on supporting members of staff who are transitioning	
1. Main contact	
Identify a single point of contact to support the individual and agree an action plan. This would normally be a manager or senior member of the department, who would liaise with Personnel Services, the Equality and Diversity Unit or the Occupational Health Service (for University employees). For staff holding a joint college appointment, a contact should be identified for liaison.	
2. Timetable	
What is the likely timetable for transition? e.g. Dates for name change Use of facilities (toilets, changing rooms) Change of records	
3. Name	
What identification needs to be changed and when?	
e.g. University card HR database, payroll, pensions Department website College website	
What documents and records need to be changed and when?	
e.g. College records Department records Contact relevant funding bodies Professional bodies Trade Union membership Payroll (and banking details) Pension scheme	
4. Process	
Is the individual taking any extended time off? Is additional paid/unpaid leave needed?	
Is time off needed for medical appointments (which may require travel to London)?	
How can ongoing non-medical procedures be accommodated? e.g. A male transitioning to female may need regular specialist hair removal. Consider whether this could be accommodated by working flexible hours and/or homeworking.	
Is the individual having any planned surgery?	

Recovery may take between one and twelve weeks, depending on the surgery, and any complications, and several surgeries may be needed. Staff will receive standard sickness leave, but may wish to negotiate additional paid/unpaid leave.	
What arrangements have been made to ensure the individual is able to return to work? The Occupational Health Service may help to plan a phased return to work.	
Are any temporary adjustments needed to duties following surgery? e.g. avoiding heavy lifting. Individuals may experience fatigue or mood fluctuations.	
Are any permanent changes to duties needed following medical treatment?	
Are there any risks to the individual e.g. in relation to third parties or media intrusion, and how will they be handled?	
Does the member of staff want to stay in their current role or consider redeployment or retirement?	
Has workload during transition been discussed with the manager? There may need to be some flexibility on deadlines, especially if there are unexpected side effects or surgical complications.	
5. Support for the individual	
Is the individual aware of the LGBT Staff Network?	
Is the individual aware that support may be available through trade unions?	
Is the individual receiving gender identity counselling through a specialist clinic?	
6. Communication	
How will colleagues and students in department and college be informed? Can a statement be agreed?	
How and when will external contacts be informed?	
Is there a training need?	
7. Discrimination	
Are there clear guidelines and processes to deal with direct or indirect discrimination or harassment of a trans person?	

6b Checklist on supporting students who are transitioning	
1. Main contact	
Identify a single point of contact to support the individual, agree an action plan and coordinate arrangements between college and University. This role would normally, but not necessarily, be undertaken by the Senior Tutor or Tutor for Graduates.	
2. Timetable	
What is likely timetable for transition? e.g. Dates for name change Use of facilities (toilets, changing rooms) Change of records	
3. Name	
What identification needs to be changed?	
e.g. University card OSS Department website College website	
What documents and records need to be changed?	
e.g. Admissions records College records Department records Student Finance England Club and society membership OUSU membership Name on degree certificate	
4. Process	
Is the student taking any extended time off? Does the student want to continue their current programme of study, defer for a set time, or come to some other arrangement?	
Is time off needed for medical appointments (which may require travel to London)?	
How can ongoing non-medical procedures be accommodated? e.g. A male transitioning to female may need regular specialist hair removal.	
Is the individual having any planned surgery? Recovery may take between one and twelve weeks, depending on the surgery, and any complications, and several surgeries may be needed.	
What adjustments can be made to minimise the impact on a student's learning? e.g. Extensions to deadlines, resits.	
Are any temporary adjustments needed following surgery? Individuals may experience fatigue or mood fluctuations.	

Are any adjustments needed to work placements?	
Are any permanent changes needed following medical treatment?	
Are there any risks to the individual e.g. in relation to third parties or media intrusion, and how will they be handled?	
Are extensions to deadlines needed if students need time out to attend medical appointments, or if they are experiencing side effects from medication or complications following surgery?	
Are any arrangements needed in relation to social activities such as competitive sports where teams and changing facilities are based on gender? Email the Sport Federation President at oufspresident@sport.ox.ac.uk	
5. Support for the individual	
Is the student aware that the OUSU LGBTQ Officer may be able to put them in contact with other students who have transitioned? lgbtqofficer@ousu.org	
Is the student aware that OU LGBTQ Society has a trans students' rep?	
Is the student in contact with the college nurse and/or doctor?	
Is the student aware that externally the voluntary organisation Gendered Intelligence offers free mentoring to trans students and those interested in exploring their gender identity?	
Students with a pre-existing mental health condition, who receive a Disabled Student Allowance, may have funding for regular mentoring. Contact the Disability Advisory Service.	
The Counselling Service may be able to offer a student short-term support (typically 2-4 sessions) in thinking about any issues in relation to being a transgender member of this University.	
Is the individual receiving gender identity counselling through a specialist clinic?	
Check whether the student is in any financial hardship. Refer to OUSU for advice, and to college and/or university sources of hardship funding if necessary.	
6. Communication	
How will staff and students in department and college be informed? Can a statement be agreed?	
How and when will external contacts e.g. placement providers be informed?	
Is there a training need?	
7. Discrimination	
Are there clear guidelines and processes to deal with direct or indirect discrimination or harassment of a trans person?	

7. Practical arrangements

a. Communicating news to other members of staff and students

The individual should discuss with their department or college when students and staff who work with them closely should be informed about their transition, and what information should be given. Some individuals may choose to send a letter to their colleagues, while others may want an agreed statement to come from a senior manager. Information should be pitched at a level and style appropriate to the audience, while respecting the individual's wishes including their right to medical confidentiality.

It is common for transitioning individuals to take a short time away from work or study and return in their new name and gender role. This time is often used to brief people.

When someone transitions this may challenge other members of staff and students who have a fixed idea of gender identity. They, too, may need support in dealing with the situation and may want to ask questions. While some individuals are very open about transitioning, others may want some help in dealing with other people's questions. It may be helpful to be able to publicise that questions about transgender issues may be directed to the Equality and Diversity Unit. For further information see Section 13 Raising awareness of transgender issues.

'While Jo took an agreed period of leave, an agreed statement was sent to her colleagues and suppliers advising them that she was changing gender, and that her department was very supportive and was sure that her colleagues would be looking forward to welcoming her back. On her first day back they invited everyone to coffee and cake, to make a very public statement of support.

Jo knew that people would feel curious and would be interested to see her. She wanted to avoid endless 'first meetings' with colleagues. Having a public gathering gave everyone the chance to be friendly and welcoming, and to talk to her about it. In fact, many colleagues sent her welcome back cards and gifts. Many of them have also said that they welcomed Jo's openness. After that it was business as usual.'

[account from another organisation]

b. Academic dress

On 19th July 2012 regulations relating to academic dress changed to become gender neutral. Members of the University may now choose which elements of subfusc to wear with academic dress.

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/48-012.shtml>

c. Degree certificates

The name that appears on a Degree Certificate and Degree Confirmation letter will be the legal name of the individual at the time they completed the degree.

Under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 the University is required to reissue a degree certificate in a new name, once a Gender Recognition Certificate has been obtained. It is not legal to request to see a GRC. The individual concerned should submit evidence of their new gender identity (such as a passport or birth certificate) to the Degree Conferrals Office.

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/graduation/certificates/>

d. Friends and family

The University aims to promote an inclusive and trans-friendly culture.

It recognises that it is not only the trans individual who is affected by their transition, but also other people who are close to them, which may include students and staff at the University. They, in their turn, may need support and understanding.

Some trans students experience a breakdown in relations with their families, causing anxiety and distress and financial hardship. 7.1% of trans students responding to the ECU survey of LGBT students reported their parents refused them financial support, while a further 9.2 % were in effect estranged from their parents but unable to prove this legally, and therefore receiving no financial support. International students may face particular challenges in discussing their transition with friends and family at home, where cultural attitudes to gender variance may be very different.

Students should be signposted to possible sources of advice and support, such as the OUSU Student Advice Service (<http://www-old.ousu.org/welfare/SAS/>), the Counselling Service (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling/>), college hardship funding and for mental health issues, the Disability Advisory Service. (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das/>).

e. Toilet facilities

People should be able to use gender-appropriate toilets.

Designating some gender-neutral toilet facilities, especially in a new building, is a sensible approach where this can be accommodated and may also be welcomed by people with a non-binary gender or who are genderfluid. It is recognised that this may difficult to accommodate in listed buildings.

The department or college will agree with the individual the point at which to change their use of single sex facilities. There is often anxiety from other people about the use of toilet facilities, so clear information should be given.

Requiring someone to use a toilet designated for disabled people is not acceptable.

8. Name and gender identification

a. Name and title changes

Someone who transitions may wish to adopt a variation of their legal name or use a nickname. Once they notify college and department of their preferred name and title (Ms, Miss, Mrs Mr) this name should be used in all circumstances, rather than their birth name and all relevant records should be updated.

The Equality and Diversity Unit suggests that departments and colleges remove all gender-specific titles from websites and print information, retaining only academic titles such as Dr, Prof. In the meantime individuals should be given the option of appearing without a title.

An individual may also prefer a particular pronoun: this might be 'he', 'she' or 'they' (used to refer to a single person). In non-binary communities, Mx and Msc are gaining popularity, and some non-binary people prefer constructed pronouns such as 'zie' or 'ey'. The student record currently allows the possibility of having no title but does not permit constructed titles such as Mx.

e.g. Miss Jane Brown notifies the department that she is transitioning to become male and wishes to be known as Jan Brown and referred to as 'he' from an agreed date.

e.g. The college is notified that Mr Simon Bates wishes to be known in future as Mx Si Bates, with the invented gender-neutral pronoun Zie. "Zie is not transitioning, but does not feel like a man or a woman. Zie is genderqueer."

People who are UK nationals may easily change their legal name by making a statutory declaration of name change. However, some do not choose to change their name immediately or at all. It may not be feasible for trans people who are not UK nationals to change their legal name.

The University endeavours to respect people in the gender in which they present, irrespective of their legal gender. When dealing with external organisations, however, (e.g. over taxes, national insurance, pensions, visas) we should be aware that they will be dealing with legal gender, not presenting gender. This may affect the time when payroll records can be changed.

i) Staff name changes

Staff name changes should include personnel records, email details, University card and contact information. Where possible, information relating to a staff member's previous identity that needs to be retained, such as copies of qualification certificates, should be kept confidentially and separate from their current record.

The staff member is responsible for contacting external agencies such as the UK Border Agency.

ii) Student name changes

The Academic Records Office should be contacted to change the student's name on university records.

Students' name changes should include student records, email details, University card. Where possible, information relating to a student's previous identity that needs to be retained, such as copies of qualification certificates, should be kept confidentially and separate from their current record.

The University recognises that some students may not wish to identify as male or female and feel that they have a more fluid gender identity, either while they transition or permanently. The Academic Records Office is looking to introduce from August 2014 a new field of Preferred Sex (female, male, indeterminate) which may be different to legal sex. The preferred sex would appear on all student accessed records (e.g. online student self service), and in data returned to HESA. The University's own reporting would use legal sex, to avoid the risk of breaching student confidentiality.

The student is responsible for contacting external agencies with details of any changes to personal details. This includes Student Finance England, the Student Loans Company, the UK Border Agency and the student's bank. It is noted that some external agencies, such as the UK Border Agency, insist that students identify according to the male/female binary.

b. Identification

A full Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) gives a trans person the means to obtain a new birth certificate but other official identification and services reflective of their preferred gender can be gained without a full GRC including a passport, driving licence and the ability to change bank details.

It is illegal for university officers to ask to see a GRC. However, they may ask for a Statutory Declaration of Name Change, Deed Poll or other official identification. There can be very real cost implications in changing identity documentation and this may not be accomplished all at once especially by students and lower paid employees. The department or college should be flexible where possible and clear about what information is required as well as any alternatives that can be offered.

i. Photographic identification

An individual who is transitioning should be given the opportunity to update any photographs on their University cards and on University webpages. They may wish to make several changes, as their physical appearance changes over time.

9. Student admissions

Staff engaged in student admissions should have awareness of transgender issues and of the profound impact of gender dysphoria. Potential applicants should be made aware of the University's support for transgender people, and any specific enquiries should be handled sensitively. Information for transgender students should be available on the university's website and in publications such as the undergraduate and postgraduate prospectus.

'A prospective student phoned the University for advice as to whether to mention transgender experiences in explaining gaps in schooling. The student was advised that since there had been disruption to their schooling, they should mention this in their application.'

[Equality & Diversity Unit]

10. Staff recruitment and selection

Recruitment and selection may be problematic for transgender applicants, who may have experienced transphobia. By highlighting the University's commitment to equality and diversity, a recruiting panel can help to reassure job applicants that they will be treated fairly.

a. Shortlisting

Good practice is to match the individual's skills against the essential and desirable criteria of the role. There may be unexplained gaps in an individual's work history while they were undergoing medical treatment for gender reassignment. Transphobia may have led to trans people leaving a previous employer, or experiencing difficulty in finding employment.

b. Interview

Trans people may find interviews awkward, since they fear being judged on the basis of their appearance and perceived conformity to gender stereotypes.

c. References

Look carefully for any additional instructions on contacting referees, or check with the applicant. Never assume anything other than the current name, unless told otherwise.

d. Documentation

Prospective members of staff are asked for identity documentation such as a passport or birth certificate to check that they have a valid entitlement to work and reside in the UK, and may also be asked for evidence of qualifications.

An applicant who has begun to live in a different gender, but who has not yet obtained a GRC may need to provide documents that use their birth name. It is important that all documentation is held confidentially, and only processed by those immediately responsible for personnel administration.

e. DBS checking

A procedure exists within the University for applying for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks without the completed form being seen by departmental staff, if individuals express concerns about this. This may apply to job applicants or students who need a DBS check for a work placement. Applicants who have transitioned, for example, may be concerned about 'outing' themselves if previous names are different from their present names. The individual may have a confidential discussion with the Head of Vetting (272945) or the Vetting administrator (282152). It is important to respect the individual's right to privacy.

Transgender applicants may use the DBS confidential checking service :

email : sensitive@db.s.gsi.gov.uk tel: 0151 676 1452.

11. Pensions

Everyone born after April 1955 now receives state pension at 65, since state pension ages have been harmonised. However women born before 1950 can claim state pension at 60, and there are phased arrangements for those born between 1950 and 1955.

For state pension purposes, transsexual people can only be regarded as the sex recorded at birth until they have obtained a new birth certificate under the provisions of the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Otherwise, those born prior to April 1955 can only claim state pension at the age appropriate to the sex on the original birth certificate - that is for transsexual women at age 65 and for transsexual men at 60.

It is the responsibility of the employer to take suitable steps to keep confidential the reason for the individual's apparently early or late retirement.

Most occupational schemes offer a Death in Service lump sum and a Dependent's Benefit. The individual should review their 'expression of wish' forms. Someone who has had their marriage

annulled or civil partnership dissolved to receive a full GRC should review their pension arrangements.

12. Consultation and monitoring

The University needs to measure its progress in creating an inclusive culture for trans people. For this reason it may ask questions about the experience of trans people or awareness of transgender issues through surveys and questionnaires. This may be done at university level due to the low numbers.

Quantitative monitoring of trans people is neither easy or helpful, since:

- for some people 'trans' is not an identity, but a transient state and those who pass through it identify as men and women;
- trans people may fear the process will 'out' them;
- people experiencing gender dysphoria may not have embarked on transition, and may not want people to be aware of their concerns;
- asking the question in a respectful way is difficult, since there are a wide range of self-descriptions.

The LGBT Staff Advisory Group works with the Equality and Diversity Unit to highlight issues relating to LGBT staff in order to inform the development of University policy and practice in relation to LGBT staff and to facilitate consultation and the sharing of information with LGBT staff.

13. Raising awareness of transgender issues

It may be helpful to provide specific briefing sessions for colleagues or fellow students of people who are transitioning to enable them to raise any concerns and ask questions about appropriate behaviours. It is important that such a session gives both general information about transgender people and specific information about how the particular individual wants to be treated.

The following informal guidelines on how to treat people who are transitioning or genderqueer may be helpful for colleagues and fellow students.

- Listen to the person, and ask them how they want to be treated and referred to.
- Think of the person as being the gender that they want you to think of them as.
- Use the name and pronoun that the person asks you to. If you are not sure what the right pronoun is, then simply ask. If you make a mistake with pronouns, correct yourself and move on. Do not make a big deal out of it. Some genderqueer people prefer to use gender neutral pronouns.
- Do not ask what their 'real' or 'birth' name is. Trans people are often sensitive about revealing information about their past, especially if they think it might affect how they are perceived in the present, and their real name is the one they are currently using.
- Similarly, respect their privacy. Do not tell others about a person's gender history. If documents have to be kept that have the person's old name and gender on them, keep them confidential.

- Respect people’s boundaries. If you feel it is appropriate to ask a personal question, first ask if it is ok to do so. Personal questions include anything to do with one’s sex life, anatomy (not just genitalia), medical treatment and relationship status – past, present or future. Would you ask this question of any other colleague?
- When someone starts to live as their correct gender, they may be very sensitive to the ways in which their physical appearance differs from gender norms. It is usually inappropriate to discuss someone’s appearance and never appropriate to judge someone by how they look.

The process of transition is complex and requires understanding on all sides. This is a difficult situation and it is normal for people to be interested, as they might be about any major life change of a colleague. Interest is not necessarily intrusive, but may be a way of expressing support. The person who is transitioning needs to tolerate mistakes, since years of habit are hard to change.

The NHS has two free video stories, which were successfully used in training sessions at another university. Watching these videos helped to shift people’s attitudes and increase their understanding.

<http://www.nhs.uk/Video/Pages/Transgender-Jaystory.aspx?searchtype=Search&searchterm=transgender&offset=1&>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Video/Pages/Transsexual-Ruthstory.aspx?searchtype=Search&searchterm=transgender&offset=1&>

14. Unfair treatment

a. Harassment and bullying

The University recognises the right of every individual to choose whether to be open about their gender identity and history. To ‘out’ someone - whether staff or student - without their permission is a form of harassment and possibly a criminal offence.

Any unlawful discriminatory behaviour, including transphobic harassment or bullying by individuals or groups, will be regarded extremely seriously and could be regarded as grounds for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion or dismissal. Such behaviour will be dealt with under the [University Policy on Harassment and Bullying](#).

Sadly, many trans people and those who do not conform to gender norms report experiencing discrimination. This may be because of deliberate and overt treatment, or it may be the result of insensitivity and ignorance. Whatever the intention of the perpetrator, the relevant issue is the impact on the individual experiencing the unwanted behaviour. Discrimination has a serious impact, not only on a person’s health and happiness, but also on their performance in study and at work.

People whose appearance does not conform to binary gender norms may be more vulnerable to harassment than those who successfully ‘pass’ as male or female. Persistently “accidentally” addressing an individual with the wrong name or pronoun might be experienced as harassment by the person concerned.

b. Perception and association

People who are perceived to be transgender are protected from bullying and harassment, whether or not the perception is true.

A person associated with someone who undergoes gender reassignment (e.g. a partner) is protected against discrimination on the grounds of that association.

c. Misuse of information

Misuse of information about gender transition contravenes the [University Policy on Data Protection](#) and may be a criminal offence.

d. Reporting transphobic hate crime

If you experience or witness transphobic hate crime in the local community, it is important to report this. You may do this anonymously.

Report it to the **Police**

- Dial 101
- Report it online at <http://www.report-it.org.uk/>
- In an emergency dial 999.

Report it to Stop Hate UK, which runs a hate crime reporting service for Oxfordshire.

- Dial the 24 hour helpline 0800 138 1625 <http://www.stophateuk.org/talk/>

Report it to **Tcrime**, GRES' service for reporting transphobic hate crime.

- Report it online at <http://tcrime.net/>

15. Further resources

a. Within the University

OU LGBTQ Society <http://www.oulgbtsoc.org.uk/> (they have a trans students' rep)

OUSU LGBTQ Officer lgbtqofficer@ousu.org

Counselling Service <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling/>

Disability Advisory Service <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das/>

Equality and Diversity Unit <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/>

b. Local organisations

Oxford Friend gives free and confidential information, support and counselling services for LGBT people. <http://www.oxfordfriend.co.uk/>

Help line Tel. 01865 726893 (open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 7-9pm)

c. National organisations

The Beaumont Society is a support network for the transgender community.

<http://www.beaumontsociety.org.uk/>

Broken Rainbow is a national organisation offering support to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse. <http://www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/>

Tel.08452 604460

Depend is an organisation offering free non-judgemental advice and support to family and friends of transgender people in the UK <http://www.depend.org.uk/>

The Gender Trust is a support and information centre for trans people and their families. It is also provides advice for employers and others who encounter gender reassignment in their work.

<http://gendertrust.org.uk/>

The **Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES)** initiates and promotes research into gender identity. <http://www.gires.org.uk/>

Gendered Intelligence offers a free mentoring service for trans students and those questioning their gender identity. <http://genderedintelligence.tumblr.com/post/26357414756/gendered-intelligence-mentoring-service-free-support>

Mermaids is a support group for gender variant children, teenagers and their families.

<http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

Press for Change is a major support and lobbying organisation for UK trans people.

<http://www.pfc.org.uk/>

Queer Youth Network is a national voluntary group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people www.queeryouth.org

T-house is the first Black Trans organisation in the UK, addressing gender and cultural identity.

<http://www.t-house.me>

Trans Media Watch gives guidance for transgender people when dealing with the media.

<http://www.transmediawatch.org/>

The UK Intersex Association (UKIA) campaigns and supports intersexed people.

<http://www.ukia.co.uk/>

d. Print and video resources

Equality Challenge Unit. (2010). Trans students and staff in higher education: revised guidance

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/files/trans-staff-and-students-in-he-revised-2010.pdf/view>

Valentine, G., Wood, N. and Plummer P. (2009). The experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans staff and students in higher education.

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/files/lgbt-staff-and-students-in-he-report.pdf/view>

Government Equalities Office (2011). Headline findings from our transgender online survey.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/lgbt-equality-publications/transgender-survey?view=Binary>

The Equality Challenge Unit has a personal account from a postdoctoral research assistant at University College London of how she chose to carry out her transition.

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/inclusive-practice/supporting-trans-staff-and-students-rachels-story>

The NHS has produced two free video stories, which may be useful for awareness raising:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Video/Pages/Transgender-Jaystory.aspx?searchtype=Search&searchterm=transgender&offset=1&>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Video/Pages/Transsexual-Ruthstory.aspx?searchtype=Search&searchterm=transgender&offset=1&>

16. Glossary

Gender dysphoria and gender identity disorder is a medical condition when a person assigned to one gender (on the basis of their physical characteristics at birth) experiences a deep discomfort with that gender and identifies as belonging to another gender.

Gender identity is a person's internal perception and experience of their gender.

Gender reassignment refers to medical treatment to support transition

Gender role or expression relates to the way a person lives in society and interacts with others.

Gender variant people see gender as a spectrum rather than binary, and express their identity in ways that reflect this. This includes androgynous/polygender people.

Genderqueer is a term used for people with gender identities other than male or female, thus outside the gender binary. Genderqueer people may think of themselves as one or more of the following: both men and women (bigender, pangender); neither men nor women (genderless, agender); moving between genders (genderfluid); third gender or other-gendered; having an overlap of, or blurred lines between gender identity and sexual or romantic orientation.

Intersex is the term used for humans born with variation in reproductive or sexual anatomy or physiology that do not seem to fit typical definitions of female or male. Sometimes this is apparent at birth. In the past the medical profession would assign a baby to a gender, and might perform surgery so that the child would conform to a more typical male or female appearance. Often this caused problems later in life, when there was a difference between the gender assigned at birth and that with which the individual identified. Nowadays the advice is to wait until an informed choice can be made.

There are a number of sex chromosomal variations which may not produce any anatomical variation and may not be detected until puberty, or later in life. This includes medical conditions such as

Turner's Syndrome, Klinefelter's Syndrome (XXY syndrome), and mosaicisms where half of a person's cells have one form of sex chromosomes and the other half another (eg XX/XY mosaicism).

Legal gender is defined by a person's birth certificate. People who obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 can now apply for a revised birth certificate in their acquired gender.

Sex refers to biological and physiological characteristics. In Britain the terms male and female are used on birth certificates to denote the sex of children.

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. This includes, but is not limited to, transsexual people who feel a consistent and overwhelming desire to transition to their preferred gender. It also includes those who are gender variant or intersex.

Transphobia refers to discrimination, harassment and bullying or hate crime experienced by trans people on the grounds of their gender expression.

Transsexual is used to refer to someone who has gender dysphoria and intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their confirmed gender. Some people who have transitioned describe themselves as a trans man (female to male transition) or trans woman (male to female transition). Others prefer 'person with a transsexual history). In most situations within the university, gender is irrelevant.

Transvestite or cross-dresser is used for someone who dresses in clothing typically worn by another gender. Generally, people who are transvestites do not wish to alter their body or live permanently in a different gender, although for people experiencing gender dysphoria it can be a way of exploring gender identity.