**People and Organisational Development**

**Student and Academic Services**

**Equality and Diversity**

**Policy on support and procedures for trans, gender fluid and non-binary staff and students**

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# Our commitment

* 1. Through its equality and diversity charter, DMUfreedom, De Montfort University sets out its commitment to allow our students, staff and visitors to have the freedom to be, freedom to inspire and freedom to succeed. The university will support staff and students live in their experienced gender, regardless of gender assigned at birth.
  2. The university will not tolerate bullying, harassment, or any form of intimidation or discrimination of those working, studying or engaging with the university. This applies to all characteristics including unfavourable treatment based on gender identity (including gender fluidity and non-binary).

1.3 This policy aims to help ensure that the university’s staff, students and visitors are treated with dignity, respect and fairness and are able to study, work and visit DMU free from harassment and discrimination regardless of their gender identity.

# Introduction, definitions and scope

* 1. This policy sets out the university’s approach to the avoidance of discrimination towards gender fluid, non-binary and trans staff and students, and the support that is offered by De Montfort University (DMU).
  2. This policy applies to all that apply to work or study at DMU, staff and students and former employees and students, and in relation to the avoidance of discrimination, and promotion of good relations, visitors to the university.
  3. ‘Trans’ is an inclusive terms for people whose experienced gender is different from that which they were assigned at birth. It is an umbrella terms that covers many different trans identities, statuses and people with a trans history. The definition of what constitutes a trans identity is continually evolving and the associated terminology can be highly individualised, meaning for example that a person may associate with a term perceived by others, even within the same community, to be inappropriate. A glossary of terms used socially and legally in relation to gender identity is provided at Appendix B.
  4. This policy applies to non-binary, gender fluid and trans people and is not restricted to those planning, going through or having been through a process of gender confirmation.
  5. DMU will protect the rights of gender fluid, non-binary and trans people to confidentiality, and will handle all enquiries and data sensitively and in accordance with the legislative requirements as set out in section 3, below.
  6. This policy should be read alongside De Montfort University’s policies and statements available on the DMU website and staff intranet (such as the Equal Opportunities Policy), which together ensure the values of DMU are upheld and legislation is met.
  7. Separate guidance for those responsible for supporting gender fluid, non-binary and trans and/or transitioning staff and students is available from the Head of Equality and Diversity: [equality@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:equality@dmu.ac.uk). Comprehensive guidance on supporting trans staff and students is also available from Equality Challenge Unit.

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# The legal framework

* 1. Trans people receive protection under the Equality Act 2010 and the Gender Recognition Act 2004. The Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 are also relevant.
  2. **The Equality Act 2010**
  3. Gender reassignment or being transsexual is one of the nine protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010. In 2016 a Women and Equalities Committee report recommended that the use of the terms ‘gender reassignment’ and ‘transsexual’ are outdated and misleading, noting that the preferred umbrella term is trans. While the Equality Act has not been updated, DMU adopts the use of trans as the preferred adjective.
  4. The Equality Act makes it unlawful to harass, victimise or discriminate against a person with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. For example this could include threatening to ‘out’ a person’s trans identity, or harassing a person because of their perceived gender.
  5. Gender reassignment is a personal, social, and sometimes medical process by which a person's gender appears to others to have changed. Anyone who is perceived to change the gender from which they were assigned at birth is protected from discrimination under the Equality Act. A person does not need to be undergoing medical supervision to be protected. For example, a person whose sex was assigned female at birth but identifies as male and lives accordingly without undergoing any medical procedures would be covered.
  6. The Equality Act also affords protection to people who face discrimination through being perceived by others to be undergoing gender reassignment or who are associated with someone who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. This extends to people whose experience is non-binary or gender fluid.
  7. The Act allows for voluntary positive action measures to be taken in order to help alleviate disadvantage and underrepresentation experienced by trans people, and to help meet their particular needs.
  8. **The Gender Recognition Act 2004**
  9. The Gender Recognition Act 2004 allows people who meet certain criteria to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate. This certificate allows them to amend their sex marker on their birth certificate.
  10. The Act gives trans people privacy rights and makes it a criminal offence for someone who acquires information in an official capacity about a person’s trans identity to pass that information to a third party without the consent of the trans person. For example this might be a personal tutor staff disclosing the information to those that manage records.
  11. **The Data Protection Act 1998**
  12. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, trans status and gender reassignment constitute ‘sensitive data’. This means that information relating to a person’s trans status cannot be recorded or passed to another person unless certain conditions are met, which include, amongst others, the need for an individual’s explicit consent for their information to be processed. It should be noted that the definition of ‘processing’ under the Act is very broad and includes obtaining, recording or holding data or information, or carrying out any action on them.
  13. Under the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation (in force from 25 May 2018), trans status and gender reassignment constitute ‘special category data’. The processing of sensitive personal information/special category requires data controllers take additional precautions to protect the data beyond those required for the processing of less confidential personal information.
  14. **The Human Rights Act 1998**
  15. The Human Rights Act 1998 affords protection to all people in respect of their right to a private life (which includes their right to express their gender identity, to live a particular lifestyle and to choose the way they look and dress). In addition the Act requires that personal information should be kept securely and not shared without the permission of the individual concerned.
  16. The Act also gives a right to freedom from degrading treatment which could include, for example, the exclusion of a trans person from facilities that are appropriate to their gender.

# Language

* 1. Language is continually shifting and previously used terms may no longer be appropriate.
  2. 'Trans' is now commonly used as an umbrella term including both 'transsexual' people and people with non-binary identities. However, while the term has no legal meaning it is used here to reflect current discourse.
  3. Annex B provides a glossary of terms.

# Use of facilities (changing rooms, toilets)

* 1. Staff and students are able to use single sex facilities according to the gender they identify with. Gender neutral changing facilities and toilets are also available across campus for any member of staff or students to use, should they prefer. People who identify as non-binary may use facilities of their choice.

# Dress code

* 1. The Code of Conduct for DMU staff policy sets out that staff may choose to wear clothing reflective of their experienced gender. Further information is available in that policy.

# Identity, names and records management

* 1. The university will support staff and students to live in their experienced gender. In the UK if you wish to be known by a different name you can change your name at any time - you can change your forename or surname, add names or rearrange your existing names.
  2. There is no requirement to follow a formal legal process in order to start using a new name or gender. The university will be able to update public facing identifiers, such as identity cards, email addresses and postal addresses. However the university may not be able to update some confidential records (such as pension’s records) unless the name change has been legally registered and/or new identity documents provided.
  3. A trans person does not need a gender recognition certificate (GRC) in order to change their name and title and it is unlawful to ask for one. Guidance is available from the Head of Equality on the legal processes staff or students wishing to legally change their name may follow.
  4. The cost of revising DMU cards, signage and where appropriate re-issuing DMU degree certificates (see Section 11) will be met by the university.

# Transitioning at work

* 1. All staff should feel able to support trans staff and students in line with our approach to providing a supportive working and studying environment.
  2. Should any member of staff need to communicate to others information on the gender identity of the person being supported, permission is required from the trans member of staff or the student. This is as the trans persons right to privacy is strongly protected by the legislation set out above, in Section 3.
  3. Staff who wish to notify the university that they wish to change the information the university holds on their gender identity and / or name should normally contact their relevant HR Partner. Should they prefer, the staff member transitioning can also notify a trusted colleague and ask them to liaise with the HR Partner on their behalf.
  4. The HR Partner will liaise with relevant other university staff to progress any formal university identity and record changes.
  5. The numbers of other staff informed will be limited to those which are absolutely necessary to make changes to records and systems, and all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.
  6. It is not necessary for the transitioning member of staff to have officially registered a change in gender or name in order for them to assume, and go about their daily life in their experienced gender at De Montfort University.
  7. The records which the university will update will be discussed with the staff member concerned. The records in scope for updating will vary according to the details of the individual situation, and will be limited if an amendment to the birth certificate has not been registered. This limitation extends only to confidential HR records and will not impinge on the member of staff from going about their daily work in their experienced gender.
  8. The HR Partner will discuss options with the member of staff concerned and agree from the outset how the transition at work will be managed. Where original documentation cannot be updated, this will be accessible only by the relevant HR Partner and the Head of Human Resources.
  9. The university will take all reasonable care to support an individual transition within the systems it has control over. The university is unable to act on behalf of an individual outside of the auspices of DMU, but will provide support and guidance to members of staff in relation to the steps that they may wish to consider taking themselves, for example in relation to contacting pension providers.
  10. DMU recognises that time off associated with transitioning may be required. All requests for taking time off to attend appointments associated with transitioning will be considered reasonably and in line with the relevant policies, including (where applicable), annual leave policies, the Attendance Management Policy and Special Leave Policy. All requests for time off should in the first instance be made to line managers.
  11. As a source of additional support, the Employee Assistance Programme is available for all staff. It provides 24 hour telephone counselling, and financial information services: <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-staff/your-staff-experience/staff-benefits/health-and-wellbeing/employee-assistance-programme.aspx>

# Transitioning as a student

* 1. All staff should feel able to support trans students in line with our approach to providing a supportive working and studying environment.
  2. Should any member of staff need to communicate to others information on the gender identity of the student being supported, permission is required in writing from the trans student. This is as the trans members right to privacy is strongly protected by the legislation set out above, in Section 3.
  3. Students that wish to formally notify the university of an intended change in their gender identity and / or name should contact the Head of Academic Services. Should they prefer, the student who is transitioning can also notify their personal tutor or another trusted member of staff and ask them to liaise with the Head of Academic Services on their behalf.
  4. The Head of Academic Services (or their nominee) will liaise with relevant university staff to progress university identity and record changes. Permission, in writing, is required to enable liaison with other staff.
  5. The staff members informed will be limited to those who are absolutely necessary to make changes to records and systems, and all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.
  6. It is not necessary for the transitioning student to have officially registered a change in gender or name in order for them to assume, and go about their daily life in their experienced gender at De Montfort University.
  7. The records which the university will update will be discussed with the student concerned. The records in scope for updating will vary according to the details of the individual situation, and will be limited if an amendment to the birth certificate has not been registered. This limitation extends only to confidential student records and will not impinge on the student going about their daily business at the university in their experienced gender. However, see paragraph 11 below, Degree Certificates.
  8. The Head of Academic Services (or their nominee) will discuss options with the student concerned and agree from the outset how the transition will be managed. Where original documentation cannot be updated, this will be accessible only by the relevant member of the Student and Academic Services team.
  9. The university will take all reasonable care to support an individual transition within the systems DMU has control over. The university is unable to act on behalf of an individual outside of the auspices of DMU.
  10. De Montfort University recognises that any student can need support or a helping hand during their time at university. The Student Finance and Welfare Team offer support and advice on a range of queries concerning fees, finances and funding, housing matters and general administrative queries. Details of the support available can be found on the Student Gateway section of DMU’s website.

# Time off – Students

* 1. De Montfort University recognises that time off associated with transitioning may be required and all requests for taking time off to attend appointments associated with transitioning will be considered reasonably and in line with the policies of the [Academic Support Office](http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/the-student-gateway/academic-support-office/academic-support-office.aspx).
  2. For planned short term absences (i.e. less than one week) the student should inform all relevant tutors, including their Personal Tutor, to avoid being marked as absent (as per any other appointment e.g. a medical appointment). Students should do their best to catch up on their work, and tutors will be able to advise what materials are available (including as part of DMUReplay) to assist with this.
  3. For longer term absences that mean work or assessment periods will be affected, students can apply for a deferral or extension. Evidence of the reason for the request should be provided and the request made in advance whenever possible. Retrospective requests are rarely granted.
  4. For long term absences or multiple short term absences, students may want to consider formally interrupting their studies.
  5. Further information is available on the Academic Support Office webpages of the student gateway <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/the-student-gateway/academic-support-office/academic-support-office.aspx>.

# Degree certificates

* 1. Degree certificates are issued in the legal name of the student. Degree certificates can be issued in the new name of DMU graduates upon receipt of the former degree certificate along with evidence (the same as set out in 13.2) of a legally registered name change.

# Announcing transition with other staff and students

* 1. An individual should decide whether they want to announce their transition to colleagues and peers. Should an individual wish to inform others, DMU can assist the individual with making the announcement or make it on their behalf, according to their wishes and preference.
  2. The HR Partner or Head of Academic Services (or their nominee) will discuss and agree with the staff member or student respectively the date from which their name and gender is changed on records, website records, payroll details, identification passes etc.
  3. The date, mode and scope of the announcement should be agreed with the individual in advance, and take account of the timeline required for updating of records and related processes, for example the creation of new ID cards.

# Information for applicants

* 1. Proof of legal identity is required from all staff and students, either (or both) at application and at registration. This must match with evidence of qualifications and other eligibility to study or work requirements, for example previous educational qualifications and visa documentation.
  2. Where an applicant has transitioned but not yet applied for, or received new supporting documentation required for their application, they should submit proof that corroborates the documentation. Suitable proof is considered to be:
* Registered statutory declaration of name change (enrolled deed poll – see: <https://www.gov.uk/change-name-deed-poll/enrol-a-deed-poll-with-the-courts>).
* Gender Recognition Certificate.
* Birth certificate.
* Driving licence.
* Passport.
  1. Where a legal name change has not been made, DMU is able to change the alias / known as name and gender of applicants, which will be reflected appropriately in future staff and student records. However, DMU records can be derived or updated using the records held by external organisations. As such the university strongly recommends that applicants inform other relevant organisations involved in the recruitment process (such as UCAS) of name changes.
  2. DMU is unable to liaise with UCAS and other external organisations engaged in the admissions process and cannot be responsible for correspondence from them adopting an applicant’s preferred name.
  3. Trans applicants that wish to utilise the approach set out in 13.2 and 13.3 should contact the Head of Admissions (students) or the Head of Human Resources (staff).

# Students that require a visa for studying at DMU

* 1. Legislation protecting the rights and freedoms for non-UK applicants may differ to that which exists in the UK. In order to meet UKVI requirements the given and family names recorded on our student database for students that require a visa must correspond with the given name and family name as written on the student’s passport and/or visa documents. It is possible for visa national students to follow the process set out in 8 and 13 and request for a known as name to be used in the application and subsequent processes.

# Monitoring and review

15.1 This policy will be amended on 25 May 2018 to take account of changes in legislation set out in 3.13 and fully reviewed in September 2018. The staff and student LGBTQ+A networks will be consulted at the time of review.

# Appendix A: Additional sources of support and information

1. Information on all student services and support is available on the Student Gateway section of the DMU website.
2. Staff should contact their HR Partner for advice, or can alternatively access the Employee Assistance Programme, details of which are available on the staff pages of the DMU website. Staff can access all relevant policies on the staff intranet.
3. Acas provides help and advice for employers and employees and is a trusted resource of the legal community. It has produced guidance on gender reassignment and trans rights at work: [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)
4. Equality Challenge Unit provides resources unique to higher education. Guidance is available on their website [www.ecu.ac.uk](http://www.ecu.ac.uk). ECU has also produced the following list of organisations that can provide information or support.

* Depend is an organisation that offers free, confidential and non-judgmental advice, information and support to all family members, partners, spouses and friends of trans people: [**www.depend.org.uk**](http://www.depend.org.uk)
* The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the statutory body responsible for protecting, enforcing and promoting equality across nine protected characteristics – age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation: [**www.equalityhumanrights.com**](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)
* The Forum for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality in Post-School Education promotes equality and good practice in employment and the provision of post-school education, with a specific focus on sexual orientation and gender identity, or transgender, equality issues: [**https://sgforum.org.uk/**](https://sgforum.org.uk/)
* The Gender Identity Research and Education Society initiates, promotes and supports research, particularly to address the needs of people who have a strong and ongoing desire to live and be accepted in the gender in which they identify, although different from that assigned at birth: [**www.gires.org.uk**](http://www.gires.org.uk)
* Gendered Intelligence is an organisation which provides support, training and resources for all those who work with and support trans people as employees, colleagues, students, pupils or clients; youth groups, activities and support for young trans people up to the age of 25; and works extensively in schools, colleges and universities with both staff and students offering mentoring, workshops and training: [**www.genderedintelligence.co.uk**](http://www.genderedintelligence.co.uk)

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# Appendix B: Glossary of terms

This glossary draws heavily from guidance produced by the Equality Challenge Unit as part of their 2016 guidance ‘Trans staff and students in HE and colleges: improving experiences’. Permission has been granted for its use in this guide. Any further reproduction should comply with ECU’s copyright statement which is available on the ECU website. Further information has been drawn from [www.glaad.org/reference/transgender](http://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender).

**Introduction**

In order to understand trans issues, it is important to be aware of the variety of terms that may be used both socially and legally.

Terminology changes and its use can be highly individualised. It is important to be mindful of trends in language as a staff member or student may associate with a term perceived by some, even members of the same community, to be inappropriate.

**Acquired gender**

A legally contested term used in the Gender Recognition Act 2004. It is defined as the gender that a person who is applying for a gender recognition certificate (GRC) has lived in for two years and intends to continue living in. This term is often not used in the community.

Affirmed gender may be used when a person has transitioned but has decided not to apply for a GRC.

**Cisgender**

A term used to describe people who are not transgender. Cisgender is based on the Latin prefix cis which means ‘on this side of’. The Latin prefix trans means ‘across from’ or ‘on the other side of’. The use of cisgender is debated within the trans community and some people prefer the term non-trans as it familiarises the use of the term trans (see below).

**Dual role**

A dual role person occasionally wears clothing and/or makeup and accessories that are not traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Generally, dual role people do not wish to transition and do not necessarily experience gender dysphoria. Some people prefer the term alter ego.

Historically the terms transvestite and cross dresser were used to describe dual role people. While some people may use the terms to describe themselves, other people may find the terms offensive.

**Gender and gender identity**

A person's internal, deeply held sense of their gender. For trans people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into one of those two choices (see non-binary and/or genderqueer below.) Unlike gender expression (see below) gender identity is not visible to others.

**Gender dysphoria**

In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association released the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) which replaced the outdated entry "Gender Identity Disorder" with Gender Dysphoria, and changed the criteria for diagnosis. The necessity of a psychiatric diagnosis remains controversial, as both psychiatric and medical authorities recommend individualized medical treatment through hormones and/or surgeries to treat gender dysphoria. Some transgender advocates believe the inclusion of Gender Dysphoria in the DSM is necessary in order to advocate for health insurance that covers the medically necessary treatment recommended for transgender people.

In order to qualify for NHS medical assistance to transition, a trans person in the UK must have a diagnosis of gender dysphoria. As not all trans people have gender dysphoria this presents a significant barrier to accessing medical support and the provisions of the Gender Recognition Act.

**Gender expression**

External manifestations of gender, expressed through a person's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice, and/or body characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture. Typically, transgender people seek to align their gender expression with their gender identity, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth.

It is best practice to not assume someone’s gender identity on the basis of their gender expression. If you are not sure, it is best to ask a person how they would like to be addressed.

**Gender Identity Disorder (GID)**

This term is outdated, see Gender Dysphoria.

**Gender reassignment**

The legal term used in the Equality Act to describe the protected characteristic of anyone who ‘proposes 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’ (Equality Act, 2010).

This is the protected characteristic that protects trans people from discrimination, victimisation and harassment in employment, education and when using services. Importantly, the act requires no medical supervision or interventions for a trans person to be afforded protection.

**Gender recognition certificate**

Gender recognition certificates (GRC) are issued by the gender recognition panel under the provisions of the Gender Recognition Act 2004. The holder of a full GRC is legally recognised in their gender for all purposes. A full GRC is issued to an applicant if they can satisfy the panel that they fulfil all the criteria outlined in the Gender Recognition Act. Applicants can be UK residents or from recognised overseas territories who have an amendment to their legal gender. The act requires that the applicant is over 18, has, or has had, gender dysphoria, has lived in their affirmed gender for two years prior to the application, and intends to live permanently according to their gender status.

**It is never appropriate to ask a trans person for a GRC and regarded as unlawful** because it breaches their right to privacy. Once a person has obtained a GRC their gender history can only be disclosed where there are explicit exceptions in law:

* in accordance with an order of or proceedings before a court or tribunal, when it is strictly relevant to proceedings.
* for the purposes of preventing or investigating crime, where it is relevant.
* for the purposes of the social security system or a pension scheme.

**Gender variance**

Gender variance, also referred to as gender non-conformity, is behaviour or gender expression that does not match socially constructed gender norms for men and women.

**Gender fluid**

People who are gender fluid may have gender identities that fluctuate, they may identify as having more than one gender depending on the context (e.g. bi-gender or pangender), feel that they have no gender (e.g. agender, non-gendered), or they may identify gender differently (e.g. third gender, genderqueer).

**Intersex**

An umbrella term used for people who are born with variations of sex characteristics, which do not always fit society’s perception of male or female bodies. Intersex is not the same as gender identity or sexual orientation.

Until recently, parents of intersex babies were encouraged to elect for surgery so that their child would conform to stereotypical male or female appearances. As a result, many intersex people can encounter difficulties as the sex assigned at birth and may differ from their gender identity. Today, parents are advised to delay surgery until their child reaches puberty so that the child can inform decision-making. Some parents do not observe this advice and attitudes will vary country by country. Not all intersex people opt for surgery, and many will consider themselves to be intersex rather than male or female.

**Legal sex**

A person’s ‘legal’ sex is determined by their sex on their birth certificate and the assumption made at birth is that their gender status (boy, girl) matches. For higher education institutions (HEI’s) and colleges a person’s legal sex is only relevant for insurance, pension purposes and in rare cases occupational requirements.

For the purposes of everyday life (including banking, personal identification and travel), a person’s legal sex may not be the same as their self-identified gender. For instance, a trans woman can have identity documents such as a passport, driving licence and employment records based upon her gender as female, but still have a birth certificate which states that she is male.

**Non-binary**

Non-binary is used to refer to a person who has a gender identity which is in between or beyond the two categories ‘man’ and ‘woman’, or who has no gender, either permanently or some of the time.

**Pronoun**

A pronoun is the term used to refer to somebody for example she/her/hers/herself or he/him/his/himself. Gender-neutral pronouns include

* they/them/their/themselves
* che/chim/chis/chimself
* E/Em/Eir/Eirs/Emself
* Per(person)/pers/perself
* Xe/ hir/ hirs/ hirself

**Real-life experience or experience**

‘Real-life experience’ or ‘experience’ are the terms used by the medical profession and refers to the period in which an individual is required to live, work and/or study full-time in their affirmed gender before they can undergo genital surgery. The requirement applied to hormone replacement as well as genital surgery, but is now diminishing in practice. Some trans staff and students may be asked by a gender identity clinic to provide confirmation from their institution that they are undertaking real-life experience or experience. Many trans people now use the word ‘experienced’ to refer to their own gender identity.

**Self-identified gender**

The gender that a person identifies themselves as. The trans community is campaigning for UK law to be based on self-identification as is currently the case in other European countries. ECU recommends that colleges and HEIs recognise a student or staff member’s self-identified gender.

**Sex**

The classification of a person as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex, usually based on the appearance of their external anatomy. (This is what is written on the birth certificate.) A person's sex, however, is actually a combination of bodily characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones, internal and external reproductive organs, and secondary sex characteristics. Please also refer to ‘Intersex’, above.

**Sexual Orientation**

Describes a person's enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Trans people may be straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer. For example, a person whose experienced gender is female, and is solely to men would typically identify as a straight woman.

**Trans (adj.)**

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms - including transgender. Some of those terms are defined below. Use the descriptive term preferred by the person. Many trans people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to bring their bodies into alignment with their gender identity. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all trans people can or will take those steps, and a trans identity is not dependent upon physical appearance or medical procedures.

The term may include, but is not limited to, trans men/boys and women/girls, non-binary people and dual role people. Not all people that can be included in the term will associate with it.

The terms trans should only be used as an adjective, for example, trans people, trans man or trans woman. However, a trans person may say ‘I am trans’.

**Transsexual (adj.)**

An older term that originated in the medical and psychological communities. Still preferred by some people who have permanently changed - or seek to change - their bodies through medical interventions, including but not limited to hormones and/or surgeries. Unlike trans, transsexual is **not** an umbrella term. Many trans people do not identify as transsexual and prefer the word trans or transgender. It is best to ask which term a person prefers. If preferred, use as an adjective: transsexual woman or transsexual man.

**Trans history**

A person with a trans history will have transitioned to their experienced gender. Consequently, they may no longer identify as a trans person, and simply see their gender assigned at birth as one part of their history.

**Trans man**

A person who was assigned female at birth but whose experiences gender is as a man or towards the masculine end of the gender spectrum. He usually uses male pronouns. The terms ‘female-to-male’ or ‘FtM’ are shorthand for indicating the direction of a person’s transition but these terms can be seen as offensive. Other people may use these terms to describe themselves.

**Trans woman**

A person who was assigned male at birth but whose experienced gender is as woman or towards the feminine end of the gender spectrum. She usually uses female pronouns. The term ‘male-to-female’ or ‘MtF’ are shorthand for indicating the direction of a person’s transition but these terms can be seen as offensive. Other people may use these terms to describe themselves.

**Transvestite and cross-dresser**

Transvestite is outdated, and was replaced by use of cross-dresser, which is also increasingly becoming outdated. While anyone may wear clothes associated with a different sex, the term cross-dresser is typically used to refer to men who occasionally wear clothes, makeup, and accessories culturally associated with women. This activity is a form of gender expression and not done for entertainment purposes. Cross-dressers do not wish to permanently change their sex or live full-time as women.

**Transition**

Altering one's birth sex is not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a long period of time. Transition can include some or all of the following personal, medical, and legal steps: telling one's family, friends, and co-workers; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery. The exact steps involved in transition vary from person to person. Avoid the phrase "sex change".

**Transphobia**

Transphobia is a term used to describe the fear, anger, intolerance, resentment and discomfort that some people may have as a result of another person being trans. This can result in discrimination, harassment, victimisation and hate crime.