



Government  
Equalities Office



# Providing services for transgender customers

A guide

November 2015

# Contents

Introduction and purpose of guidance	3
Who is this guidance for?	3
Who are transgender people?	3
What is 'gender reassignment'?	4
Good practice – including everyone is good for business	5
What does good practice look like?	5
Good Practice 1: Treat transgender people as you would all other customers whilst considering the additional sensitivities they may face	6
Good Practice 2: Try not to assume someone's gender simply by their appearance	6
Good Practice 3: Consider whether you need to ask someone's gender	7
Good Practice 4: Assume everyone selects the facilities appropriate to their gender	8
Good Practice 5: Accept a range of ID other than a birth certificate – you do not usually need to see a GRC to amend personal details	9
Good Practice 6: Ask those who transition whilst using your services how you can support them	10
Good Practice 7: Update documentation and records efficiently and sensitively	10
Good Practice 8: Publicise your good practice and inclusivity to diverse groups	11
The law	12
Equality Act 2010	12
When you may treat people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment differently	15
Gender Recognition Act 2004 (GRA)	17
Further Resources	18
Glossary	19

## Introduction and purpose of guidance

Every service provider knows that providing a comfortable, welcoming environment for all customers is key to customer satisfaction and loyalty. This guide is intended to help you ensure transgender people are welcomed, included and valued as customers, clients, users or members, and to ensure they are treated fairly and appropriately. It also aims to help you comply with the law.

Transgender people, like any other customer, want to shop, open accounts, seek entertainment and go on evenings out, yet they can face discrimination and prejudice in day to day life. Some of it is intentional, most of it is unintentional: the use of the wrong title (e.g. Mr, Mrs, Miss etc.) pronoun (e.g. he, she, they etc.) or being barred from a changing facility. Mistakes like these are easily overcome ensuring that trans customers or clients have a positive experience and service providers are rewarded with future loyalty, business and recommendations.

This guidance introduces a range of terms with which you may not be familiar and a glossary is included at the end of this document where these terms are defined.

## Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for anyone who provides services. This includes those providing statutory services, voluntary sector services or business / commercial services, e.g. as shops, restaurants, public houses, banks, sports clubs and leisure centres.

This is general guidance and so may not cover every circumstance you may encounter in your particular service. You may need to take further advice in some situations or if you are unclear what to do. Further resources that can help you are given at the end of this document.

## Who are transgender people?

Although the words 'gender' and 'sex' both have the sense of 'the state of being male or female', they are typically used in different ways. 'Sex' tends to refer to biological differences, while 'gender' tends to refer to cultural or social ones. A trans person is someone who feels that the sex they were assigned at birth (male or female) does not match or sit easily with their sense of their own gender.

Trans people come from all walks of life and include those who may describe themselves as **transsexual**, **transgender**, a **cross-dresser (transvestite)**, **non-binary** and anyone else who may not conform to traditional gender roles. It includes those who have transitioned from male to female (transgender women) or from female to male (transgender men) as well as those who do not have a typically 'male' or 'female' gender identity (non-binary).

The term 'assigned gender' refers to the gender recorded at birth. Using these words recognises that trans people have had no say in their assigned gender, do not agree with it or do not regard it as a reflection of who they are.

It's important to try to avoid phrases such as 'one of the men who uses our services is turning into a woman' or 'we have a female client who wants to be a man' which imply the original assignment was correct. From the trans person's point of view, it is only the outward expression of their gender that is changing, not who they are.

Some transgender people choose to undergo '**gender reassignment**'.

### **What is 'gender reassignment'?**

'Gender reassignment' is when a person takes steps to alter the outward expression of their gender so that it better aligns with their sense of who they are or, in other words, their identity.

This means that if someone adopts a new gender role by changing their name, title and pronoun and/or by wearing different clothing, altering their body language, speech and hairstyle, they have reassigned their gender. As part of their gender reassignment some people may choose to take hormones and/or have surgery, but medical intervention is not an essential part of gender reassignment.

## Good practice – including everyone is good for business

All organisations will wish to ensure that they provide the best service for their customers and users to build and maintain their reputation and to ensure customer loyalty. Public sector services need to retain the public's confidence by ensuring that their services include everyone and that service users are treated fairly. Services are generally better when they are designed to take account of different people's needs.

If you set the atmosphere and culture by treating the inclusion of transgender people as 'business as usual' and nothing remarkable, it will help others to follow. In other words, be mindful of issues that can arise, but don't *expect* there to be problems.

Treating transgender service-users well is cost effective in terms of reputation and business, but also it will reduce the number of complaints, and even in some cases, legal action.

"[I had] terrible service at [a major high street bank] when I just transitioned getting my accounts changed. ... They handled my mortgage, credit cards and bank account all separately so I had the embarrassment of doing it three times. In the end they paid me nearly £200 compensation for the embarrassment. ... I left that brand and I tell others of my bad experience."

The law specifically protects those with the characteristic of gender reassignment. Good practice means treating everyone respectfully and fairly including all trans people including cross-dressers, those who identify as non-binary, and those who do not conform to gender norms.

As well as trans people themselves, their partners, parents, siblings, children, friends and colleagues are likely to favour those services and places that offer a good experience for the transgender people they know.

## What does good practice look like?

The following points of good practice are simple steps every organisation can take to provide services that are welcoming and appropriate to transgender people and avoid the most common difficulties trans people experience when accessing services. They are illustrated by a mixture of positive and negative real-life experiences of trans people and some examples of good practice.

1. Treat transgender people as you would all other customers whilst considering the additional sensitivities they may face.
2. Try not to assume someone's gender simply by their appearance.

3. Consider whether you need to ask someone's gender.
4. Assume everyone selects the facilities appropriate to their gender.
5. Accept a range of ID other than a birth certificate. You do not usually need to see a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) to amend personal details.
6. Ask those who transition whilst using your services how you can support them.
7. Update documentation and records efficiently and sensitively.
8. Publicise your good practice and inclusivity to diverse groups.

### **Good Practice 1: Treat transgender people as you would all other customers whilst considering the additional sensitivities they may face**

You may not know that a transgender person is using your facilities or services. Don't assume that you can identify a person as trans.

"The most positive experience I can hope to have with a business regarding my gender is to not need to think about my gender during the business interaction. This happens when the business people don't gender me, or look at me funny, or seem taken aback when I ask for "masculine" items/clothes, or use he/him/his pronouns, or declare myself a "Mr". I'm pleasantly surprised when the business person I'm talking to takes all of the above in [their] stride and doesn't give me any doubtful glances."

"I am happy to be trans, treat me as everyone else, nothing special, just me... Just allow me to enjoy being a person enjoying shopping, dining... Make me feel as welcome as any customer. My voice may sound male, but my soul is female. Don't look surprised when I speak."

### **Good Practice 2: Try not to assume someone's gender simply by their appearance**

Try not to assume you can always tell someone's gender by looking at them or hearing their voice. This is particularly important to remember on the phone.

Take each individual person's lead regarding language. If someone makes it clear how they would like to be addressed in terms of their gender, especially as regards their name, pronoun and / or title, then respect those choices.

Along with the standard pronouns 'he' and 'she', you may come across people who prefer to be referred to as 'they'. This is sometimes used amongst people who do not have a typically 'male' or 'female' gender identity (non-binary people). Similarly, people may request gender-neutral titles such as 'Mx', 'Msr', 'Per' etc. You may wish to ensure your systems allow for gender-neutral titles as well as for no title, or to offer a blank space for the user to enter their own title.

"In any official communication I receive from my bank I am addressed by title - the wrong title, because there is no gender-neutral option. This extends to my debit card."

If you have known a particular person for a while, and they reassign their gender, it can take time to adapt and use the language appropriate to their new gender. It's important to make every effort to ensure you get into the habit of the new form of address in the minimum time possible.

"I am often misgendered even though I am fully made up... sometimes I complain in writing without any reply. Even when I complain face to face, there is a shrug of the shoulders."

### **Good Practice 3: Consider whether you need to ask someone's gender**

In many cases, knowing someone's gender is not necessary to provide them with a service.

While there are some clear instances where you need to collect gender data, such as to prevent sex discrimination, to provide better services, or help market your business, there are many instances where gender data is collected but never used. If it is unnecessary to collect data on gender, or it's not being used, you may be raising an unnecessary barrier to transgender customers.

If you want to collect data to develop an understanding of trans service users in your customer base, make sure that the question you ask is with other gender questions and not with questions on sexual orientation.

You could include a question such as 'Please tick here if your gender is different from the sex you were assigned at birth'. This can enable trans people who have a clear male or female identity to choose male or female, but also let you know they are transgender. This is likely to need a little supporting explanation. It is also good practice to include an option of 'prefer not to say'. Be aware that you need to be careful with what you do with the information you receive, especially if it can identify the transgender person. As with all personal information, treat this information sensitively and securely.

Service providers should be mindful that people can object to equality/diversity questionnaires about their sexuality, religion and other aspects of their private life. Service providers can and should use their judgment and common sense to pay due regard to equality, without resorting to time-consuming and costly bureaucratic processes.

### **Example:**

A sports centre believed that no trans people attended the centre as last time a monitoring exercise was carried out, nobody ticked the 'transgender' box on the form under 'sexuality'. When the exercise was repeated with improved questions correctly located under 'gender', the trans people using the centre could see the centre had developed greater understanding and felt comfortable to disclose that they were trans.

### **Good Practice 4: Assume everyone selects the facilities appropriate to their gender**

A trans person should be free to select the facilities (such as toilets or changing rooms) appropriate to the gender in which they present. For example, when a trans person starts to live in their acquired gender on a full-time basis they should be afforded the right to use the facilities appropriate to their acquired gender. Service providers must avoid discriminating against anyone with the protected characteristic of 'gender reassignment'.

### **Example:**

A pub serves their transgender customers and those customers who are with trans customers just as they would any other customer. The trans person is not given a worse standard of service. The staff serving in the pub do not allow other customers to make hostile remarks without intervening. The pub allows all trans customers access to the toilets appropriate to the sex in which they present.<sup>1</sup>

"[Some staff] have actually shouted, "Women's are over there" or come up to me and practically tried to escort me to a different department!"

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<sup>1</sup> Equality and Human Rights Commission publication: [What equality law means for your business](#) p.46



“I have experienced absolutely no problems with a gym which I went to for several years - this included the communal changing and showering area (obviously segregated into the traditional binary [male and female]). I was included and accepted.”

“There was a pub in the West End where all my buddies used to drink... There was only one stall in the men’s room and it was missing its door. Drinking beer and not being able to [go to the toilet]... meant this particular pub was off-limits to me.”

Some organisations offer gender-neutral facilities. These can support access for many different people.

### **Good Practice 5: Accept a range of ID other than a birth certificate – you do not usually need to see a GRC to amend personal details**

Transgender people can change most of their identity documents including their passport and driving licence early on in transition. Not all transgender people will choose to obtain a GRC and change their birth certificate. If your business requires proof of identity, it is therefore good practice to accept other forms of identification to avoid ‘outing’ or embarrassing transgender people. Service providers can only ask for a GRC in very few circumstances and it should never be asked for as proof of gender.

“[I’ve had] very positive experiences with [three high street banks]. [One] processed my name and gender change without fuss, it was all straightforward. [One] accepted my new account application in my new name and gender using a mixture of deed poll and old identity [documents]. [One] processed my name change based purely on the published public record - they did not even require a certified copy of my deed poll.”

“[I’ve had] very negative experiences with [two high street banks]... [One] refused to accept my deed poll in [the] branch because I did not have updated photo ID to match it. They eventually accepted that there was no justified demand for new photo ID and have changed their policy. [The other] asked for a certified copy of my deed poll, then refused to accept it, and wanted a GRC to accept change of gender. They backed down and accepted the evidence already provided once informed about [another bank’s] altogether more appropriate response.”

## **Good Practice 6: Ask those who transition whilst using your services how you can support them**

If someone transitions whilst using your services, ask the transgender person what would make them feel most comfortable at that time. It is sometimes useful to make a plan. For instance they may be ready to move to the facilities of their self-identified gender or they may wish for additional privacy at this time. Also you may decide to agree a date for the person's new name and pronoun to be used and for phone lists or registers etc. to be updated.

The vast majority of documentation can and should be changed on request. It may be necessary to inform your staff members who will have contact with the person that they have changed their name and gender identity. This should be planned *with* the trans person.

### **Example:**

A gym member approaches a member of staff and tells them that they are transitioning from male to female. The staff member asks the transgender woman which changing facilities she would like to use during her transition. The transgender person explains that she would prefer to use the accessible changing room at this stage and the organisation seeks to accommodate this.

## **Good Practice 7: Update documentation and records efficiently and sensitively**

A transgender person may wish to be referred to by a different name and pronoun and require their gender marker to be changed on documents and systems.

The vast majority of documentation can and should be changed upon request as it simply enables you to identify a particular individual within your setting and has no other ramifications. In many instances it is not even necessary to see a formal name change document.

There is no legal requirement that needs to be satisfied for a person to change their name – it can be done by common usage. If people want to make the change more formally they can do so by statutory declaration or deed poll.<sup>2</sup> Children under 18 cannot

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<sup>2</sup> GOV.UK website: [Change your name by deed poll](#)

usually effect a name change without the agreement of those with parental responsibility for them.

“Midway through my [insurance] policy year, I had my "official" transition ... I telephoned [the insurance company] and explained and was politely put through by the Call Centre staff... There the person took my details ... then politely completed the call. It wasn't gushy, nor freaked-out. Quite the opposite and it felt so normal.”

“I phoned [the bank] to ask what the process was to get my [credit card] details amended. The call centre staff really could NOT understand what I was saying. [I] tried to explain in different ways, and in the end I had to use the term "sex change" - which I abhor. The bank staff then said she would take my details, have a word with her supervisor and get back to me. She never did.”

### **Good Practice 8: Publicise your good practice and inclusivity to diverse groups**

Transgender people can experience difficult challenges – ranging from disappointment to outright fear and physical harm. Consequently, trans people tend to look for clear evidence that service providers are transgender-friendly anywhere they are going, applying to, or otherwise engaging with. People may not use services or visit premises for fear of a negative response unless services make it clear they are welcome. Where appropriate, it can be helpful to include a statement of diversity values and make it visible.

#### **Example:**

A community centre develops an inclusion policy which makes reference to transgender people. They put the policy on their website and feature it in their newsletter, blog post and other social media platforms. A local support group for trans people reads a tweet and approaches the community centre to find out about venue hire. The trans group make a regular weekly booking at the centre to meet.

## The law

In recent years, legislation has been introduced to recognise a person's right to determine their own gender and to ensure they are not unfairly treated in various areas of their lives. The key laws that are relevant to the provision of services to transgender people are the Equality Act 2010 and the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

### Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine protected characteristics in respect of which discrimination, harassment and victimisation are unlawful. The Act makes provision about discrimination, harassment and victimisation in various areas of life, including employment, education and the provision of services.

All employers and service providers, whatever their size, are bound by the Act. For the purposes of this guidance, the relevant protected characteristics are **gender reassignment** and **sex**.

The Act defines the protected characteristic of gender reassignment as follows:

“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.”<sup>3</sup>

- The Act protects people of all ages, regardless of whether they are children or adults.
- The characteristic applies to anyone who has proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex.<sup>4</sup>
- A person does not need to be under medical supervision to qualify for protection.
- Someone assigned female at birth who makes the transition to live as a man and a person assigned male at birth who makes the transition to live as a woman both share the characteristic of gender reassignment.

The Act defines the protected characteristic of sex as follows:

“a reference to a person who has a particular protected characteristic is a reference to a man or to a woman;”

An organisation must not unlawfully discriminate against someone, victimise them or harass them because of the protected characteristics of gender reassignment or sex, or

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<sup>3</sup> Equality Act 2010, Section 7

<sup>4</sup> Equality Act Explanatory Notes, Part 2: Equality: Key Concepts, Chapter 1: Protected characteristics; Section 7: Gender reassignment; 41-43

because a person is perceived to have these protected characteristics; for example, because they think the person intends to undergo, is undergoing or has at some time in the past undergone gender reassignment; or because of their association with someone with this protected characteristic. Discrimination may be **direct** or **indirect**.

**Direct discrimination** occurs where a person is treated less favourably than other people because of a protected characteristic such as gender reassignment or sex.<sup>5</sup>

### Examples:

- Deliberately not using someone's chosen name and pronoun when you use the correct terms for everyone else.
- Refusing to update someone's gender details on your system.
- Refusing to serve someone or excluding them from services because of gender reassignment.
- Refusing to allow a woman to use female facilities because staff perceive her to be male.<sup>6</sup>

**Indirect discrimination** occurs when a blanket criterion or practice puts a person with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage, and it cannot be justified as a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.<sup>7</sup>

### Example:

- Requiring someone to present their birth certificate as a form of identification (which could 'out' them as being transgender) when a passport or driving licence would be an equally appropriate form of identification as this may impact adversely on some trans people. It would not be discriminatory to ask for a person's birth certificate if it is necessary to confirm their legal gender (although for most services such circumstances will be rare).

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<sup>5</sup> Equality Act 2010, Section 13(1)

<sup>6</sup> In 2014, a transgender woman was awarded damages of £1,500 by a County Court after a publican had refused access to a ladies' toilet and had barred her when she complained following complaints from other customers.

The County Court judge found that she had been discriminated against and had subsequently been victimised by the pub management. The judge issued a declaration of discrimination and awarded damages.

<sup>7</sup> Equality Act 2010, Section 19(1)

Organisations should take reasonable steps to meet the needs of those with the protected characteristic without adversely affecting other people. What is lawful and appropriate will depend on the circumstances of each case.

**Discrimination by association** occurs when someone is discriminated against because they associate with a person who possesses the protected characteristic.

**Example:**

- Refusing someone entry to a venue because they are with a person with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

**Discrimination by perception** occurs when someone is discriminated against because they are perceived to have the protected characteristic, even if they do not.

**Example:**

- Refusing someone entry to a venue because they are perceived to be a person with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

**Harassment** is unwanted conduct in relation to a protected characteristic and the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature<sup>8</sup> which has a similar effect also constitutes harassment.

**Example:**

- Transphobic comments.
- Social media trolling and other unwanted online behaviour.
- Isolation, exclusion and making a person feel emotionally or physically unsafe.

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<sup>8</sup> Equality Act 2010, Section 26

**Victimisation** takes place when one person treats another less favourably because that person has asserted their legal rights in line with the Act or helped someone else to do so.<sup>9</sup>

### Example:

- Excluding someone from your services because they have acted as a witness to support the claim of harassment or discrimination by a person with the protected characteristic.

### When you may treat people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment differently

The Equality Act 2010 says that organisations *may* treat people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment differently in very particular and limited circumstances.

The key areas in which people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment may be treated differently under the law are:

- Some competitive sport.
- The provision of separate and single sex services.
- Religious marriage services.
- Insurance contracts.
- Communal accommodation.

It is advisable for an organisation always to seek ways to enable full inclusion and only use the exceptions if no other option can be found. Under no circumstances should the allowable exceptions be treated as something an organisation *should* do.

### Sport

The Equality Act 2010 says that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment may only be treated differently in relation to sport if it is necessary to ensure fairness of competition or safety of competitors in a 'gender-affected activity'. A 'gender-affected activity' is a sport, game or other activity of a competitive nature where the physical strength, stamina or physique of average persons of one sex would put them at a disadvantage compared to average persons of the other sex.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Equality Act 2010, Section 27

<sup>10</sup> Equality Act 2010, Section 195

Typical concerns tend to be regarding safety for transgender men, safety of those competing with transgender women and unfair advantage for transgender women. This provision does not affect non-competitive sporting activities found in a typical leisure centre such as informal swimming, gym, racquet sports and fitness classes (where strength, stamina and physique are not important).

This guidance does not go into detail about competitive sport; if in doubt, seek advice from your sport's governing body.

### **Separate and single sex services**

You may only treat people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment differently regarding access to services reserved for their self-identified gender if you can demonstrate that the way you have approached a situation is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim' and so is objectively justifiable.<sup>11</sup> You need to be able to show that there is no less discriminatory way to achieve the aim.

Unlawful discrimination against people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment is not acceptable and consequently the exception has to be used in exceptional circumstances. Decisions made cannot be based on personal prejudice but on evidence of detriment to others, and the service provider will need to show that a less discriminatory way to achieve the objective was not available. Also, the service provider still has to seek a way to provide that service to people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission provides guidance on how services should apply these exceptions.<sup>12 13</sup> In general, it is very unlikely that any exceptions will apply in ordinary 'high street' service provision situations.

### **Other exceptions**

These are fairly limited in scope and include the solemnization of marriages by clergy and 'approved celebrants';<sup>14</sup> provision of annuities, life assurance policies, accident insurance policies or similar matter which involves the assessment of risk;<sup>15</sup> and the provision of communal accommodation.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Equality Act 2010, Schedule 3, Part 7; Equality Act 2010, Schedule 23

<sup>12</sup> Equality and Human Rights Commission publication: ['What equality law means for your business'](#)

<sup>13</sup> Equality and Human Rights Commission website: [Businesses guidance page](#)

<sup>14</sup> Equality Act 2010, Schedule 3, Part 6

<sup>15</sup> Equality Act 2010, Schedule 3, Part 5

<sup>16</sup> Equality Act 2010, Schedule 23 (3)



## Gender Recognition Act 2004 (GRA)

The GRA enables a person to change their gender legally by obtaining a GRC which leads to the issue of a new birth certificate. A person does not have to undergo any physical medical intervention to receive a GRC. They do however have to comply with the requirements laid down in the Act. The Act works to protect a person's rights to privacy. Information pertaining to a person's gender history is confidential.

It is an offence in almost all circumstances to disclose that someone has made an application under the Act or someone's gender history once they have a GRC, if you have come into the information in an official capacity including as a service provider.<sup>17</sup> Few people have the right to see someone's GRC; you may ask for a person's birth certificate if it is essential to know their legal gender.

As a service provider, in most practical situations, it is not appropriate to treat a person without a GRC differently from one with a GRC. A GRC does not make a trans person any more or less visible as a trans person, or any more or less vulnerable to hostile situations or discrimination.

A person is not required to provide their GRC to banks, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, the Passport Office and other service providers. Establishments will need to change the name of their client, gender marker (M/F) and title (Mr, Mrs, Miss) on paperwork; not to do so could be unlawful discrimination.

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<sup>17</sup> Gender Recognition Act 2004, Section 22

## Further Resources

### Government Equalities Office (GEO)

The GEO is responsible for equality strategy and legislation across government.

[www.gov.uk/geo](http://www.gov.uk/geo)

### Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

BIS is the department for economic growth. The department invests in skills and education to promote trade, boost innovation and help people to start and grow a business. BIS also protects consumers and reduces the impact of regulation.

[www.gov.uk/bis](http://www.gov.uk/bis)

### Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

EHRC has a wide range of publications including reports and guidance on its website.

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/)

See particularly:

- [Services, public functions and associations Statutory Code of Practice](#), 2011
- [Collecting information on gender identity \(2<sup>nd</sup> edition\)](#), 2012

### Equality and Advisory Support Service (EASS)

EASS has a helpline that advises and assists individuals on issues relating to equality and human rights, across England, Scotland and Wales

[www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/)

### British Chambers of Commerce (BCC)

BCC is the national voice of local business and serves business members across the UK. The BCC is a voice for the interests of business, delivers services that help business grow, and is the private sector source of advice and support for international trade.

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

## Glossary

Terms and language regarding transgender people and transgender issues are evolving rapidly and many terms may mean different things to different people. The definitions given here are common, but not universal, understandings of these terms.

### **Acquired gender**

The law uses the phrase ‘acquired gender’ to refer to the gender in which a transgender person lives and presents to the world. This is not the gender that they were assigned at birth, but it is the gender in which they should be treated.

### **Cross-dresser**

Someone who wears the clothes usually expected to be worn by someone of the ‘opposite’ gender. Other terms include ‘transvestite’ (now becoming a dated term and disliked by some) and ‘dual role’. A cross-dresser is unlikely to have a full-time identity as a member of their cross-dressed gender and typically does not seek medical intervention.

### **Gender binary**

A binary system allows only two things or states – for example, on/off. In terms of gender, it refers to the either/or categories of male/female that do not allow for, or recognise, other experiences of gender.

### **Gender dysphoria**

Transgender people who seek medical intervention are typically diagnosed with ‘gender dysphoria’ as a first step. Gender dysphoria describes the sense of a strong, persistent discomfort or distress caused by the dissonance between a person’s self-identified gender and the gender they were assigned at birth.

### **Gender identity**

A person’s sense of self as a man, woman, non-binary person or other sense of gender. A person’s gender identity is typically expected to follow directly from the sex they were assigned at birth (based on physical attributes), but this is not always the case.

### **Gender reassignment**

The process of changing or transitioning from one gender to another.

### **Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC)**

A certificate issued under the GRA<sup>18</sup> which enables someone to be legally recognised in their acquired gender.

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<sup>18</sup> GOV.UK website: [Applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate](#)

**Mis-gendering**

You mis-gender someone when you refer to them using a word, especially a pronoun or a form of address, that does not correctly reflect the gender with which they identify.

**Non-binary person**

Someone who does not subscribe to the customary binary approach to gender, and who may regard themselves as neither male nor female, or both male and female, or take another approach to gender entirely.

**Transgender (or trans) person**

A broad, inclusive term referring to anyone whose personal experience of gender extends beyond the typical experiences of those of their assigned sex. Amongst others, transsexual people, non-binary people and cross-dressers may all consider themselves transgender people.

**Transsexual person**

This term is most closely associated with the legally protected characteristic of 'gender reassignment'. A transsexual person may be a person assigned female at birth who has transitioned or is transitioning to live as a man, or a person assigned male at birth who has transitioned or is transitioning to live as a woman. The law does not require a person to undergo a medical procedure to be recognised as a transsexual person. Once a transsexual person has acquired a GRC, they should generally be treated entirely as in their acquired gender.

**Transgender man**

A transgender man is a female-to-male transgender person who was assigned female at birth but has a male gender identity.

**Transgender woman**

A transgender woman is a male-to-female transgender person who was assigned male at birth but has a female gender identity.

**Transition**

The journey a transgender person takes from their assigned gender to the one they know themselves to be. This may refer to social transition (changing name, clothes etc), medical transition (hormones and/or surgery) or both.



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