

Human Resources Policy Framework

**Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment
Guidance Notes**

Version	1.0
Published	April 2016
Review Date	April 2017

Manager's Guidance

These guidance notes have been developed to assist managers when supporting employees through the Gender Reassignment process in the workplace. The guidance is to support the application of the Council's policy and procedure on Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment and is not intended as a substitute for following the policy and procedure. The guidance is based on best practice and recent developments in employment case law; it does not form part of the Council's Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment policy and procedure.

The information contained within this document includes detailed guidance on the 'how to' with reference to other resources that can assist when dealing with Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment and issues, and check lists for managers.

For further information, please contact HR on (01902) 552345 or email HR.supportdesk@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Managers' Guidance

Managing Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment issues in the Workplace

Contents	Page
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Terminology	3
3.0 Privacy	4
4.0 Disclosure	4
5.0 Agreeing a process	4-5
6.0 Informing Management & Colleagues	5-6
7.0 Timing	6
8.0 Communication	6
9.0 Time of Transition	7
10.0 Single Sex Facilities	7
11.0 And afterwards	7
12.0 Living in the affirmed gender	8
13.0 Record changing / Retention / Access & Monitoring	8
14.0 Access to Records	9
15.0 Dealing with / Attitudes of the public	9
16.0 Previous names / Job applications / Interviews and References	9-10
17.0 Recruitment / Interviews	10
18.0 DBS / Security Checks	10-11
19.0 References	11
20.0 Media Interest	11
21.0 Other useful information	11
22.0 Birth Certificates	11
23.0 National Insurance	12
24.0 Pensions	12
25.0 Professional Registration / Certificates	12
26.0 Dress Code	12
27.0 Performance issues	13
28.0 Types of Gender Reassignment absence	13-14
29.0 Adjustments on return to work	14
30.0 Current Legislation	14
Appendix 1 Glossary	15-17

Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this guidance is to inform policy and practice development as well as providing employees of City of Wolverhampton Council with good practice information in relation to managing transgender equality issues in employment.
- 1.2 These guidance notes are to be used in conjunction with the Council's Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment Policy. These notes give more information for managers and employees when an employee is going through gender reassignment.
- 1.3 It is about making sure that people feel safe about being open about their gender identity.
- 1.4 It includes the legislative responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Gender Recognition Act 2004.
- 1.5 Managers will need to make sure that support and guidance is given to all employees to help understand any issues that may occur if a person is going through the gender reassignment process.
- 1.6 Terminology is not fixed, however a glossary is provided at the end of the document to assist understanding of commonly used phrases, based on guidance from EHRC & Home Office/a:gender the workplace and gender guide. You may find it useful to read this first if you are not acquainted with the language relating to trans issues. This document refers to 'transgender' as an umbrella phrase to describe all those whose gender identity and/or gender expression is not completely congruent with their birth sex.
- 1.7 However, in relation to gender reassignment as defined by the Equality Act 2010 we reflect the legal use of the term 'transsexual' to define a person who is proposing to undergo, undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.

2.0 Terminology

- 2.1 As outlined within the policy, terminology is not fixed, however a glossary is provided at the end of the document to assist understanding of commonly used phrases, based on guidance from EHRC & Home Office/a: gender the workplace and gender guide. You may find it useful to read this first if you are not acquainted with the language relating to trans issues. This document refers to 'transgender' as an umbrella phrase to describe all those whose gender identity and/or gender expression is not completely congruent with their birth sex. We also reflect the legal use of the term 'transsexual' to define a person who is proposing to undergo, undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.

3.0 Privacy

- 3.1 Once an employee has raised the intention to change gender role, they are protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010. This Act makes it unlawful to treat someone less favourably than other people in relation to employment on grounds that they propose to, have started or have completed a process to change their gender.
- 3.2 Respect for privacy and a freedom from workplace gossip, including unnecessary broadcasting of their personal circumstances, is a right. Most transsexual people wish to keep their transsexual status as private as possible, even though others may be willing to discuss it either confidentially or openly.
- 3.3 It is important that no one breaches the personal privacy of employees, recognising that the right to disclose or discuss their medical history is the prerogative of the individual. When an employee has changed gender, it is essential that other people respect this. Reference to a person by their previous name or gender will reveal the status of the person which constitutes a breach of confidentiality and could be viewed as harassment.

4.0 Disclosure

- 4.1 A person may be appointed who changed gender before commencing employment. They are not required to declare that they have changed gender and any suggestion that a person is not being open and honest is unreasonable.
- 4.2 Some may choose to declare their gender history and in doing so that information becomes protected. That information cannot be shared with anyone else without the consent of the individual. To do so would be a breach of policy, legislation and the Council's disciplinary procedures.

5.0 Agreeing a process

- 5.1 Successful support and management of an employee's gender reassignment transition depends crucially on taking account of the individual's views on how to proceed. Sensitive and considered discussions can identify and resolve potential areas of difficulty and conflict before they arise. It is therefore important at an early stage to agree a process. (A suggested action plan can be found at Appendix 1 of the Policy).

This action plan outlines the types of issues that should be considered and identify arrangements to support the employee during and after the transition and include mechanisms for discussing issues relating to their transition in connection with their role and work environment.

Key elements include: -

- the anticipated point in time of change of name, personal details and social gender;
- whether the employee wishes to stay in their current post or whether redeployment should be considered, if it can be accommodated, on a temporary or permanent basis;
- an anticipation of time off for medical appointments, treatments and surgical procedures and the handling of such absence;
- amendments to records and systems to take account of the change of personal details;
- when and how colleagues should be informed – the employee should decide who performs this task – and whether any training in gender identity issues is needed;
- how to handle any harassment, hostile reaction or media interest.
- clarifying how HR and any additional support will be provided to the employee.

5.2 The use of the action plan is optional, and the level of detail entered is purely a matter for the individual. The individual and manager may use it as a reminder of the possible steps which gender reassignment may take, and may fill it in together as the individual's plans for gender reassignment emerge. Under no circumstances should this information be passed to anyone else without the express permission of the individual undergoing gender reassignment.

6.0 Informing Management & Colleagues

6.1 Transition can be difficult for an existing employee, who starts coming to work with a different gender status and presentation. It is essential that colleagues of the transgender person are prepared for the change (knowing how to address that person and being able to handle callers and visitors who may have known the person in their previous gender role). This must be done sensitively and in conjunction with the employee with consideration for their privacy.

6.2 Managers should have consideration for the difficult challenges employees might face whilst transitioning, and recognition that employees may be dealing with issues both within and outside of the workplace.

6.3 Managers should be aware that people within their team may deal with a colleague transitioning differently. Careful consideration should be given to when and how colleagues will be informed and by whom. This should be agreed with the transitioning employee to ensure that they are comfortable with what is shared. Colleagues may have questions that they do not feel is appropriate to ask their colleague directly and managers should consider whether their employees require further education and training in gender identity issues.

Human Resources – Supporting a confident and capable Council

- 6.4 It may be appropriate, with the transitioning employee's agreement, to arrange for briefing sessions to provide employees with useful information and answer any questions they might have.
- 6.5 Managers will need to be aware of any issues that may arise and deal with them immediately. All colleagues should observe the Transsexual, Transgender and Gender Reassignment Policy, Employee Code of Conduct and Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy. Any breaches may invoke the disciplinary procedure.
- 6.6 Sensitive and positive handling of an employee's transition at work should result in an improved working environment for the individual.

7.0 Timing

- 7.1 The timing of the individual's initial approach to management is a matter for the individual to decide. The individual may be guided by the progress of medical treatment and may provide a letter from their gender identity clinic or other medical advisor to support their intention. However, there may be no medical process involved. Therefore, not only the timing, but the manner of approach and the kind of supporting evidence, if any, is up to the individual.
- 7.2 Conversely an employee may request a letter confirming they have discussed their intention with their employer, or to confirm their attendance at work in the acquired gender, as evidence requested by the clinic. The Council will provide this as appropriate.
- 7.3 The initial point of contact could be an immediate line manager, a senior manager, Human Resources, a union representative, or Occupational Health. All must maintain confidentiality except as otherwise expressly agreed by the individual. It is vital to be able to provide assurance that the Council will be supportive, and that discrimination against, or harassment of, transsexual employees is not tolerated.

8.0 Communication

- 8.1 Agreement between the manager and the individual is important before communication of impending gender transition. The approach taken will depend on the individual and be appropriate to the size and structure of the workplace.
- 8.2 As part of the agreed action plan, the transitioning employee must decide who should be informed, when and by whom.

9.0 Time of transition

- 9.1 At the point of transition, some transsexual people prefer to take a brief break to prepare to return to work in the acquired gender. During this period the opportunity should be taken, if possible, to ensure workplace records and IT systems are appropriately amended. If no break is taken, a new ID card should be prepared in advance of the transition if possible, and all records amended at transition or as soon as possible thereafter.

10.0 Single Sex Facilities

- 10.1 There is a requirement to live as a member of the opposite sex before going through any surgical procedure, which includes using single sex facilities. The issue of when this will begin is something that needs to be decided by the individual and supported by the manager but usually from the date of transition.
- 10.2 This will involve open discussion, education and understanding. Trans people (like everyone else in Britain) can use toilets or changing facilities appropriate to their gender presentation with or without a Gender Recognition Certificate.
- 10.3 It would be unacceptable and inappropriate to expect a person in their acquired gender to use toilet facilities of their birth sex or indeed be restricted to the use of the disabled toilet.
- 10.4 Difficulties can arise if objections are raised by colleagues, which will need to be dealt with sensitively.
- 10.5 Any continued objection or inappropriate comments by work colleagues to the use of the facilities appropriate to the gender of transition should be seen as unreasonable and discriminatory. In the first instance, managers should address these issues with education and training. If ongoing issues continue this could be viewed as harassment and action may be taken in line with the Council's Bullying & Harassment Policy.

11.0 And afterwards

- 11.1 Maintaining regular contact with the employee and monitoring their transition within the workplace is good managerial practice.
- 11.2 Regular contact and monitoring provides management with an opportunity to address any issues or concerns as they arise, including any issues overlooked in the pre-transition preparation.

12.0 Living in the affirmed gender

- 12.1 Once a person has transitioned they may not regard themselves as transgender, identifying only in their affirmed gender as a man or a woman (although some people do not feel comfortable in either group and may live androgynously or in a non-gendered role).
- 12.2 Many people choose to live in their affirmed gender without surgery. For those who want to be considered for gender reassignment surgery or want to be recognised under the Gender Recognition Act 2004, they will need to live continuously in the new gender role for 12 months or more. If they wish to obtain a gender recognition certificate (GRC) under the Gender Recognition Act, they have to demonstrate they have lived in the affirmed gender for at least two years.

13.0 Record changing / Retention / Access & Monitoring

- 13.1 In circumstances where an employee has changed gender after entering employment, there are many potential instances where a previous name or gender may unnecessarily be revealed. Failure to update and maintain records to reflect the individual's transition is a frequent cause of distress to transsexual employees and may amount to unlawful discrimination.
- 13.2 Records will only be changed when the appropriate certificates, for example to confirm a change of name, have been provided.
- 13.3 After transition, any new records should refer only to the new name and acquired gender, while records pre-dating transition must be up-dated. Wherever possible, details of previous name and gender should be deleted; it would be discriminatory not to do so unless their retention is justified and proportionate. For example, a pension provider may need to do so as pension records may need to retain a note of birth sex, but this should not prevent correspondence showing the acquired gender.
- 13.4 Where retention can be properly justified, access to these records must be restricted to employees who require such information for the performance of their specific official duties.
- 13.5 Breaches of confidentiality can have a serious impact on a transsexual employee, may lead to action under the Data Protection Act, and will be reviewed seriously as a potential disciplinary matter.
- 13.6 The list of records to be changed will include HR personnel records, pay and pension records, all IT systems to which the individual has access and IT address lists with reference to the person, all relevant employee directories including telephone listings, name badges, and ID passes with a new photograph. Changes to email accounts and IT systems must take place at the same time to avoid revelation of the previous identity. It is suggested that Human Resources co-ordinate this process.

14.0 Access to records

- 14.1 Access to records showing the change of name and any other details associated with the individual's transsexual status, (such as records of absence for medical treatment) will be restricted to employees who need the information to do their work. They could include people directly involved in the administration of a process, for example, people involved in the pension schemes or management of absence. They do not include colleagues or clients.
- 14.2 Breaches of confidentiality will be treated in the same serious manner as disclosure of personal details of any other employee.
- 14.3 Transsexual people may choose voluntarily to disclose information at a secondary level, for example, answering an equal opportunities monitoring questionnaire, or asking support from their line manager. Again, strict confidentiality should be observed, as further disclosure must not be made without the express permission of the transsexual person.

15.0 Dealing with / Attitudes of the public

- 15.1 An employee must never be removed from a public facing role merely because they are a transsexual person. The employee may appreciate some discreet support, at least at first, conversely others may lack initial confidence for such a role and any request for a temporary or permanent change of duties should be accommodated if possible. Any decision to remove a transsexual employee from a public facing role must have the full agreement of the individual concerned, even if only as a temporary measure.
- 15.2 Managers should be aware of the possibility of harassment in occupations where this is a risk. If a member of the public objects to being dealt with by a transsexual employee, this is an unacceptable objection. The incident should be managed in the same way as any other pressure to discriminate. It would usually be unlawful for a manager to comply with the wishes of that member of the public.

16.0 Previous names / Job applications / Interviews and References

- 16.1 When a transsexual person applies for a job, the potential employer may ask for disclosure of former names and previous employers at the application stage. To do so will disclose the individual's transsexual status, compromise their right to privacy and potentially prejudice their recruitment chances.
- 16.2 Therefore checks requiring former names, such as security and credit checks or obtaining references, should be done at the end of the recruitment process.

Human Resources – Supporting a confident and capable Council

- 16.3 If the individual has already informed previous employers of the need to amend their records to show their new name and acquired gender only, then details of former employers can be openly given
- 16.4 Section 22 of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 provides that it is an offence for a person who has acquired protected information in an official capacity to disclose that information to any other person. However, this Act also sets out a series of exceptions, where disclosure is considered to be justified, for example for the purpose of obtaining legal advice, for religious or medical purposes, disclosure by or on behalf of a credit reference agency and disclosure for purposes in relation to insolvency or bankruptcy. Further guidance regarding disclosures can be accessed via the following link:
<http://www.gires.org.uk/assets/Legal-Assets/SI2005-635.pdf>

17.0 Recruitment / Interviews

- 17.1 Any application for work may be made in the assumed gender of the applicant. There is no requirement for them to disclose details of this to a recruitment panel or manager.
- 17.2 The recruitment and selection process should not be affected by an individual's gender or gender history. A job applicant's gender identity status is irrelevant to the recruitment process, unless in exceptional circumstances where a genuine occupational requirement applies to the job. Where there is an occupational requirement, the Council will need to make this clear in the recruitment material.
- 17.3 The Council will not ask questions about gender identity status and job applicants are not required to volunteer information about it, unless an occupational requirement makes this relevant. However, a job applicant with a gender recognition certificate is never required to disclose their gender history.
- 17.4 If disclosure is voluntarily made, the information should be held in strictest confidence and not be made available to other employees. Disclosure by the job applicant is not in itself a reason for not offering employment and non-disclosure or subsequent disclosure is not grounds for dismissal.
- 17.5 If the Council believes that they have just cause requiring specific disclosure of information protected by section 22 of the Gender Recognition Act (2004), perhaps for security vetting purposes, then it must be made explicitly clear on recruitment documentation.

18.0 DBS / Security Checks

- 18.1 If disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is required as part of the recruitment process, applicants must disclose any previous names and/or gender to the DBS. Transgender applicants may make use of

Human Resources – Supporting a confident and capable Council
the special application procedure established by the DBS so that their previous name is not disclosed to the organisation.

- 18.2 If an applicant fails a DBS check and it is advised that previous names would not be disclosed by DBS, this information must be treated in strict confidence.
- 18.3 In the case of identity checks and right to work checks, if the applicant produces ID in their previous identity, for example with a name change deed, this information must be treated in strict confidence.

19.0 References

- 19.1 References from previous employers may reveal a previous gender and name and should therefore be kept confidential.
- 19.2 References provided for someone moving to new employment must be in the name to be used in the new job with no reference to the former name or gender.

20.0 Media Interest

- 20.1 Instances of gender reassignment can attract attention from national and local press. When coupled with employment in the public sector, that interest can be intensified. Any response must have the consent of the person concerned and centre on a commitment to an Equal Opportunities Policy and support for the individual.
- 20.2 In the interest of confidentiality, the employee should not be named. If the press are already aware of the transsexual person's identity, then it is essential that any response is in accordance with the individual's wishes.
- 20.3 Employees should be advised to maintain strict confidentiality and not breach an individual's privacy or provide information to the media.
- 20.4 Where an employee is harassed by the media, protection should be offered, and consideration given, to a complaint to the Press Complaints Commission.

21.0 Other useful information

22.0 Birth Certificates

- 22.1 Transsexual people are able to obtain a new birth certificate for their new gender status (for those whose birth was registered in the UK).

23.0 National Insurance

- 23.1 Employees who change their name will need to inform their local benefits Office. As part of the Gender recognition process instructions are issued to the DWP and the Inland Revenue to make appropriate changes to state pension and NI contribution rates.

24.0 Pensions

- 24.1 A transsexual person who obtains a new birth certificate will be treated according to their affirmed gender for pension purposes. Employees are obliged under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 to notify HMRC when they receive their GRC. For those with birthdates between 29 January 1947 and 05 December 1953 their legal sex determines whether they pay employee's NIC or not and if and when such deductions should stop. Therefore HMRC need to know their legal gender status and the date on which they received gender recognition, if obtained, because that date determines the change in the State Pension Age of the individual.
- 24.2 Transsexual people who do not obtain a new birth certificate retain their full pension rights in accordance with the sex that is recorded on their original birth certificate in terms of pension provision. It is good practice for employees to be treated as having their birth gender up to the point of transition (i.e. when they start to live fully in the acquired gender) and their affirmed gender from the point of transition. This would apply for example in calculating funds transfers between pension plans.

25.0 Professional Registration / Certificates

- 25.1 When an employee is subjected to professional registration they should be advised to contact their professional body to establish if there are any specific requirements in terms of name changes etc. Where the Council has to keep evidence of professional status or qualifications, this should be discussed with the employee as to how to retain such evidence on file so as not to compromise or breach disclosure of protected information.
- 25.2 Certificates may have been issued in a previous identity and should therefore be treated as confidential.

26.0 Dress Code

- 26.1 Any dress code forms part of the contract of employment. Some flexibility must be allowed to accommodate the change of gender role, but the transsexual person is otherwise required to adhere to such a code, dressing appropriately for the acquired gender from the date of transition.
- 26.2 Where clothing or uniform is provided by the employee, new clothing should be provided consistent with the change in gender on the same basis as replacement clothing / uniform is provided to accommodate a change in size.

27.0 Performance Issues

- 27.1 A change in performance objectives should be considered in the first period of reassignment, while the individual gains confidence to perform satisfactorily in the acquired gender.
- 27.2 Side effects of medication may adversely affect work performance but the close medical attention received by an individual transitioning should ensure that these are of a minimal and temporary nature. The application of disciplinary action or dismissal from employment in accordance with the Council's Capability Policy is not appropriate in these circumstances.
- 27.3 The individual may also suffer from longer term depression if their reassignment does not go smoothly for reasons that may or may not relate to work. All sickness absences should be managed in accordance with the Management of Attendance Policy.
- 27.4 Redeployment might be considered in cases where it appears that the individual is no longer capable of performing key aspects of their duties. Managers should not seek to impose a change of duties on the individual, but must seek assistance from Human Resources and Occupational Health.
- 27.5 Redeployment must be explored in the exceptional case where a genuine occupational requirement applies to the post.

28.0 Types of Gender Reassignment absence

- Medical assessment / monitoring
 - Speech / voice therapy
 - Electrolysis / hair removal treatment
 - Hair transplantation
 - Hormone treatment
 - Surgery
- 28.1 It is important that absences are managed confidentially, sensitively and appropriately in line with the Council's Management of Attendance Policy. Under the Equality Act 2010, employees who are absent due to gender reassignment must not be treated less favourably than if their absence was due to sickness or injury.
- 28.2 Complications may arise as a result of medical treatment for gender reassignment resulting in prolonged incapacity from work. As with any other long-term illness, the individual will be supported and monitored by the manager with advice from Occupational health and Human Resources. If incapacity continues the absence will be monitored and dealt with in line with the Council's Management of Attendance Policy.
- 28.3 The employee may require time off for medical or other treatment. Time off for these purposes will be treated no less favourably than time off for illness or other medical appointments, in line with Council's Management of Attendance Policy and Leave Policy.

29.0 Adjustments on return to work

- 29.1 This will depend on the nature of the individual's duties; for example, duties involving lifting are unlikely to be immediately suitable after genital or breast surgery. Managers should refer to the Management of Attendance Managers Guidance for advice regarding managing an employee's return to work.

30.0 Current Legislation

Equality Act 2010
Gender Recognition Act 2004
Data Protection Act 1998
Human Rights Act 1998

Appendix 1 Glossary

Cross-dresser

Most people who are cross dressers do not experience any discomfort with their gender identity and do not wish to transition their gender role. Nor do they usually seek modification of their bodies. The term 'transvestite' is associated with cross dressing, though some cross dressers would not identify as such and the term is not commonly used.

Under the Equality Act 2010, legal protection is given to someone who is cross-dressing as part of the process of reassigning their gender (transitioning) or to someone who is perceived to be transgender due to being cross-dressed.

Gender

Gender consists of two related aspects; the person's internal perception of who they are is the 'gender identity'; the way the person behaves and lives in society and interacts with others is the gender role or expression. Most people in the general population are cisgender, in other words their perception of themselves is congruent with their sex appearance and their gender role.

Gender reassignment

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to. In this guidance, gender reassignment is used to describe the process of change and gender transition to describe the time when the gender role is changed.

Gender Dysphoria (GD) / Gender Variance / Gender nonconforming

Dressing or behaving in a way that is perceived by others as being outside cultural gender norms may be described as gender variance or gender nonconformity. Gender dysphoria describes the persistent personal discomfort that occurs when the physical sex does not match the gender identity. The social role is also expected to conform to the sex appearance, so this too feels uncomfortable for the individual concerned. (The term 'gender identity disorder' is considered pathologising and is gradually disappearing from the vocabulary). It should be noted that these refer to all cases whether or not surgery is actively sought.

Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC)

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 provided for the legal recognition of the trans person in their 'acquired', i.e. affirmed, gender and the opportunity to acquire a new 'birth' certificate for their new gender. This is called a Gender Recognition Certificate and replaces the original birth certificate in all official documentation. Those in existing marriages or civil partnerships are currently obliged to obtain their spouse's consent to the marriage or civil partnership continuing after the issue of a full GRC. If the spouse does not provide consent, an interim GRC may be issued for 6 months, during which time, if consent is still not granted, an application for annulment must be made.

Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS)

An individual must live continuously in the gender role that is congruent with the gender identity for 12 months before undergoing genital surgery. Separate opinions from two clinicians are required for referral for genital reassignment surgery. Some other procedures, such as chest surgery, may be undertaken before this stage, according to the needs of the individual undergoing reassignment.

Surgery is not obligatory to reassign gender and, for some, the risks will be outweighed by the potential benefits.

Affirmed Gender

This refers to the post-transition gender role of a person who has undergone gender reassignment. Those who have transitioned to the affirmed gender role, and who have a GRC, have 'acquired' a new gender status. It is possible for an individual to transition fully to the affirmed gender without surgical intervention.

Hormone treatment

Typically, hormone medication has a very positive effect on a transgender person's wellbeing. Currently, within several NHS Gender Identity Clinics, hormone treatment is not prescribed until the psychiatrists are confident about the person's condition of gender dysphoria. The time taken to complete this assessment process can range between three months and five years after the second consultation. However, it is no longer contingent upon a change of gender role. Some hormone treatment medication can have serious consequences for the person's health and must be regularly monitored by a GP. Once hormone treatment starts, any physical changes may take a while. However, these changes may be painful and uncomfortable. Any changes in this treatment may also have an impact. Depression and other emotional difficulties may manifest during this initial treatment phase. Problems may also occur should medication be withheld at any time or for any reason. Regular blood tests are undertaken and appointments with an endocrinologist may be required.

Physical sex

This is simply the sex with which the body organs, particularly genitalia, were associated with and registered at birth. In most of the population the sex appearance is clearly male or female. However 'intersex' conditions occur in about 1% of the population, some of which give rise to ambiguous genitalia and therefore may be wrongly described on the birth certificate. This may cause a mismatch between the individual's gender identity and gender role, therefore later adjustment, in the same way as for trans people, may be necessary. (The term Disorders of Sex Development has recently been introduced but is unpopular with the population affected).

Sexuality

One of the most common misconceptions about gender dysphoric people is that this is the same as being gay, lesbian or bisexual. Sexual orientation is separate and unrelated to gender dysphoria. The sexual orientation of gender dysphoric people may be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual or asexual.

Transsexual

An adjective that describes people whose sex, as registered at birth, is not congruent with their gender identity. Usually people respond to their discomfort by undergoing a personal process of gender reassignment to bring their outside characteristics and their gender expression, in line with their gender identity. The word transsexual is not often used by people who may be so described, because they prefer the terms 'trans' or 'transgender'. Those that have completed the process may regard themselves as man or woman, having resolved the conflict between their gender identity and gender expression.

This term is also used by the Equality Act 2010 to define people who fall within the definition of those people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Transgender (often abbreviated to 'trans')

This is often used as an 'umbrella term' to include all people who experience gender dysphoria and express this in some way. Transgender includes transsexual people but it is much wider to embrace a wide variety of gender expression, including those who have no intention of permanently changing gender role and may use a variety of self-descriptions, such as poly-gender, pan gender, gender queer. A few do not identify as either men or women and are non-gender.

Trans Man

A trans man is a person who was registered female at birth, but who identifies as a man.

Trans Woman

A trans woman is a person who was registered male at birth, but who identifies as a woman.

Source: Based on guidance from EHRC and the Home Office/a:gender the workplace and gender guide