

## Gender Identity & The Transgender Umbrella\*

### Trans Women (male-to-female)

Someone who is born biologically male but identifies, and lives permanently, as a woman

### Trans Men (female-to-male)

Someone who is born biologically female but identifies, and lives permanently, as a man

### Non-binary/Gender Queer

Someone who doesn't identify with gender being defined in only two categories (man and woman) They may define as both a man and a woman, neither, or somewhere else along the gender spectrum. Others do not identify with labelling gender at all.

### Cross-dressing People

Someone who is happy with their gender identity, but who expresses their gender in clothing generally thought by society to belong to the "opposite" gender

### Intersex People

Someone who is born with genitalia, reproductive organs or chromosomes that are not strictly male or female. An intersex individual may or may not identify as transgender

\*adapted from LGBT Youth Scotland and LGBT National Youth Council Gender Identity and the Transgender Umbrella Handout

## Transgender Inclusive Language - DOs and DON'Ts

| Avoid saying  | Say instead   | Why?  | Example  |
|---|---|---|--|
| normal people and trans gender people                     | cisgender* and trans gender people                            | "normal" implies "abnormal" and is stigmatising to trans people   | This college is open to both transgender and cisgender students.                 |
| "cross-dresser", "tranny", "she-male"                     | trans person, trans people                                    | These are derogatory terms  | I met a very interesting trans woman last week. Her guest lecture was inspiring. |
| "sex change", "pre-op", "post-op"                         | Transition**  | "sex-change", "pre-op" and "post-op" focus on the physical when gender is a socio-psychological concept.<br><br>Also, not all transgender people will undergo medical procedures. | Mario has a meeting with a university representative to support his transition.  |
| "biologically male" "biologically female"                 | Assigned male at birth (AMAB) Assigned female at birth (AFAB) | "biologically male or female refer to a person's sex, not gender; AMAB and AFAB more accurately describe the transgender experience.  | It is not appropriate to ask if he was assigned female at birth.                 |
| "it" when referring to someone (and pronouns are unknown) | They/them   | "it" refers to things not to people   | Actually, I don't know how they identify. I should ask them what pronoun to use. |

\*Cisgender - Someone whose personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex

\*\* Transition - The personal process or processes a trans or gender diverse person determines is right for them in order to live as their defined gender identity and so that society recognises this. Transition may involve social, medical and/or legal steps that affirm a person's gender.

Email: [equality@forthvalley.ac.uk](mailto:equality@forthvalley.ac.uk)

## Transgender Guide and Case Study

Making Learning Work . . .  
**For You**





## Trans Guide

At Forth Valley College we welcome students of all identities. We encourage an inclusive culture that welcomes diversity and respects difference in all circumstances. This quick guide, created in consultation with members of the trans community, is intended to provide information to support students who identify as trans and non-binary. More information and guidance is available from [equality@forthvalley.ac.uk](mailto:equality@forthvalley.ac.uk)

## Support and Guidance

Learner Advisers and Learner Development Workers are usually the first point of contact for guidance issues and are aware of mechanisms and procedures to support a trans student. On the other hand, it could be that an individual will disclose their transition to another trusted member of staff. If this is the case the staff member should consult with the Diversity Co-ordinator to ensure that the individual receives the appropriate support.

The rest of this guide is a brief outline to good practice with a practical case study example, terminology, legal framework and support agencies.

## Use of Language

Once a trans person has made known their chosen name, this name, rather than their birth name, should be used in all circumstances. A trans person should be referred to using the pronoun (he, she or they) appropriate for their gender identity.

Some people identify as non-binary (i.e. they may define as both male or female, neither or somewhere else along the gender spectrum). There may be times when the pronoun he or she is not appropriate and a more gender neutral expression should be used. Non-binary people may use the pronouns "they" or "them" or "ze" and "zir".

If you are unsure about which pronoun to use, just ask. Terms that are discriminatory should not be used, any language deemed inappropriate will be taken seriously by the College.

## Forth Valley College Transgender - Case Study

Ali was a trans man in the process of transitioning and approached the College Learner Advisory Team for support. The team worked together on a case sharing basis and shared information with the agreement of Ali so that they could all support him when required and learn from each other.

One of the issues for Ali was that he was not out to his family and therefore there was a need to be very careful with naming when calling the learner at home. Ali had some problems settling at college and used the college counselling service who were able to support him from the perspective of any impact on college studies.

Ali was reassured about college culture and the support mechanisms available such as Hate Incident Monitoring and Counselling Services. The Learner Advisory Team also liaised with Student Records and SQA regarding name change on certification.

The support to Ali was very much learner led where Learner Advisory staff worked closely with him to try and meet his needs and ensure that life at college was as smooth as possible.

Ali was anxious and uncomfortable about accessing either the male and female facilities while undergoing transition. As none of the campuses within Forth Valley College had gender neutral toilets at the time and the campus facilities were all labelled as either male or female, the solution was for Ali to use the accessible toilet. Ali was happy with this arrangement. However, as a result we now have all gender toilets on each campus.

The decision to disclose information to his peer group was left entirely up to Ali, as to when and how this would happen. Ali informed us that, as his family were unaware of his transition, this was something that needed to be handled carefully and sensitively.

## Practical Arrangements

**Time off:** Trans people may require time off work or study for appointments such as psychotherapy, voice therapy, and medical consultations. These absences should not be treated any less favourably than if the absence was due to sickness or injury.

**Record of name:** Trans identity and gender reassignment constitute "sensitive data" for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. Information relating to a person's trans status cannot be recorded or passed to another person unless conditions for processing sensitive personal data are met. **Confidentiality is crucial.**

Student Records staff will change names and reissue certificates if requested. It is unlawful to ask for a gender recognition certificate. A trans person can get a passport, driving licence, new bank account details without a gender recognition certificate.

A student can request a name and/or gender change by emailing: [srmconfidential@forthvalley.ac.uk](mailto:srmconfidential@forthvalley.ac.uk)

Not all trans people will hold a birth certificate that is reflective of the gender they identify with. Where official confirmation is required, students should be given the option of providing more than one type of official identification, for example a driving licence or passport.

## PVG Scheme

Disclosure Scotland has a mechanism to protect trans identity if a learner does not wish to disclose their previous gender. Information can be obtained from their helpline: **0870 609 6006** or the website at Disclosure Scotland.

## Signposting to Agencies

**Equality Network** - The Scottish Transgender Alliance is based within the Equality Network and works to improve gender identity and gender reassignment equality, rights and inclusion in Scotland.

**LGBT Youth Scotland** - Provides advice, information, contacts, support groups and signposting for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender young people 13-25.