



**Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe**  
**Gower College Swansea**

## **Transgender Best Practice Guidance**

**A guide for staff on how to support transgender students**

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If you, or someone you know, would like this document in large print, audio, electronically or in Welsh, please contact:

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## **1. Context**

Gower College Swansea is committed to ensuring all students feel safe, can be open about who they are, and are free from bullying. This Best Practice Guidance has been developed to support staff in supporting transgender young people or adults and to support the College in being a transgender inclusive environment, which in turn will help to prevent transphobia.

The Equality Act 2010 protects gender variant and trans young people and adults with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. This applies to anyone who is undergoing, has undergone or is proposing to undergo a process of reassigning their sex. For this to apply, a student does not have to be undergoing a medical procedure to change their sex, but is proposing to take active steps to transition socially

## **2. Scope**

The Protocol applies to all students of Gower College Swansea (including clients on the college's employability programmes) that are transitioning or questioning their gender. The guidance will ensure we comply with the Equality Act 2010 and Anti Bullying guidance in relation to trans young people and adults.

## **3. Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the Transgender Best Practice Protocol is to:

- a. Provide guidance to staff on how to effectively support students who are transgender
- b. Support staff in developing an inclusive environment which prevents trans phobia
- c. Supports the College with complying with the Equality Act 2010 and Anti-Bullying guidance in relation to Transgender young people
- d. Supports staff with practicalities, around which toilets, changing rooms to use, residential trips, sporting activities etc.

#### **4. Body of Protocol/Best Practise Guidance**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on how to effectively support transgender and gender questioning students.

WBL students have employed status, which is covered by the Equality Act 2010

When a person begins transition, it can often be a stressful time for them, they need to deal with parents, friends, spouses, partner coming to terms with their transition, which may not be easy.

It is really important that we as a College agree with the student how the process is handled with them. It is also important that we agree how others are informed, the trans person may wish to lead this themselves, or they may wish the College to support. The important thing is that the trans person has a say on what people are told and the language that is used. It should be made clear to the student that as a College we support the right of trans people to study free from discrimination and harassment and that the College will fully support them.

##### **4.1 Use of Pronouns**

It is really important to at trans young person or adult that their identity is validated and supported. It is important that the pronoun they are comfortable with is used for example, he, she, zie.

##### **4.2 Name Change**

It is important all respect the young person or adult's right to change their name in line with pronoun used to describe them and that this name is used consistently. Although they may not have changed their name legally, they still have the right to choose the name by which they are known as.

While a student can change their name, without doing anything official, should they wish to change their birth certificate or passport, they would at this point need to change their name by deed poll.

A young person is able to legally change their name via deed poll before the age of 16, providing everyone with parental responsibility agrees. After 16 the young person can change their name to by deed poll without parental consent. Once they reach 18, they can be reissued with a birth certificate with a Gender Recognition Certificate through the Gender Recognition Panel

Information on changing names on birth certificates can be found in the following website:

[www.deedpoll.org.uk/CanABirthCertificateBeChanged.html](http://www.deedpoll.org.uk/CanABirthCertificateBeChanged.html)

## **Procedure for Name Change (not official) for GCS students FE/HE and WBL**

- Students that advise a member of staff that they wish to be known by a different name need to complete a **Change of Details form** available on reception. For WBL students, this form needs to be forwarded to the Contract and Compliant Co-ordinator, FE and HE forms need to be forwarded directly to MIS
- MIS will on receipt of this form, update their records to show the name change and gender (if applicable).
- For the purpose of exam registration, the students legal name needs to be used and exam certificates will be issued with their legal name
- Arrangements need to be made for students with a Name Change (not official) to be issued with a Student ID card in their legal name, for the purpose of sitting exams
- For clients on the college's employability programmes, e.g. Better Jobs, Better Futures, they will advise their Career Coach that they wish to be known by a different name. This will be recorded on the 'activity log' within their file and signed by the client

### **4.3 Transition**

Generally, transition can be split into two categories, social or medical.

Social transition is making the decision to live their life as their preferred gender. Young people or adults can socially transition without support from Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) and without support from CAMHS.

Medical Transition is where the young person or adult makes the decision to have hormone therapy or undertake surgery. Only GP's or CAMHS are able to refer to GIDS, (for people under the age of 17) once referred there is typically a 9 month waiting list before the initial assessment. The majority of referrals are aged between 14 and 16, although some are as young as 4 years old.

For students over the age of 17, referral needs to be made to their regional adult gender identity clinic.

### **4.4 Curriculum/Team Activities**

There may be times when single gender activities are required, for example, ladies football, men's rugby, targeting learning for a particular gender. Providing there is a clear need, the Equality Act will allow for such provision, however, for participants it needs to be clear that they can participate according to their gender identity. For example, a trans male, could participate in a male rugby team, just as a trans female could participate in ladies football.

### **Sporting activities**

Consideration for students undertaking sporting activities needs to be given especially to trans males, due to the wearing of binders. For example, young trans males who are participating in activities such as climbing or canoeing can often experience a great degree of discomfort, and as such may feel they cannot participate. Risk assessments need to be carried out prior to activity to confirm if an alternative activity or other reasonable adjustment can be made.

#### **4.5 Dress Code**

Trans and gender questioning students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

#### **4.6 Confidentiality**

All students, including trans or gender non confirming young people or adults, have the right to privacy, this means that members of staff should not:

- Disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender or non-conforming presentation to others, which includes parents, carers and anyone else from the College community unless legally required to do so or because the young person/adult has specifically asked you to.
- Staff should not discuss trans gender students outside of College, even with close friends, even when no reference is made to their name. The Trans community is such a small one, that even a small reference, could compromise confidentiality. Additionally, it is also a criminal offence to for anyone who acquires information about someone's trans status to pass that information to a third party without permission from the individual.
- Trans and gender questioning young people and adults have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and to decide when, with whom and how much information to share.
- **Sharing Information with Parents Carers**  
Confidential information should not be shared with parents or carers, without the young person's permission. If speaking with a parent or carer of a trans or gender questioning student, it is important we use their legal name and the gender assigned at birth pronouns, unless specifically otherwise by the young person, adult.

#### **4.7 Use of Toilets**

Trans young people or adults can use the toilets of their gender identity. They can choose to use the gender neutral toilets if they prefer, or use the gender segregated toilets of their gender identity.

#### **4.8 Use of Changing Rooms**

Trans students should have access to the changing room that corresponds to their gender identity. This is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 whereby refusing a young person access to the changing room of their true identity would constitute an act of discrimination.

Should a parent, carer make a complaint, for example about a trans female changing in the same changing room as their daughter, then we as a College have to look at offering an alternative for the person who feels uncomfortable around the Trans person and not at removing the Trans person.

#### **4.9 Residential Trips**

To exclude trans students from residential trips would contravene the Equality Act.

Trans students should be able to sleep in dorms appropriate to their gender identity. In cases where the Trans student does not feel comfortable with this, alternative sleeping arrangements should be made. This consideration needs to apply to all learners' preferences or protected characteristics.

For International trips, there is a need for staff to investigate the laws regarding Trans communities. The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) have information on their website about countries that pose a risk to Trans individuals.

<https://www.ilga.org/maps-sexual-orientation-laws>

Trips abroad will require students to have a passport, which may cause trans students a problem

A consideration needs to be given to trans males on residential trips, due to the hygiene needs of washing binders. Binders are a constructive covering for the chest to flatten breasts. Binders are very expensive and this often results in the student only having a single binder, which they wash at night, this needs to be taken into account and discussed with the student for residential trips.

Any kit lists which may be generated for trips need to be gender neutral.

Any concerns you may have, as a member of staff, please refer to Anne Pitman, Learner Safeguarding and Welfare Manager or any Designated Support staff listed in section 5.

## **5. Designated Staff with Responsibility for Supporting Transgender Students**

All Student Support Officers have undertaken training on how to support Trans young people and adults and have supported many trans young people and adults over the years.

Ian Billington	01792 890708
Ryan McCarley	01792 284193
Mo Qasim	01792 284000 ex 3214
Cathy Thomas	01792 890772
Vicki Wannell	01792 284277

For WBL students, in addition to the Student Support Officers, they can also contact their Union for support

## **6. Interviewing Transgender students**

It is important to adhere to professional code of practise within your areas, and the Equality Act 2010. Should you have any concerns and wish to seek advice, please refer to Anne Pitman, Learner Safeguarding and Welfare Manager or any member of staff with designated responsivity to support referred to in section 5.

## **7. Yr Iaith Cymraeg / The Welsh Language**

Mae Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe yn ymrwymedig i hyrwyddo'r iaith Gymraeg, yn unol â Safonau'r Iaith Gymraeg a Mesur y Gymraeg (Cymru) 2011.

Gower College Swansea is committed to the promotion of the Welsh language, in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.



## Appendix 1

## Definitions and useful websites

Biphobia	Fear or dislike of someone who identifies as being bisexual
Bisexual	Refers to a person who has a romantic and or sexual orientation to more than one gender
Cisgender	Refers to a person whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth
Gender Dysphoria	Describes a person who experiences discomfort due to a mismatch between their sex at assigned birth and their gender identity
Gender Fluid	When a person moves between gender identities
Gender Reassignment	Is the legal term for describing a person's transition, this usually involves medical intervention, but it can equally mean, changing their name, pronoun, dressing according to their identified gender. Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic in the Equality Act 2010
Gender variant	Someone who does not conform to the gender roles and behaviours assigned to them at birth. This term is usually used in relation to children
Gender Questioning	When someone explores their own gender identity
Intersex	Is a term used by people whose physical, biological sex characteristics differ from the typical male or female. They may have some male and some female characteristics.  Intersex is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of traits
LGBT LGBTQI+	The acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans, if superceded with Q, I and +, it stands for Queer, Questioning, Intersex and the '+' representing and embracing other identities
Non-Binary	A term used for someone who does not identify as male or female
Trans	An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with the sex they were assigned at birth
Transitioning	There are two types of transitioning, medical and social.  Medical refers to someone taking medical intervention such as hormone therapy and surgery. Not all trans people can have or want medical intervention  Social refers to someone who is informing friends and family of their transition, and is dressing according to their gender identity  A gender recognition certificate is required for a legal transition as legal gender is determined either by a birth certificate or by a gender recognition certificate
Transsexual	This term is used in the Equality Act to refer to someone who has transitioned to live in the gender identity of their choosing. Most Tans people prefer the term trans or transgender

## 8. Useful Websites

A guide for young people that are trans

<http://cdn0.genderedintelligence.co.uk/2012/11/17/17-15-02-A-Guide-For-Young-People.pdf>

Support groups for trans people in Wales

<https://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/help-advice/whats-my-area>

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

<http://youthcymru.org.uk/transform-cymru/>

<https://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/>

TUC Useful Union Website for WBL: Claire Mullaly's tips on how to be a great trans ally

<https://www.tuc.org.uk>

[Unity Group Wales](#)

[Umbrella Cymru.](#)