

Appendix 4

Trans Glossary of Terms

The language used in relation to transgender issues evolves continuously, and reflects the changing position and perspectives of trans people in society. Its use can be highly individualised. It is important to be mindful of these changes as some trans people may use terms that others perceive as inappropriate.

This glossary covers terms that are frequently used in our policy and guidance. Unless otherwise indicated, they have been taken from the Stonewall Glossary of terms.

Cisgender or Cis - someone whose gender identity is the same as the gender they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

Coming Out - when a person first tells someone/others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bi or trans.

Gender - Gender refers to the cultural and social distinctions between men and women. It consists of three related aspects: a society's constructed gender roles, norms and behaviours which are essentially based on the sex assigned at birth; gender identity, which is a person's internal perception of their identity; gender expression, which is the way a person lives in society and interacts with others. Gender does not necessarily represent a simple binary choice: some people have a gender identity that cannot be defined simply by the use of the terms woman or man.

Gender expression/presentation - how a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.

Gender identity - a person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

Gender non-conformity – see 'gender variance'

Gender reassignment - another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo gender reassignment usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender. Gender reassignment is a characteristic that is protected by the Equality Act 2010, and it is further interpreted in the Equality Act 2010 approved code of practice. It is a term of much contention and is one that Stonewall's Trans Advisory Group feels should be reviewed.

Gender variance – Gender variance, also referred to as gender non-conformity, is behaviour or gender expression that does not match socially constructed gender norms for men and women. E.g. someone who identifies as a man but dresses as a woman.

Intersex – an umbrella term used for people who are born with variation of sex characteristics, who do not always fit society's perception of male or female bodies. Intersex is not the same as gender identity or sexual orientation. Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary.

Non-binary - an umbrella term for a person who has a gender identity which is in between or beyond the two categories 'man' and 'woman', fluctuates between 'man' and 'woman', or

who has no gender, either permanently or some of the time. Non-binary people may be protected under the discrimination by perception provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Passing - Being perceived by others as a particular identity/gender or cisgender regardless how the individual in question identifies, e.g. passing as straight, passing as a cis woman, passing as a youth. This term has become controversial as 'passing' can imply that one is not genuinely what they are passing as.

Pronoun - words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they / their.

Sex - assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions.

Trans - an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the gender they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, non-binary and gender queer. Transgender man is a term used to describe someone who was assigned female at birth but identifies as a man. This may be shortened to trans man. Transgender woman is a term used to describe someone who was assigned male at birth but identifies as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman.

Transitioning - Transitioning is a term used to describe the process and steps an individual takes in order to live in the gender they identify as. Transitioning is a unique process for each individual and may include any number of changes to a person's life. It can be social and/or medical, and it can take several years.

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