Transgender

**Introduction**  
*Transgender* or *trans* are umbrella terms for people who self-define as a gender different to that which they were assigned at birth (that is, what was written on their first birth certificate). Gender is assigned at birth according to attributes such as chromosomes, hormones and external and internal anatomy. However, this assignment sometimes conflicts with people’s gender identity.

*Gender identity* refers to a person’s internal sense of their own gender and what feels right for them. This might be male, female, non-binary (outside of male or female), genderless, or other gender identity. All gender identities are equally valid.

*Gender expression* refers to the way a person expresses or communicates their gender identity through factors such as their clothing, hairstyle, voice, body characteristics or behaviour. However, not everyone whose appearance or behaviour is considered gender nonconforming by society will identify as a trans person.

*Gender roles* refer to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for boys and men or girls and women. These influence the ways people act, interact, and feel about themselves. While some aspects of gender and gender roles may be similar across different cultures, other aspects may differ.

*Transition* refers to the process a trans person undergoes when changing their social role, forms of address (e.g. name, pronouns, and gendered titles), appearance, and/or legal information to be more congruent with their gender identity. Some trans people access medical treatment such as hormones or surgery to support their transition, but this is not required, desired or accessible for all trans people. There is no one correct way to transition, and every trans person’s journey is unique.

**Dealing with your concerns**

Many trans people worry about how other people will react and how they'll treat them once they find out that they’re trans. For example, they may fear rejection or hostility from their family, peers or colleagues.

Trans people often experience difficulties because people perceive them to be a different gender to the one they identify as. This can result in others using incorrect gendered language for them, such as pronouns and forms of address (e.g. ‘Sir’, or ‘Miss’). Some people may also exhibit transphobic behaviour towards trans people, such as harassing, bullying or excluding them for being trans.

Some trans people feel clear about their gender identity from a young age whereas for others it’s less obvious, and how they feel about their gender may shift over time. Acknowledging how you feel about yourself may sometimes involve overcoming feelings such as shame, guilt, or fear of disapproval.

**Lewis Hancox** - filmmaker, comedy writer, aspiring actor and trans advocate – wrote [an article for Ditch The Label with some helpful tips on coming out as trans](https://www.ditchthelabel.org/8-tips-for-coming-out-as-trans/).

**Other support available**

Live team have active student groups that offer support and often meet up **–**

<https://bedfordcollegegroup.ac.uk/student-life/l-i-v-e/>

Helpful Links:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Transhealth/Pages/Transhealthhome.aspx>  
<http://www.gires.org.uk/index.php>  
<http://www.gires.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/LEAFLET-Feb-2017-Transgender-Experiences2.pdf>  
<http://transbareall.co.uk/>  
[https://www.gendertrust.org.uk/](http://transbareall.co.uk/)  
<http://www.imaan.org.uk/>  
Support for those in a relationship with a trans person:  
<http://www.depend.org.uk/frameset.html>