

TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY POLICY & PROCEDURES

Terminology

Throughout this policy, the term 'Trans' will be used to refer to all learners and members of staff whose gender is different from or does not sit comfortably with the sex they were assigned at birth. The term 'non-binary' is used for any learner or member of staff whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with man or woman. This may include gender fluid, agender, etc.

Please refer to the Glossary of Terms at the end of this document for more detail.

Introduction

Many individuals have an innate sense of being male or female; their gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth, and they do not have any questions over their gender identity. These people are known as cisgender individuals.

However, there are a number of individuals whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth, and they may identify as trans, non-binary, and/or gender non-conforming. Some may undergo the process of aligning their life and/or physical identity to match their gender identity, and this is called transitioning. Individuals all view themselves and their experience in a unique way and will have personal preferences in terms of language, but for the purpose of this document, we use the umbrella term 'trans' and 'non-binary'.

South Thames Colleges Group values all its students and staff equally. It will neither practice nor allow any discrimination based on gender identity. Recognising the existence of transphobia in society, the Group will ensure the following:

- Staff and students will not be denied fair and equal treatment because of their gender identity.
- All staff and students feel safe and respected as individuals, with their personal preferences taken into consideration as much as is reasonably practicable.
- Transphobic abuse, harassment, and bullying (including name-calling, derogatory comments or jokes, graffiti, unacceptable or unwanted behaviour, intrusive questions) are serious disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the appropriate procedure.
- All areas of the curriculum and resources will be monitored to ensure that they don't intentionally rely on gender stereotypes and that they don't contain any transphobic material. Indeed, gender stereotypes should be challenged at every opportunity.
- Staff or students who wish it to be known that they are trans will be provided with a supportive environment. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to declare and be open about their gender identity. To 'out' someone, whether staff or student, without that person's permission is a very serious act and will be dealt with accordingly. Indeed, it is potentially a criminal offence under section 22 of the Gender Recognition Act.
- The College Group does not tolerate any form of bullying.

- Trans staff and students come from diverse backgrounds, and the College will strive to ensure that they do not face discrimination either on the grounds of their gender identity or with regard to any of the protected characteristics (age, disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, and pregnancy/maternity). Transgender issues will be included in annual equality and inclusion training.
- Staff and students undergoing any medical and surgical procedures related to gender reassignment will receive positive support from the Group.
- Staff will not be excluded from employment, promotion, or any employee benefit because of their trans or gender identity.
- Assumptions will not be made that partners are always of the opposite gender.

In light of the UK Supreme Court ruling on April 16, 2025, the Group acknowledges that, under the Equality Act 2010, the terms 'man,' 'woman,' and 'sex' refer to biological sex assigned at birth. This clarification has implications for access to single-sex spaces and services.

Policy Statement

The Group aims to create an environment in which all staff and students, whatever their gender identity, feel equally welcome and valued and one in which transphobic behaviour is not tolerated.

All trans students and staff have the following options:

- To choose whether or not to declare their trans or gender identity, and to whom they declare it, and the circumstances where this may be declared.
- To request the college to update its documents, records, and systems to reflect their new gender identity, once they have decided to commence living full-time in their acquired gender.

All college staff have these responsibilities:

- To respect the dignity of all students.
- To challenge or report incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment, or victimisation relating to trans or gender identity.
- To maintain and respect confidentiality about an individual's transgender status from any other person unless given explicit permission by the individual or if there is a significant safeguarding risk.
- To comply with the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the protected characteristics of gender reassignment that is in force in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Policy Title: Transgender & Non-Binary Policy & Procedure	Staff Member Responsible: Vice Principal Quality, Development & Standards
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STCG TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY PROCEDURE

Promoting Information About Ways of Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Students:

- Ensuring all learners are aware of the policy and procedures and the support available.
- Ensuring learners are aware of the student unions and LGBTQ+ groups.
- Ensuring learners are aware of the student support services, including counselling available in the college.
- Ensuring trans and non-binary learners are represented in marketing and posters to promote and celebrate the equality, diversity, and inclusion culture of the college.

Declaring Trans or Gender Identity

Benefits of Declaring Trans or Gender Identity

We encourage you to tell us about your intention to undertake gender reassignment or transition so that we can support you.

We understand that you may not wish to tell us about your intentions. However, if you do, we would be able to offer you our full support.

If You Wish to Declare

If there is anything you would like us to know about your gender identity, please speak to any trusted member of staff who will work with you to identify ways in which the college can support you.

A number of support options will also be available that may enable you to live more easily in accordance with your gender during your study.

Social or Medical Transition

Social transition is choosing to live your life as a preferred gender. This could include:

- A name change
- A change in pronoun
- Wearing clothes that are associated with their gender identity
- *Using toilets/changing rooms appropriate to their gender identity rather than biological sex*
- *Arrangements for rooming during residential college trips*

Medical transition is the process by which a trans person takes steps to physically alter their body. Some trans young people will be hoping to undergo both social and medical aspects of transition, while some will choose just the social aspects. A young person's goals in terms of transition may change over time, and the support offered needs to reflect and support this through regular meetings to review their current goals.

Information and Staff Training

Training and information are available to all staff.

Name Changing Procedure

Where a student has legally changed their name, they should immediately inform College Admissions.

The College will then:

- Update their student record with the new name.
- Ensure that, from that point onwards, all communications use the chosen name.
- *Ensure the student's legal name and sex (as per their birth certificate) are maintained on official records where required by law, while preferred name and pronouns are used in informal and day-to-day college contexts.*

Pronouns

The College acknowledges the importance of using a person's correct pronouns as an aspect of affirming their gender identity. All staff are expected to:

- Respect students' and colleagues' preferred pronouns.
- *Engage in annual training to raise awareness of inclusive language and the evolving understanding of gender diversity.*

Facilities and Spaces

Where possible, the College will provide gender-neutral toilets and changing rooms.

Following the UK Supreme Court ruling in April 2025, access to single-sex facilities will be determined based on biological sex. Where this creates discomfort or challenges for transgender or non-binary students or staff, the College will work collaboratively to identify reasonable adjustments, such as access to gender-neutral facilities.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The College recognises the right of individuals to privacy. Information about a person's transgender status, history, or transition must be treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is unlawful to disclose any such information without the express permission of the individual.

Dress Codes

All students and staff are expected to follow the College dress code, which allows for dress consistent with an individual's gender identity. The College aims to support a gender-inclusive approach to personal presentation.

Monitoring and Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and in consultation with students and staff.

As part of the next review, the Group will specifically consider the implications of recent legal developments, including the Department for Education's 2024/25 guidance on supporting gender-questioning children and the 2025 Supreme Court ruling, to ensure full legal compliance and alignment with best practices in inclusivity.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Biological Sex** – The classification of individuals as male or female at birth based on physical anatomy and chromosomes.
- **Gender Identity** – An individual’s deeply held sense of their own gender, which may be different from the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Transgender** – An umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex at birth.
- **Non-Binary** – A gender identity that does not fit within traditional binary notions of male or female.
- **Gender Reassignment** – A protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 referring to people undergoing, proposing to undergo, or having undergone a process to change their gender.
- **Gender-Neutral Facilities** – Spaces designed for use by anyone regardless of gender identity or biological sex.

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