

# Conceptualizing, listening to and supporting students across diverse gender identities

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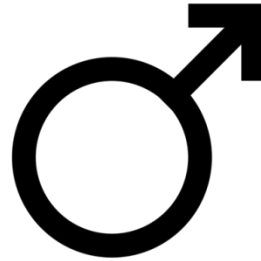
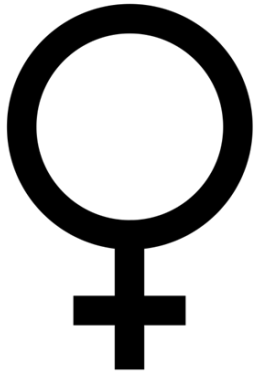
# Session overview

- An introduction to the differences and complexities of gender and its related concepts within the setting of post-compulsory education and what we know about how transgender students experience these?
- the theoretical basis for examining and promoting transgender inclusion in post-compulsory education?
- thinking about how we work more inclusively within the university with transgender issues including within the broader LGBTQI banner?
- identifying priorities for improving our inclusivity



**QUIZ**  
**TIME!**

# Exploring gender diversity



How many gender  
descriptive terms  
can you think of?

“Trans” or “trans\*” with an asterisk can be used as shorthand to reflect the full spectrum but not exclusive to: transgender, transfeminine; transmaculine; transsexual; transvestite; genderqueer; genderfluid; non-binary; genderfuck; genderless; agender; non-gendered; third gender; two-spirit; bigender; androgynous and gender nonconforming.

**Gender** BENDER

it's more than what's downstairs (that's just sex)

**Heteronormativity IS THE ASSUMED** THAT SOMEONE'S BIOLOGICAL SEX MATCHES AN ASSIGNED GENDER IDENTITY & set of roles created by society

There's so much more to **gender identity** than just the two sexes of **male & female**. Many people are both, **OR NEITHER** or the unexpected!

ALEX  
ash  
avery  
cameron  
casey  
DYLAN  
elliott  
hayden  
jordan  
LEE  
me  
MORGAN  
peyton  
quinn  
riley  
RYAN  
shane  
sidney  
SKYLAR  
taylor

**ze**  
androgyny  
can be a fashion style or an **identity**

**WOMEN VENUS COPPER**

**INTERSEX MERCURY**

folks are gender **AMBIGUOUS** biologically

not everyone is **XX** or **XY** there's a lot more **inbetween**

a **cisgendered** person feels *matched* with their **BIOLOGICAL SEX** & assigned gender

**Most PEOPLE** consider themselves **CISGENDERED** but common is **not necessarily better or normal**

**IT JUST IS**

**TRANS** gendered **PEOPLE** doesn't match or inadequately describes their **GENDER**

feel that the sex ASSIGNED at **BIRTH** this often leads to feelings of **dysphoria**

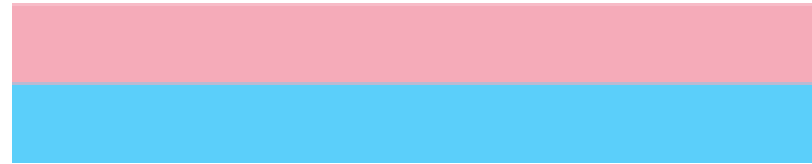
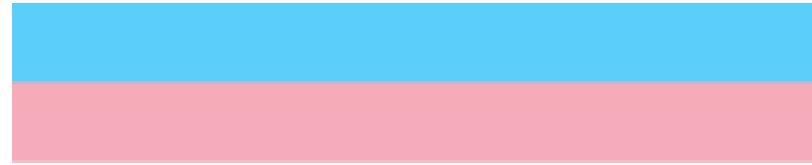
gender "norms" that society **constructs** are **not INHERENT** yet so many are **persecuted** just for being themselves

**genderqueer**  
an umbrella term for the rest of us

**TOMBOYS&SissiesUNITE**

"Is that a boy or girl?" "does it matter?"

# Which communities do these flag represent?



Q2. What percentage of the population identify as transgender

**Answer:**

The Gender Identity Research & Education Society (GIREs) estimates that about 1% of the British population are gender nonconforming to some degree.

The number of gender variant people is approximately doubling every six months

**Information points for students:**

**A degree certificate** is a legal document. Institutions will need to see legal proof of name change (for example a statutory declaration of name change or a birth certificate) to issue or reissue a certificate in a name different from that under which the student originally registered. Asking students or alumni for evidence of medical supervision is not appropriate, as not all trans people will be under medical supervision. It is unlawful to ask anyone for a gender recognition certificate.

**REFERENCES**

References for current or former students who have transitioned must make no reference to the person's former names or gender, and must use appropriate pronouns. Failure to do so without the individual's consent would be a breach of the Data Protection and the Gender Recognition Acts. If the university receives a reference for someone who has previously transitioned and which refers to them by a previous name, then that information should be treated as confidential.

**Q4 . Name 3 key issues faced by students from Transgender Communities?**

- 1. 38% have experienced harrassment on campus**
- 2. Other risk factors involve**

**34.4% of trans adults had attempted suicide at least once and almost 14% of trans adults had attempted suicide more than twice.**

**3. Unemployment rate is 3 times higher than the rest of the population**

**Information point**

***Equality and Human Rights Commission***, found that a high number of LGBT students have experienced negative treatment on the basis of their sexual orientation: 49.5% of their survey respondents reported problems with fellow students, 10.4% saw negativity from tutors and lecturers, and a further 10.6% from other staff within their institution

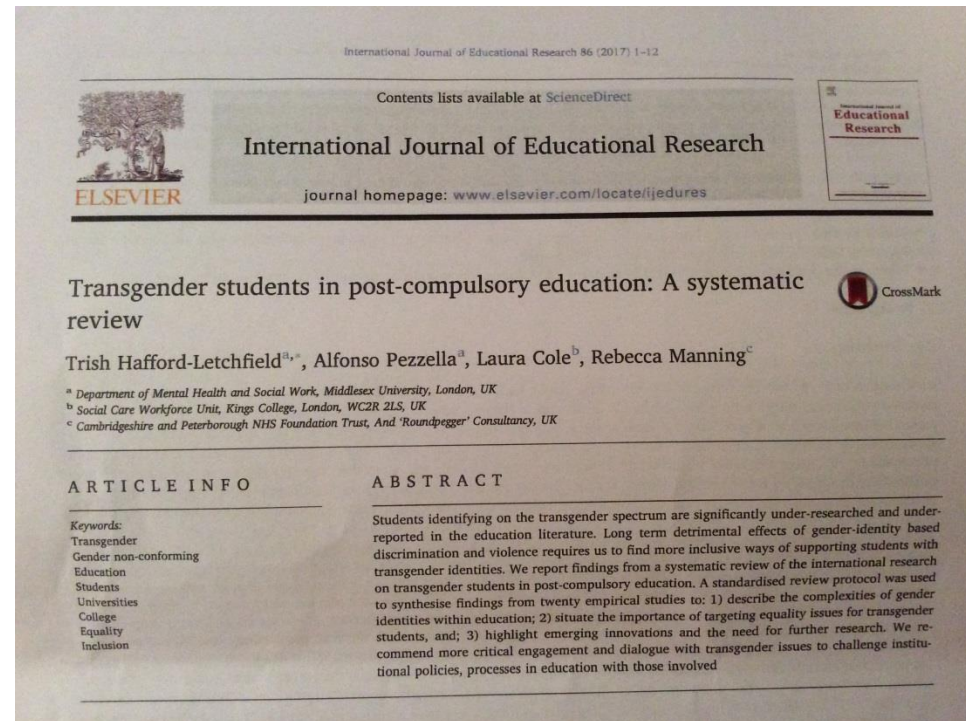
***You Gov*** discrimination LGBT students are twice as likely as their heterosexual and cisgender peers to experience mental health difficulties with 45% of LGBT students saying that they have experienced mental health difficulties. Profound effect on their learning and outcomes



Hafford-Letchfield, T., Pezzella, A., Cole, L., Manning, R. (2017) Transgender students in post-compulsory education: A systematic review. *International Journal of Educational Research*.

## Key highlights:

- Students on the transgender spectrum are significantly under-researched.
- College or university is a significant time for students to develop their identity.
- Empirical studies reveal significant complexities around gender in education.
- Action to promote transgender equality in post-compulsory education is **now urgent**.



# Common issues for us may include:

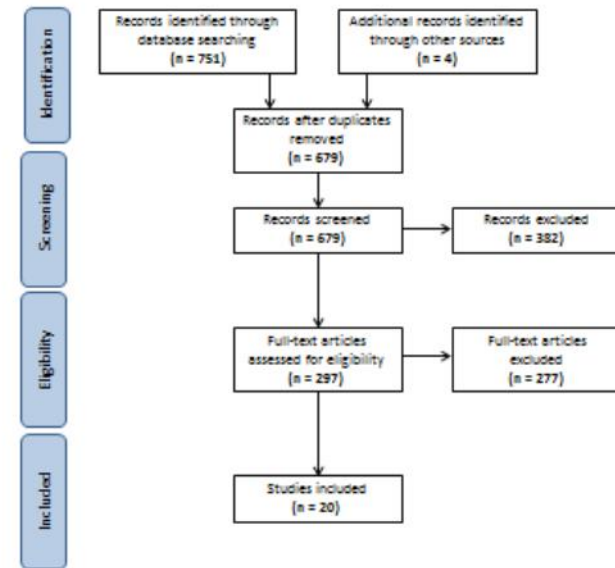
- Lack of familiarity
- Confidence
- Visibility
- Cisnormativity, heteronormativity and **unwitting** exclusion discrimination
- Fear of getting it wrong
- The challenge of intersectionality



# Main review questions

- [?] What are the complexities around gender and its related concepts within the setting of post-compulsory education and how do transgender students experience these?
- [?] What might be the theoretical basis for examining and promoting transgender inclusion in post-compulsory education?
- [?] Which policies, processes, and structures for engagement can be identified to work more inclusively with transgender issues including those included under the broader LGBTQI banner?
- [?] What are the priorities for further research and how can existing innovations be promoted or new initiatives generated?

Figure 1: Trans\* Review: Flow Diagram Overview

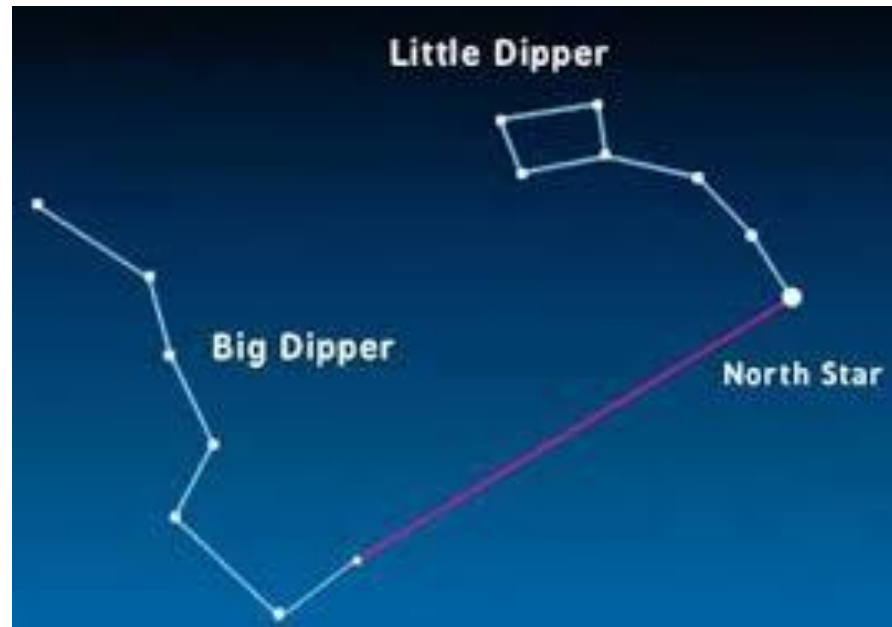


# Main themes

## 1. Taking the 'T' out of LGBT



## 2. NAVIGATING TRANSGENDER IDENTITIES ACROSS A VARIETY OF SPACES





### 3. Safety, wellbeing and transgender identities

# 4. Institutional processes and systemic influences





## 5. Theoretical lenses and research methods used to engage transgender issues



## Over To You



# Scenario 1

You are conducting some pedagogic research and ask your class of 50 students complete a survey which collects some demographic information about each participant.

One of the students writes on the survey under gender in big bold letters 'neither' - this survey is rubbish.

What do you do?

## Scenario 2

A student who is on a work placement tells you that they didn't go to placement last week because some of the people in the team had made transphobic comments which when he tried to challenge, they made fun of him and told him that he was being oversensitive

What would you do?

# Scenario 3

Your administrator approaches you to say that one of the students has e mailed her asking for the transcript of her degree to have the name changed on it as she has now transitioned into her desired gender.

What would you do?

## The Ward-Gale Model for LGBTQ-inclusivity in Higher Education

	LANGUAGE	ROLE MODELS	CURRICULUM CONTENT
<b>INCREASING AWARENESS</b>	Avoiding abusive and discriminatory language	Signposting to LGBTQ organisations and events	Basic acknowledgement of gender and sexual diversity
<b>ADDITITVE APPROACHES</b>	Avoiding hetero-normative and cis-normative language	Access to mentors for LGBTQ-identified students	Inclusion of topics, themes and readings about LGBTQ identities
<b>TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICE</b>	Critical engagement with queer/trans inclusive language	Role models and allies in the teaching and learning environment	Critical approaches to pedagogy, supporting social engagement and action/inclusive professional practice

Model has 3 domains of inclusivity with 3 levels of inclusivity

Ward and Gale (2016)

*Some Examples ....*

# Language!

- Including a statement in module/programme handbooks on avoiding hetero and cis-normative language
- Induction - discuss what constitutes abusive or discriminatory language
- Provide a compulsory online and interactive equality and diversity module at induction.

# Role models

- Being out in the classroom including as an ally– safe people to talk to if a problem arises
- Challenging and educating homo/transphobia
- Encourage students to draw on experience during learning and in their own work
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss different cultural experiences openly
- Embrace LGBT issues in sessions on equality/social justice/history/literature



# Awareness

- Do staff/students understand and work to legal requirements, (bullying /harassment / abuse and discrimination)
- Are issues audited / reviewed to establish whether effective support in place for students exposed to homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.
- Are students able to change their gender in registration systems
- Do staff have knowledge, confidence, skill to challenge and educate when Issues arise
- Can staff signpost students to support services or SIG

# Additive

- Actively make gender and sexual diversity within the culture of higher education (promotion event – imagery – activities)
- Showcase and integrate LGBTQ scientists or theorists from the discipline to students.
- Provide mentors/peer mentors, link students to each other

# Transformative

- Provides spaces in which students are able to become involved in engaged social action (proactive critical discussion of the language of gender and sexuality)
- May look different in different disciplines

What do you know about the networks and activities for LGBT community at Middlesex?

# Middlesex LGBT



<http://www.mdxsu.com/liberations>

<http://www.mdxsu.com/groups/mdxsu-lgbt-students/events/pride-in-london-parade-2017>

<https://sexualitysocialwork.wordpress.com/join-the-group/>



**Or contact us**

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**[A.Pezzella@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:A.Pezzella@mdx.ac.uk)**

# References

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