

## Recommendations for gender-neutral facilities in colleges

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There is a document detailing many of the things colleges can do to be more inclusive & accessible to trans students – this is entitled '*Including Transgender Students at the University of Cambridge*' and was written by Sarah Gibson, trans rep in 2013. The latest version (edited 2015) can be found in the Resources section of the Make No Assumptions website ([www.makenoassumptions.org.uk](http://www.makenoassumptions.org.uk))

This document is a good introduction to colleges' obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and contains some good basic information about what it means to be transgender.

This document contains the following background information on bathroom use by trans students:

*Students' use of the facilities which closest match their self-determined gender is protected under the Equality Act 2010 and denying them the use of these constitutes discrimination. Should any other user make a complaint about this issue, it should be handled sensitively and calmly, explaining that the trans person has the right to use the facilities and that they are no more likely to be a threat than any other person. It should also be noted that the trans person, particularly those MAAB, is far more likely to face aggression in this situation than a cisgender user.*

The following recommendations are made:

*Many trans or intersex individuals may not have a gender identity within the gender binary, or may feel unsafe using gendered facilities, and so only offering facilities designated male or female is not sufficient to meet their needs. To fully include these people, it should be examined whether gender neutral toilets can be installed. By gender neutral toilet we mean a single stall loo, similar to disabled ones but not necessarily accessible, with signage such as 'bathroom' or 'WC' printed on it. We believe these to be the safest solution as well an efficient way of providing facilities to all but disabled students. In some areas, these may already exist but with gendered signage on them, simply changing the signs, at negligible cost, will make them inclusive of all.*

Important points to note considering the issue of gender-neutral toilet facilities:

1. Gender-neutral toilet facilities are a necessity in order to be fully accessible to non-binary students and other students who feel uncomfortable using a gendered facility (this may include transgender students, who may or may not have disclosed that they are transgender).
2. Gender-neutral toilet facilities should ideally be single-stall toilets with non-gendered signage (such as '*Toilet*', '*Bathroom*', '*WC*')
3. We would recommend that all existent single-stall toilet facilities are re-designated as gender-neutral. The only thing this would require is changing the signage on the door, and the provision of sanitary disposal bins in both facilities (or signing clearly which toilet has this facility)

# MAKE NO ASSUMPTIONS.



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4. If single-stall toilets are not available in a building, existent multi-stall facilities can be re-designated as gender-neutral. We are not aware of any legal barriers to doing this.
5. When re-designating multi-user toilet facilities as gender-neutral it can be helpful to note which contains urinals. This can be incorporated into signage – for example, *'Toilets with urinals'* and *'Toilets without urinals'*.
6. Sanitary disposal bins should either be available in all toilets, or clear signage placed on the door to indicate which toilets contain these facilities and which do not.
7. While at present some students choose to use disabled toilets when in need of a gender-neutral option (and should not be prevented from doing so) this is not an ideal solution. Disabled people require unrestricted access to these facilities and the increased traffic resulting from using them as the sole gender-neutral option is unhelpful. Additional gender-neutral facilities should be provided; it is not sufficient to have a single accessible toilet as the only gender-neutral option.
8. When both gendered and gender-neutral facilities are available, transgender people should not be expected to use only gender-neutral facilities. Transgender people should be allowed to use whichever toilet facilities they are most comfortable using; preventing them from doing so is a form of discrimination.