

Monitoring equality: Developing a gender identity question

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Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011

First published Summer 2011

ISBN: 978-1-84206-392-7

Equality and Human Rights Commission Research Report Series

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Acknowledgements

At the Equality and Human Rights Commission we would like to thank Sue Botcherby and Fiona Glen for their guidance and support throughout the project.

We would also like to thank the interviewers who worked on this project: Amanda Maltby, Julie Foster and Karen Joyce, all from the National Centre for Social Research.

Most importantly, we are grateful to all those people who took part in this study, as without their help, this research would not have been possible.

Glossary

Acquired gender

The new gender of a person who has had their gender reassigned and/or legally recognised. It is possible for an individual to transition fully without surgical intervention.

Cross-dresser

The term refers to a person who wears the clothing of the opposite sex because it is the clothing of the opposite sex. This excludes people who wear opposite sex clothing for other reasons. Cross-dressers may not identify with, or want to be the opposite gender, nor adopt the behaviors or practices of the opposite gender, and generally do not want to change their bodies. This term is associated with transvestite, though some cross-dressers would not identify as such.

FtM

Female to male transsexual person. A person who is changing, or has changed, gender role from female to male. Also described as a 'trans man'.

Gender

Gender refers to socially constructed roles; behaviours; activities; and attributes. The terms 'man', 'masculine', 'woman', and 'feminine' denote gender.

Gender dysphoria

Gender dysphoria is the medical term used for the condition in which a person assigned one gender (usually at birth on the basis of their sex), identifies as belonging to another gender, or does not conform with the gender role their respective society prescribes to them.

Gender identity

This is the way in which an individual identifies with a gender category.

Gender reassignment

The term 'gender reassignment' applies to the process of transitioning from one gender to another. The term used in the Equality Act to describe people who intend to transition; are transitioning; or have transitioned is 'transsexual'. So, a person who intends to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process of gender reassignment (which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery), is a transsexual person.

GRA

Gender Recognition Act 2004.

GRC

Gender Recognition Certificate. A full Gender Recognition Certificate shows that a person has satisfied the criteria for legal recognition in the acquired gender. It makes the recipient of the certificate, for all intents and purposes, the sex listed on the certificate from that moment onward. The legal basis for creating a Gender Recognition Certificate is found in the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

GRS

Gender reassignment surgery.

Intersex

There are a number of intersex conditions (recently renamed Disorders of Sex Development) some of which lead to physical genital anomalies. Those born with them may experience inconsistency between their gender identity and the gender role assigned at birth.

LGBT

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender. Where this group does not include trans people, it is referred to as LGB.

MtF

Male to female transsexual person. A person who is changing, or has changed, gender role from male to female. Also described as a 'trans woman'.

Executive summary

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the new Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which gives additional responsibilities to public authorities and those working on their behalf. The duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations across all aspects of equality protected by the Act. The PSED consists of a general equality duty, which is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 itself, and draft specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. For the first time, public sector bodies will be required to demonstrate equality across all protected characteristics, including age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. This builds on the existing duties relating to disability, gender and race, and improves the coverage in relation to gender reassignment .

The draft specific duties require listed public authorities to publish information to demonstrate that they have complied with the general equality duty. The purpose of having and using such information is to embed equality into their everyday work.

The information that different authorities need to collect to inform their decisions under the equality duty will vary widely between different sectors and organisations. It is up to each individual authority to establish what information they will need to collect and publish. An overview of information requirements of the equality duty can be found in *Equality information and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities* (EHRC, 2011).

When public bodies monitor for the range of protected characteristics outlined above, they can avail of questions that have been developed and cognitively tested for public use. The exception is gender reassignment/transgender status. Yet, employers and service providers are increasingly seeking guidance and information on monitoring for such characteristics. If public bodies do intend to monitor for transgender status, then it is important that they use questions that have been systematically developed and cognitively tested. This is a process of empirical investigation to ensure that questions do work as intended, and that people feel willing and able to answer them.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (the Commission) commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) to carry out a research study to 1) develop and cognitively test new gender identity questions that can be used by public bodies when carrying out equality monitoring, and 2) that can be understood and answered by people who are transgender and non-transgender. For the purposes of this project, the concept of 'monitoring' is defined in its broadest sense, to mean the capture of evidence.

After an initial review of gender identity questions already in the public domain, a suite of questions, designed by the Commission and NatCen, were presented to participants recruited purposively for deliberative focus groups. Deliberative focus groups took place with transgender and non-transgender people (separately) during stage 2 of this research study. Focus groups provided the opportunity to explore how participants, both trans and non-trans, felt about the questions in regards to wording and acceptability. The stage which followed the focus groups, stage 3, involved cognitive interviews with trans and non-trans participants over two rounds (with iterations made to the questions between rounds). Cognitive interviewing provided the opportunity to test wording and sensitivity on a one-to-one basis.

Recommended questions

The project found that most trans and non-trans participants were willing to answer the recommended gender identity questions, with certain caveats and assurances in place. A number of exceptions were identified, and these are highlighted.

We would advise that introductory written text is provided before these questions are asked to explain the purpose, to encourage participation and to gain participants' trust to answer the questions honestly. This should explain why the data are being collected; how the data will be protected under the Data Protection Act; and how respect for the participants' answers will be ensured by the organisation, for example, by ensuring confidentiality and anonymity throughout. Trans participants in the research were particularly keen that these assurances are provided. Public authorities have a duty to protect an individual's right to privacy. The Gender Recognition Act 2004 provides that, where a person holds a Gender Recognition

Certificate (GRC), they must be treated according to their acquired gender and it is a criminal offence to disclose their status. A transsexual person may consent to disclosing the information if they decide it is in their interests to do so. However, such consent must be explicit, and not assumed.

Whilst we recognise that monitoring can take place in many different forms, the participants in this research preferred the self completion format for collecting responses to the recommended questions. The questions are therefore presented here with ‘tick boxes’ and participant instructions (for example, ‘please tick one option’). The questions would require amendments if asked by an interviewer face-to-face or over the phone.

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
<p>Q1 At birth were you described as...</p> <p><i>Please tick one option</i></p> <p>Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Intersex <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>a) We would recommend that this question is asked first and a clear explanation is given for collecting the information. Confidentiality and anonymity should be described and assured (where possible).</p> <p>b) This question captures the sex ascribed to individuals at birth. A small number of individuals are described as intersex at birth, rather than male or female, therefore this option should be included. The sensitivity of the question requires a ‘prefer not to say’ option. This question, when used in combination with question 2, will allow for gender identity and transgender history to be captured.</p> <p>c) Testing did reveal that some trans</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
	<p>participants would not be comfortable answering a question like this in <i>any</i> context, because they do not have to reveal this identity, are legally protected from doing so (hold a GRC)), or feel uncomfortable revealing this. There will always be participants who will not want to reveal this information.</p>
<p>Q2 Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?</p> <p><i>Please tick one option</i></p> <p>Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>In another way: <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>	<p>a) We would recommend that this question is asked after question 1. This question captures the identity of individuals now. The insertion of the ‘in another way’ option was considered to be important for those individuals who may not think of themselves as male or female, and this terminology is preferred to the usual option of ‘other’. This question, when used in combination with question 1, will allow for gender identity and transgender history to be captured.</p> <p>b) Testing found that the terms ‘male’ and ‘female’ are less problematic than ‘man’ and ‘woman’ because the former are seen as biological facts and not socially constructed like the latter terms. Additionally, despite concerns raised in the focus groups around the potential confusion of using traditional sex categories when asking how one describes themselves (such as about</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
	<p>gender), evidence from cognitive interviews suggests that the categories 'male' and 'female' do work, and they work well for both trans and non-trans individuals.</p> <p>c) Where there is limited space in a form or questionnaire, or where the information required need not capture the legal definition of gender reassignment; this question and question 1 are adequate for capturing transgender history and gender identity.</p> <p>However, there will be people with a transgender history who will not disclose it through questions 1 and 2, either because they hold a GRC or because they simply do not wish to. A reliance on these two questions alone may therefore result in underestimation.</p>
<p>Q3 Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth to the gender you identify with, or do you intend to?</p> <p>(This could include changing your name, wearing different clothes taking hormones or having any gender reassignment surgery).</p>	<p>a) Question 3 enables a better capture of gender reassignment in line with the definition of gender reassignment protected by the 2010 Equality Act. We recommend this question is used in combination with Q4, which will enable capture of the stage at which individuals are in the process, if any.</p> <p>However, there will always be trans</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> → Please go to Q4</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> → End.</p>	<p>people who will choose not to answer this question (see above).</p>
<p>Q4 Continuing to think about these examples, which of the following options best applies to you?</p> <p><i>Please tick one option</i></p> <p>I am thinking about going through this process <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am currently going through this process <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have already been through this process <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have been through this process, then changed back <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>a) Question 4 only works in conjunction with question 3, as it directly refers to the examples used in the previous question. Trans people will be routed to question 4. Question 4 enables a better capture of where individuals are in the process, in line with the definition of gender reassignment protected by the 2010 Equality Act. The options elicit intention to, whether currently undergoing and having gone through gender reassignment (as defined by the individual).</p> <p>b) The ‘prefer not to say’ option was recommended by participants. The ‘none of the above’ answer option gives participants the opportunity to write in an alternative response if they wish to.</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
<p>Q5 Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?</p> <p><i>Tick all that apply</i></p> <p>Trans man <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Trans woman <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Transsexual person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Gender variant person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Cross dressing person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Transvestite person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Intersex person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>In another way: <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>a) This question will enable capture of the different gender identities within the trans population.</p> <p>b) We would advise that where possible, this question is included since it provides an opportunity for people to express themselves in the way that they want to.</p> <p>c) The ‘prefer not to say’ option was recommended by participants, and the option to self-define ‘in another way’. The use of ‘person’ enables a human identity, rather than simply a category. The options ‘transvestite’ and ‘cross dresser’ were recommended separately as they can be different identities, as were the options to define as a ‘trans man’ or ‘trans woman’. The list of answers is not exhaustive, but represents most forms of identity and self identity, without becoming onerously long.</p>

1 Introduction and background

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the new Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED consists of a general equality duty, which is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 itself, and draft specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. The general equality duty came into force on 5 April 2011.

The PSED will ensure public sector organisations have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. For the first time, public sector bodies will be required to demonstrate equality across all protected characteristics, including age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. This builds on the existing duties relating to disability, gender and race, and improves the coverage in relation to gender reassignment.

Public bodies, including employers and services, are routinely monitoring their employees or service users in order to meet their needs, consult and engage with them, and capture evidence on equality or inequality. It is expected that public sector employers such as government departments, local councils, the National Health Service, and others, will publish information to demonstrate that they have complied with the general equality duty.

When public bodies monitor for the range of protected characteristics outlined above, questions are available that have been developed and cognitively tested for public use; the exception is gender reassignment/transgender status. Yet, employers and service providers are increasingly seeking guidance and information on monitoring for such characteristics. If public bodies and others do intend to monitor for transgender status, then it is important that they use questions that have been systematically developed and cognitively tested. This is a process of empirical investigation to ensure that questions do work as intended, and that people feel willing and able to answer them.

1.1 Project aims

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (the Commission) commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) to carry out a research study with a primary aim of developing and cognitively reviewing new questions to measure gender identity, including transgender that can be understood and answered by all people living in the United Kingdom (UK).

The purpose of the project was to:

- review existing transgender questions and what they capture;
- develop a shortlist of questions for testing;
- facilitate a range of focus groups and undertake cognitive interviewing with transgender and non-transgender people to test the questions;
- select the most appropriate question/questions that include the capture of gender reassignment as defined by the Equality Act; and
- provide a final report that outlines the findings and suggests questions to ask which are grounded in research.

1.2 Report structure

The next chapter (**chapter 2**) is about methodology where we describe the methods used throughout this research.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the findings and recommendations from the focus groups with trans and non-trans participants. These took place during January 2011 and helped shape the questions which were then taken forward to stage 2 of the research project: cognitive interviews with trans and non-trans participants. Detailed findings and recommendations from round 1 cognitive testing are presented in **Chapter 4** and from round 2 in **chapter 5**.

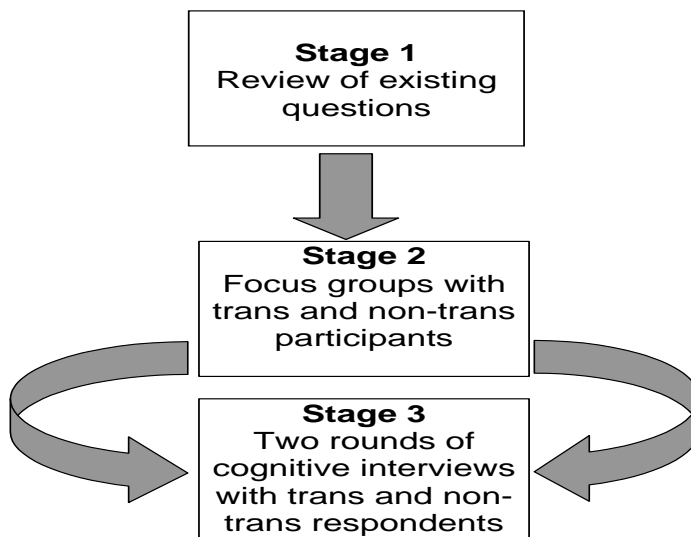
In **chapter 6**, we touch on some more general findings in relation to the context and mode for asking gender identity questions, and also present findings from the focus groups and cognitive interviews in relation to a set of themes. Finally, **chapter 7** discusses the conclusions from this study. Here we draw on stages 2 and 3 to suggest questions which could be considered for monitoring or survey purposes. In this chapter we also reflect on lessons learnt during this project. It is hoped that this discussion will be useful for those who plan to conduct research with trans participants.

2 Methodology

The project comprised three stages:

- **Stage 1:** Question review
- **Stage 2:** Focus groups to seek trans and non-trans participants views on the questions; and,
- **Stage 3:** Cognitive interviews to test, refine, and re-test the questions.

An overview of the research process



2.1 Question review

In November 2010, the Commission carried out a short review of a range of different questions that measure transgender status. Questions were reviewed from a number of sources, both within and outside of the UK. The Commission considered questions taken from surveys such as the British Social Attitudes Survey, the LGBTQ Sexual Health Services Survey, the Ottawa-Carleton School Board survey of student needs, the Scottish Transgender Alliance Online survey and the California Transgender Economic Health Survey. The Commission also reviewed questions used in monitoring forms, such as the Welsh Assembly Government Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. A total of 23 separate questions were considered as part of the review.

The aim was to find a questioning approach, which was simple and could be understood by everyone, including those who are not familiar with transgender people or issues. The Commission also needed an approach that would not require too many questions so as not to overburden public bodies, other providers and their participants. Whilst public bodies were the driving force for this development work, such questions could also be run on national surveys or even a Census. Comparable data could then be collected through a harmonised, considered and tested approach. The questions subsequently reviewed, were assessed against the project's requirements, to see if they:

- confused sexual orientation and transgender status;
- failed to include those thinking about living in their acquired gender permanently and also those who only live sometimes in their acquired gender;
- used terms which may not be well understood by non-trans people;
- presented 'transgender' as a separate gender;
- could be answered by people who do not have a transgender identity/a transgender history; or,
- could only work in a longitudinal survey (because they collect data following previous data collection and then check and verify this in future data collection intervals).

The review revealed that no existing questions met the project's requirements in entirety. So following the question review, the Commission took forward elements of some of the questions which were felt to be useful and proposed alternative short sets of questions each containing three questions: a first question which established current identity; a second question which asked for birth sex; and a third which collected transgender identity. This final question was designed for those trans people who might want to self identify in more detail (only asked if there was a discrepancy between the first and second question).

NatCen's Questionnaire Development and Testing (QDT) hubⁱ were involved in reviewing the questions in light of good questionnaire design principles and also with the aim of highlighting potential pitfalls that could occur as a result of administering them in different data collection modes (such as removing the need for routing with a

paper self completion format in mind). The Commission and the NatCen team worked together to finalise the questions and following this first stage of work, NatCen took the lead on exploring the questions in focus groups and then testing them in cognitive interviews. NatCen worked closely throughout with the Commission to present the findings from each stage and agree on a way forward in terms of revising the questions for the next phase.

A starting point was to use the questions which had been developed by the Commission in collaboration with NatCen's Questionnaire Development and Testing (QDT) hub (these can be found in section 3.1 – table 5). These questions were presented to participants recruited purposively for deliberative focus groups.

2.2 Deliberative focus groups (Stage 2)

Deliberative research is a tool that enables the public to be involved in decision making and can be a useful methodology for policy consultations. It has many of the characteristics of qualitative group discussions or workshops but the focus is on participants' viewpoints after they have had the opportunity to 'deliberate' the issues (compared to traditional qualitative methods that seek to understand current viewpoints). Deliberative research was chosen for this research because it tends to involve more interaction with participants and provides information (such as the questions) over the course of the process to allow participants to make informed decisions.

Seven deliberative focus groups were conducted during January 2011; three with non-trans people and four with trans people. They were held in a variety of geographical areas, usually during evenings (to allow maximum participation, including people working during the day), with the exception of an online group that was conducted in the afternoon of a week day. Particular care was taken in ensuring that the venues for the trans groups were in safe places with suitable unisex and separate sex toilet facilities available. Although specific travel expenses could not be paid within the limited resources available; all focus group participants were paid £30 as a thank you for their time. This is a standard payment for participation of this nature.

The group sessions involved discussion of example questions and general views about acceptability of asking questions about gender identity in specific contexts and using particular modes of delivery (for example, self-completion, interviewer administered, online). Participants were also given a brief introduction to the aims and objectives of the research and rules were set about confidentiality of the discussion and allowing everyone to express their views openly.

All groups were conducted using a topic guide. The topic guides were slightly different for trans and non-trans groups. For example, the non-trans guide included a section on knowledge about transgender people and issues, while the transgender guide included a section on the consideration of the questions and discussion from a non-trans point of view. The topic guides for each group are shown in Appendices C and D. In the face to face groups, the questions were displayed on A1 sized posters and were read out as a series of options (see Table 1), with handouts for people who were visually impaired or had difficulty reading the information on the posters. During the online group the questions were presented (one by one) to participants in the session using the 'white-board': a display panel on screen.

The face-to-face groups lasted an hour and a half, whilst the online group was shorter at one hour and fifteen minutes, to allow for potential loss of concentration caused by using an online format. A decision was taken to exclude question 1c from the online group because of the more limited time available and the fact that this was the most consistently rejected question in the face-to-face groups.

The face-to-face groups were digitally sound recorded and detailed notes written through listening to the sound recordings whilst a transcript was generated from the online group – which was then summarised. The findings were analysed thematically and in relation to issues arising to the specific wording relating to the questions. They are presented below - first in terms of the overarching issues emerging across the groups; second in relation to the specific wording of the questions and answer categories; and third in relation to other issues such as the context and mode of delivery of the questions.

2.3 Cognitive testing (stage 3)

Cognitive interviewing methods, which are derived from cognitive psychology, enable researchers to examine (in great detail) the question and answer process. This well established and widely used research method allows us to uncover aspects of the survey response process that are usually hidden. For example, a participant may answer 'yes' to a survey question and show no visible signs of confusion, but may be thinking of something totally different from what the question designer had in mind. Similarly, a participant may respond with a refusal or say they 'don't know' simply because the answer options being offered do not fit with the way in which they desire to respond. These types of problems would not be revealed in a standard field pilot test. Cognitive interviews thus allow us to identify whether the questions are clear to participants and useable by the target research population so that they are able to understand the questions and provide the information intended.

The study was designed to allow for two rounds of cognitive testing. The aim of both rounds was to test and collect evidence on how the questions worked. This step wise process allowed us to fully test and develop with evidence a set of questions that the Commission are able to recommend to public bodies to use in monitoring.

The primary objective of the cognitive testing was to test how the questions worked with different segments of the survey population. As part of this, the testing protocols were designed to explore:

- Participants' understanding of the questions;
- Participants' ability to answer the questions;
- Issues of sensitivity; and,
- How the questions work when administered in a self completion mode.

The main aim of cognitive testing was to look at the cognitive answer process to explore how the questions were understood and examine the judgement, recall and response processes participants used in formulating their answers. This is important because the questions could be used by a range of public bodies in different modes, such as on a self-completion monitoring form but also possibly in a face-to-face interview or over the phone. The questions also need to work in a consistent way

with participants so that the data collected is meaningful and comparable. Testing allowed us to evaluate how the questions worked and to suggest revisions informed by evidence collected in the cognitive interviews.

In this study, both think aloud and probing techniques were used in both rounds of testing. In the think aloud technique, participants were asked to say aloud what they are thinking as they go about completing the task of answering the question. For example, participants were encouraged to articulate what information they are drawing on to complete the task, what decisions they are making about what information to draw on and how they are deciding their answer to the question. In the probing technique, the interviewer asked specific questions, which provide information on how participants interpret question wording and what processes they go through when deciding how to answer. Scripted probes, and areas to explore, depending on participants' response were indicated on the probe sheet. These 'probes' were scripted to provide a consistency between interviewers to ensure the key areas were explored. As cognitive interviews are qualitative in nature, interviewers also had the freedom to probe on aspects that they considered were unique to the participant and to explore issues that had not been foreseen in advance. A copy of the test questionnaire and probes used in round 1 can be found in Appendix C and for round 2 in appendix D.

In round 1, we tested three different sets of questions which we referred to as versions 1, 2 and 3. Each version was presented in its own self completion instrument. The participant was asked to complete one version before the questions were tested using retrospective probing techniques. In total participants were asked a maximum of 10 questions in total in round 1. Version 1 of the questions had two questions, version 2 had three questions and version 3 had five questions. In round 2 we tested five questions, and an alternative version for the first four questions, so participants were asked a maximum of nine questions depending on how they routed at one question. Probes were asked after each question in round 2. In round 2 each question was presented on a card. The participant was asked to complete the question and to think out aloud while they answered the question. The interviewer then probed the participant after they had answered the question to find out extra information on how the question worked. The interviewer then showed the alternative

version of the question and probed to find out how the participant found this version of the question. To address the effects of question ordering, the interviewers alternated the version of the question which was shown first. Appendix B contains the questions which were tested in both rounds. A full copy of the interview protocol (including the interview Question and Probe Sheet) used in round 1 is provided in Appendix C and the instrument used in round 2 is provided in Appendix D.

The members of the research team and the field interviewers, all of whom were trained in cognitive methods, made detailed notes on their cognitive interviews, with reference to the recording of the interview. These notes, recordings of the interviews and the completed test questionnaires, were reviewed as part of the analysis process.

Notes were analysed using a content analysis approach based on 'Framework', an analytic tool developed by the Qualitative Research Unit at NatCen. A matrix was set up, which listed the respective areas of the questionnaire we tested across the page and cases down the page. The matrix included a summary of the characteristics of participants; such as the product they received and whether they were based at a single or multi-site. Under each question, a summary was made of each participant's understanding of the question, recall strategies used, judgements made in formulating an answer, and the answer provided. Any other problems were also recorded. Thus data could be read horizontally as a complete case record for an individual, or vertically by question, looking across all cases. Once the matrix was completed the data were reviewed. In reviewing the matrix the full range of problems with the economic impact questions were explored.

2.4 Recruitment for the focus groups and cognitive interviews

Here we describe the strategies used to recruit both trans and non-trans (non-trans research participants and participants).

Trans recruitment for the focus groups and the cognitive interviews

To date no adequate sampling frame for the transgender population has been developed because few publicly funded large-scale surveys have asked questions on gender identity. At the same time, potential discrimination against transgender people means that they often have to hide their identity and experience. The 'hidden' nature of this population therefore required a different recruitment strategy compared to the non-transgender population.

To ensure that this research included a diverse range of participants to represent the views of trans people, NatCen used four main strategies for generating the samples for the trans focus groups and trans cognitive interviews. These were:

1. NatCen's research team contacted over 100 trans support groups and organisationsⁱⁱ, both locally and nationally. These were found through www.TranzWiki.net, other extensive internet searches, knowledge within the Commission and NatCen teams, and on recommendation from stakeholders. Representatives of many groups kindly assisted with circulating the information about the study to their members, for example placing a description of the study on their websites and in their specific membership press.
2. NatCen made contact with a Gender Identity Clinic, who kindly put up posters about the study and helped spread the word about what we were doing.
3. NatCen issued a press release.
4. The Commission posted information about the study on their website, and referred people to the NatCen press release.

The second, third and fourth strategies outlined above took place to ensure that the research did not only attract trans volunteers who were affiliated with groups and or organisations. It was important that trans people included in this research did not skew the results in any way so we specifically ensured that from those eventually chosen, we had a good number of people who were not members of trans groups and/or organisations but had come forward and volunteered on hearing about it through other channels (for example, when they were visiting the gender identity clinic or being told by friends who are members of such groups).

Whilst different channels were used to reach out to trans people (described above), the method for collecting the details from those who expressed an interest in taking part in the study was the same. A detailed participant leaflet was produced, with a link to a webpage which was especially set up for the purpose of collecting the details of trans volunteers. The webpage was live for the whole duration of the study (three months) and explicitly stated the access rights to the data submitted via it and gave the necessary assurances around who would have access to the information, data protection and confidentiality.

All prospective volunteers who were directed to the webpage, having heard about the study from various different sources, were asked to complete personal demographic information online and to then submit the form. Where people did not have access to the Internet, they were required to contact a free phone number where a researcher would then call them back at a convenient time and complete the opt in form with them over the telephone. The form gave volunteers the opportunity to express a preference for taking part in an online/face-to-face group and a telephone/face-to-face interview and we also asked for a chosen method of contact (email in the first instance for example). An open space was also provided to give volunteers the opportunity to type in anything else which should be noted by the research team, such as times they were likely to be away during the fieldwork periods. Volunteers used this box to provide helpful information about themselves and their circumstances and also to comment on the questions chosen for recruitment purposes. Text on the webpage explained that participants would receive a thank you to the value of £10-£30, depending on their eventual level of involvement in the study.

Once a form had been submitted, the individuals' responses entered a secure database which was accessible to just one researcher in the NatCen project team. In total over 250 trans volunteers registered their interest via the study webpage however not all of these could be considered since eight volunteers were from outside of the UK (from France, Norway, New Zealand, the Philippines and the USA) and others did not provide contact details. There were eight, nine, and six participants respectively in the face-to-face groups and seven participants in the online group. We conducted 16 face-to-face interviews with trans participants.

At the end of the project (March 2011), the lead researcher (at NatCen) emailed all volunteers who were not required for a focus group or for an interview, thanking them for their interest but explaining that they would not be needed after all. Volunteers were also assured that all information about them, being securely held by NatCen, would be destroyed securely.

Non-trans recruitment for the focus groups and cognitive interviews

The samples for the non-trans focus groups and interviews were designed to reflect the diversity amongst the general population in the UK. Therefore, we aimed to recruit a mix of men and women, from different age groups, varying in their knowledge of transgender issuesⁱⁱⁱ. We also monitored religion, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation of those we recruited and aimed to ensure that we recruited a good mix. Based on feedback from a national Transgender organisation, we additionally ensured that the participants recruited for focus groups and those recruited for interviews, varied in terms of their educational background as education was a socio-demographic variable seen as important in determining the views and opinions of people about transgender people. The sample designs sought, and were successful in, their attempts to include people with high, medium and low level educational attainment.

The recruitment of participants for the deliberative groups (stage 2) was outsourced to a reputable recruitment agency that NatCen has worked with previously. The agency demonstrated a good grasp of the research study's aims and put forward a number of helpful suggestions which helped shape the recruitment documents. The NatCen team developed the recruitment instructions and briefed the recruitment agency on what was needed. Recruiters worked in two areas of England and one in Scotland and found people to fill the quotas we had set (such as X number of men, Y number of women per group).

Recruitment for stage 3 (both rounds of cognitive interviews) was carried out by the NatCen cognitive interviewers, via a door-step screening exercise. Interviewers were each given a quota of non-trans participants to recruit and were asked to recruit their

own participants using door-to-door recruitment and their own contacts for both rounds of cognitive testing. Irrespective of which recruitment strategy was used, all prospective non-trans participants were screened in the study using a screening-in questionnaire to identify suitable participants. The screening in exercise only took place once the participant had been told about the study and they had consented to take part in the study.

2.5 Sample composition for the focus groups and cognitive interviews

Here we describe the sample composition of the participants in the trans and non-trans focus groups and cognitive interviews.

Sample composition of the trans and non-trans focus groups

A wide range of demographic information was collected from the transgender and non-transgender volunteers in order to ensure that diversity of identity and experience was mapped within the deliberative groups. The criteria used to establish and map diversity and the selected samples for the transgender and non-transgender groups are shown in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Both trans and non-trans participants were selected for the groups on the basis of geographical areas where sufficient participants were clustered and would be able to attend; range and diversity against the selection criteria; and people who were willing to take part in a face-to-face or online group. They were then contacted by telephone to confirm they were still willing to participate and a confirmation letter/ email sent to confirm arrangements and further outline what participation would involve.

Table 1 Sample composition of the transgender focus groups (stage 2)

Characteristics of participants		Number with characteristic
Gender identity of participants	Woman (including MTF trans woman)	13*
	Man (including FTM trans man)	9
	Other (for example, androgynous/polygender person)	8
	Female to male/trans man	7
	Male to female/trans woman	11
	Intersex person	1
	Androgyne/polygender/genderqueer person	11
	Cross-dressing/transvestite person	6
	Rather not answer	1
	Other ('Bi-Gendered'; 'Femme'; 'queer female' and 'Somewhere on the gender spectrum and as such a balance of M & F with either sometimes being more dominant at times.')	4
Intention to transition	Yes, I have already transitioned	11
	Yes, I am currently transitioning	9
	Yes, I intend to transition	0
	No, I am unable to transition	0
	No, I do not currently wish to transition	4
	No, transitioning is not relevant to me	4
	I am undecided about whether or not to transition	1
	I had transitioned but then I reversed direction and transitioned back	1
Member of a group or organisation for trans people	Yes	19
	No	11

Characteristics of participants		Number with characteristic
Age of participant	16-30	11
	31-60	15
	61+	4
Limiting health/disability	No	18
	Yes, a little	9
	Yes, a lot	3
Ethnicity	English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	25
	White and Black Caribbean	1
	Any Other White background (North American/New Zealand-white dual national)	2
	Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background (Mixed European)	1
	Any other ethnic group (British European 'UN' Friend(Affiliate) NATO Peace Commonwealth)	1
Sexual orientation	Bisexual	6
	Gay/Lesbian	4
	Heterosexual/Straight	13
	Other	7
Religion	Christian	7
	Jewish	1
	Other (Pagan and Quaker)	5
	No religion	17
Education	Degree	19
	Higher education qualification below degree level	3
	A Levels or equivalent	5

Characteristics of participants		Number with characteristic
	O Level or GCSE equivalent	3
Area**	Area 1	8
	Area 2	9
	Area 3	6
	Online	7

*The numbers do not necessarily tally up to 30 in this table as there were missing responses and some questions allowed for more than one answer.

**We have removed the names of the fieldwork areas to avoid compromising participants being identified.

Table 2 Sample composition of the non-transgender focus groups (stage 2)

Characteristics of participants		Number with characteristic
Gender of participant	Woman	18
	Man	15
	Total	33
Age of participant	16-30	12
	31-60	18
	61+	3
	Total	33
Knowledge of Transgender		
Familiar with the term Gender Identity	Yes	15*
	No	7*
	Total	22*
Familiar with the term Transsexual or Transgender	Yes	16*
	No	6*
	Total	22*
Know a Transgender person	Yes	5
	No	17
	Total	22*
Limiting health/disability	Yes, a lot	0
	Yes, a little	2
	No	31
	Total	33
Ethnicity	English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	25
	Any Other White background (North American/New Zealand-white dual national)	2
	White and Black Caribbean	
	Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background (Mixed European)	1
	Any other ethnic group (British European 'UN')	5

Characteristics of participants		Number with characteristic
	Friend(Affiliate) NATO Peace Commonwealth)	
	Total	33
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual/Straight	32
	Gay/Lesbian	1
	Bisexual	
	Other	
	Total	33
Religion	Christian	14
	Hindu	2
	Muslim	3
	Jewish	1
	No religion	13
	Total	33
Education	Degree/Higher education qualification below degree level	11
	A Levels or Higher/ONC/BTEC/level or GCSE equivalent (Grade A – C)/ Other qualifications	14
	O Level or GCSE equivalent (Grade D – G)/ No formal qualifications	8
	Total	33
Area	London	11
	Glasgow	11
	Manchester	11
	Total	33

Sample composition of the trans and non-trans cognitive interviews

Cognitive interviews are qualitative in nature and so the samples are purposive and designed to reflect the range and diversity of the population of interest, rather than to be statistically representative. 16 face-to-face interviews were conducted with non-trans participants and an additional 16 with trans participants, over the two rounds of testing (see tables 3 and 4).

As the aim of this testing was to see if the gender identity questions allow participants, including trans participants, to describe their gender satisfactorily, the sample was therefore designed to include a spread of non-trans and trans participants in each round of cognitive testing. We used quotas to ensure we recruited sufficient numbers of different types of participants, for example, to achieve a mix of non-trans participants with different levels of knowledge of trans issues for both rounds of testing. The sample characteristics we recruited in both rounds of testing are shown below.

For the non-trans participants it was felt important to test the new questions with:

- a mix of participants in different age groups;
- participants with different educational levels;
- participants with different levels of knowledge of trans issues; and
- a mix of ethnic groups.

We also felt it was important to test the questions with the following types of trans people:

- Trans male to female (MTF);
- Trans female to male (FTM);
- Intersex;
- Androgynous/ polygender/ genderqueer;
- Cross-dressing / transvestite; and
- Other trans.

In total 32 participants were interviewed over the two rounds, 16 in each round. Eight interviews took place in the following three areas in England:

- Manchester and the surrounding areas;
- Brighton and the surrounding areas; and the
- Greater London area.

Irrespective of who was being recruited, a screening in questionnaire was administered to ensure a range of people were recruited in the interviewer areas. All recruits who were screened in and agreed to participate in this research were sent (if recruited over the phone) or given (if recruited in person) a confirmation letter confirming their participation. The letter also contained further details about the study, including the name of the interviewer and the contact details of the research team. All participants were also given a specially designed leaflet which provided details about the study and the interview. Interviewers arranged a suitable time and place for the interview to fit around the participants' convenience. All the interviews were conducted face-to-face and each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes. Interviews were digitally recorded with participants' consent. Participants were given a thank you letter and a £10 high street voucher as a token of our appreciation for taking part in the interview. Recruitment and interviews took place in February and March 2011.

Table 3 Characteristics of trans cognitive interview participants in rounds 1 and 2 (stage 3)

Characteristic of participants		Number with characteristic	
		Number Round 1	Number Round 2
Gender identity of participants	Woman (including MTF trans woman)	3	3
	Man (including FTM trans man)	3	4
	Other (e.g. androgynous/polygender person)	2	1
	Female to male/trans man	1	4
	Male to female/trans woman	5	3
	Intersex person	1	
	Androgyne/polygender/genderqueer person	1	1
	Cross-dressing/transvestite person	2	
	Rather not answer		1
	Other		
Intention to transition	Yes, I have already transitioned	2	5
	Yes, I am currently transitioning	1	3
	Yes, I intend to transition	2	
	No, I am unable to transition		
	No, I do not currently wish to transition		
	No, transitioning is not relevant to me	2	
	I am undecided about whether or not to transition	1	
	I had transitioned but then I reversed direction and transitioned back		
Member of a group or organisation for trans people	Yes	8	7

Characteristic of participants		Number with characteristic	
		Number Round 1	Number Round 2
	No		1
Age of participant	16-30	2	1
	31-60	5	7
	61+	1	
Limiting health/disability	Yes, a lot	1	1
	Yes, a little	1	1
	No	6	6
Ethnicity	White UK	7	7
	White and Black Caribbean		
	Any Other White background (White British American, Irish)	1	1
	Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background		
	Any other ethnic group		
Sexual orientation	Bisexual	3	2
	Gay/Lesbian		1
	Heterosexual/Straight	2	3
	Other	2	2
Religion	Christian	5	4
	Jewish		
	Other (Pagan and Quaker, methodist)		1
	No religion	3	2
Education	Degree	3	5
	Higher education qualification below	1	2

Characteristic of participants		Number with characteristic	
		Number Round 1	Number Round 2
	degree level		
	A Levels or equivalent	1	1
	ONC/BTEC	1	
	O Level or GCSE equivalent		
	Other Qualifications	2	

Table 4 Characteristics of non-trans cognitive interview participants in rounds 1 and 2 (stage 3)

Characteristic of participant		Number with characteristic	
		Round 1	Round 2
Gender	Male	5	4
	Female	3	4
	Total	8	8
Age of Participant	16-35	4	4
	36-50	1	1
	51+	3	3
	Total	8	8
Ethnicity	White	6	8
	Mixed	1	0
	Asian/Asian British	1	0
	Total	8	8
Limiting health/disability	Yes, a lot	1	2
	Yes, a little	3	3
	No	4	3
	Total	8	8

Familiarity with trans issues	Yes	4	5
	Minimal knowledge	3	0
	No	1	3
	Total	8	8
Education Level	Low (GCSEs D-G or no formal qualification)	3	4
	Medium (GCSEs A-C to higher education qualification below degree level inclusive)	4	1
	High (Higher education qualification below degree level or above)	1	3
	Total	8	8
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual	8	7
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual	0	1
	Total	8	8
Religion	Christian (all dominations)	4	5
	Hindu	1	0
	Does not have a religion	2	3
	Unknown (not collected)	1	0
	Total	8	8
Interviewer Area	Manchester and the surrounding areas (North West England);	3	3
	Brighton and the surrounding areas (South Coast, Hampshire and Surrey); and	3	2
	Greater London area.	2	3
	Total	8	8

2.6 Conduct of the research

We were offered advice from trans stakeholder organisations around how to conduct research with trans and non-trans participants. Specifically this advice came in the following forms:

1. How to deal with situations in focus groups where trans people might already know each other, or where there is a risk that their paths may cross in the future (such as to emphasise the importance of participants respecting each other's privacy and anonymity at all stages of involvement);
2. How to ensure that trans people's true identity is not disclosed, by giving people the option of using another name during the group; and
3. Strategies for minimising discrimination (in both trans and non-trans groups), whilst providing participants with an open space to express their differing views comfortably.

Many of the issues raised related to facilitating groups of people who have very different ideas about a subject. Those moderating the groups were very aware that they had to manage the discussions so to assure that everyone's voice was heard and that minority views were given as much attention as majority views and opinions.

3 Focus groups with trans and non-trans participants (Stage 2)


3.1 Introduction and approach

In this chapter we discuss the findings from the deliberative focus groups with transgender and non-transgender people. The focus groups were used to gauge initial reactions to the proposed questions in terms of how acceptable they were felt to be, whether they were understood and what they were seen to be measuring. During the groups, participants were presented with a number of questions (see Table 5). Some of these questions followed in a sequence (for example, 1a, 2a, 3a) and were therefore shown as a number of 'options' relating to the order in which questions would be presented or asked. The questions and specific responses to them are therefore reported here in the way they were presented to participants, as options 1, 2, 3 and 4, with specific questions within each option. However, questions within different options were also seen as possible alternatives to each other (for example, 2b or 2c as an alternative to 2a), so preferences for particular alternatives to others are also drawn out.

Issues relating to specific options and questions are addressed in the chapter first followed by more general themes emerging across all questions. Themes and issues that arose in relation to the definition and expression of key terms in the questions are also addressed at the end of the chapter.

Table 5 below presents the questions which were used as deliberative tools for the 7 focus groups with trans and non-trans participants.

Table 5 Questions formed after the question review and put forward in focus groups

Reading direction	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
	<p>{ASK ALL}</p> <p>1a) Currently, are you...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	<p>{ASK ALL}</p> <p>1b) Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 		<p>{ASK ALL}</p> <p>1c) Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No
	<p>{ASK ALL}</p> <p>2a)...and at birth, were you...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	<p>{ASK ALL}</p> <p>2b)..and were you born</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	<p>{ASK ALL}</p> <p>2c)..and at birth, were you described as</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	
	<p>3a) Answer this question if the options in question 1 did not allow you to fully describe how you think of yourself. Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trans male to female 2. Trans female to male 3. Cross-dressing / transvestite person 4. Androgyne /polygender /genderqueer person 5. Intersex person 6. Other (please specify) 7. This question does not apply to me 	<p>3b) Answer this question if the options in question 1 did not allow you to fully describe how you think of yourself. Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transgender 2. Transsexual 3. Cross-dresser/ transvestite 4. Gender variant 5. Intersex 6. Other (please specify) 		

3.2 Issues relating to questions and answer options

In this section we address specific issues relating to the understanding of the wording of particular questions and answer categories; preferences for one form of wording over another; and suggestions of alternative forms of wording that would be more acceptable or more easily understood. Text which is underlined indicates where non-transgender or transgender participants offered views about what the other population would think rather than their own.

Option 1

Question 1a (compared to Q1b)

Question 1a - Currently, are you...	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Currently' means 'right now' or how you 'are now' ▪ 'Currently' is understandable when seen in sequence with Q2a (...and at birth, were you...) but not as a separate question ▪ The phrase 'are you' is vague and doesn't specify whether the question is asking for self-definition or definition by others 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'are you' is vague and open to confusion, because: ▪ It is not clear if the Q is asking about gender identity, gender or sex; this can be inferred when compared to Q2a (seen to be about sex) but was open to interpretation and error ▪ It is not clear if the Q is asking for self-definition, definition by others or a legal definition
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Currently' could provide a useful time reference for the question and/ or an indication of a change to identity over time BUT ▪ <u>Thought to be problematic to trans people who are trans part of the time (for example, cross dressers) or people in transition AND to trans people who have always regarded themselves as male or</u> 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Currently' is problematic for some trans people because it implies a change of identity whereas they have always been male or female (it was their body that was 'defective'/ a 'mistake').

<p><u>female</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Might sound harsh to trans people</u> 	
<p>Suggested improvements</p>	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change to 'Do you consider yourself...'
<p>Answer categories for question 1a –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	
<p>Non-transgender views</p>	<p>Transgender views</p>
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Male' and 'female' are unproblematic to non-T people because sex is not something they have to consider; their identity is straightforward ▪ 'Other' won't be understandable to some non-trans who aren't familiar gender identity/ transgender issues ▪ 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the question is about gender identity, the categories should be 'man', 'woman', 'other' ▪ 'Other' category, although worded badly, is a welcome recognition that not everyone has a binary m/f identity
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Other' will be confusing and amusing to some non-trans people because they won't understand the reason for it; it will make some people laugh and 'mock' the questions producing unreliable data • <u>The categories were thought to be confusing for trans people who might want to answer male/ female and other</u> • <u>'Other' is needed to accommodate some trans people but is probably 'offensive'</u> 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depending how the question is understood it might not identify all trans people, because: ▪ Trans people who have always regarded themselves as male or female will choose the 'male' or 'female' options and their trans experience would be lost without another question ▪ Cross-dressers would answer male/ female but this would tell people nothing about their experience as trans ▪ 'Other' needs to be reworded because it has connotations of being 'strange' and is 'offensive'
<p>Suggested improvements</p>	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace the question with 'How would you describe yourself?'

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ If the question is about gender identity, change the categories to 'man, woman, other'.▪ Change 'other' to 'Other (please specify)' or 'In another way (please explain)'▪ Add a 'Prefer not to say' option
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Question 2a (compared to Q2b and 2c)

Question 2a - ... and at birth, were you....	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understood 'at birth' to mean how others defined them on their birth certificate ▪ Question seen to be about sex at birth in the context of the previous question (1a) ▪ Question easy to understand because sex at birth is not an issue for them 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'were you' is vague and open to confusion because it is not clear if the Q is asking for self-definition, definition by others or a legal definition ▪ Open to interpretation whether the question was asking for sex or gender identity, although it was inferred that it was about sex at birth
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A rare view was that the question seemed unnecessary as it seemed to ask about the person's sex twice (making Q1 more clearly about gender/ gender identity, with the answer categories being man, woman, other might resolve this). ▪ Phrasing of the Q seemed 'harsher' than Q2b ▪ <u>Felt the Q might seem irrelevant to trans people who always considered themselves MtF</u> 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appreciated that the intention was to find out a person's sex at birth compared to their gender identity now. ▪ But, the question was seen as inappropriate, insensitive and/ or offensive to people who had always felt male/ female at birth but who considered their body a 'mistake' compared with their identity now
Suggested improvements	Suggested improvements
<p>Answer categories for question 2a –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answering 'male' and 'female' unproblematic to non-T because their sex is straightforward 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was assumed this question was about sex at birth from the answer categories
Issues	Issues

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One view was that the ‘other’ category was not needed because everyone would be registered male or female. Others could see that it might be needed for intersex people. ▪ ‘Other’ will be confusing and amusing to some non-trans people because they won’t understand the reason for it; it will surprise some people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There were different views among people who considered themselves male/ female at birth, and/ or who held a GRC, and/ or who were living in ‘stealth’, about how they would answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They would answer ‘honestly’ because their sex at birth was a ‘medical fact’ (subject to provisos below) ○ They would answer ‘truthfully’ because they were always m/f or because they had their birth certificate changed ▪ A recurring view was that transgender people would consider answering this question ‘factually’ provided there was complete anonymity and the monitoring could be shown to be beneficial to trans people ▪ Any wording of the Q to ask ‘initially’ or ‘originally’ at birth was thought to be illegal and would produce a complaint of discrimination for one participant. Asking about sex on one’s birth certificate was also regarded as problematic in the context of the GRA (see 2b) ▪ If asking about the assignment of sex at birth, the ‘other’ category might not be needed; the options should be ‘male’ and ‘female’, only.
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace the ‘other’ category with ‘neither’ or ‘both’. 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed across trans groups that, if asking about sex at birth, the answer categories should be ‘male’, ‘female’ and ‘intersex’ (not ‘other’) ▪ Specifying the question was asking about

	<p>'biological sex' at birth would add clarification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Change the wording to 'at birth, what was your birth gender' but it was agreed that this would add confusion because it would not be understood by non-trans people and all trans people▪ Add a 'Prefer not to say' option.
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Question 3a (compared to Q3b)

Question 3a – Answer this question if the options in question 1 <u>did not</u> allow you to fully describe how you think of yourself.	
Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The routing instructions were understood but were too ‘wordy’ and needed to be presented in a better way (e.g. put instructions in italics to distinguish them from questions) ▪ The reason for Q3a was understood to allow people to describes their trans experience ▪ Some people thought it was important to ask the question but others were annoyed by it and asked ‘where will it end’ (even though they understood that they did not have to answer the Q) 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The routing instructions were thought to be understandable but long ▪ Question understood to be asking about self-definition of gender identity because it asked ‘how you think of yourself’ ▪ There were four responses to the sequence of Qs leading up to 3a (and 3b): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants who regarded themselves always ‘male’ or ‘female’ and were happy they could answer in this way in Q1 and Q2 and did not feel the need to answer Q3 (even though this meant their trans history would be excluded) 2. Participants who regarded themselves always ‘male’ or ‘female’ but who might respond ‘other’ in Q1 or Q2 or identify their ‘transgender’ history/ experience in particular circumstances (described in section 2.1.4) 3. Participants who would answer ‘male’ and ‘female’ in Q1 and Q2 in a ‘factual’ way that would identify a change of sex/ gender but who still wanted the option to explain their ‘trans’ identity/ experience in Q3 4. Participants who would answer ‘male’ , ‘female’ or ‘other’ in Q1 and Q2 but who welcomed some way of further explaining their trans identity/ experience (either as ‘please specify’ in Q1/ Q2 or in Q3).
<p>Issues</p>	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Necessity of asking <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was unnecessary because trans experience should be able to be inferred from the difference between Q1

	<p>and Q2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. It was necessary because aspects of 'trans' history, experience or identity would not be captured in Q1 and Q2 (for example, people who are m/f in their current identity but who still identify as transgender in some regard; people in transition, people who are neither or both m/f, cross dressers, people who have not established a fixed or binary identity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desirability of asking Q3 (or something akin to it): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transgender identity and experience needed to be included in a single question on a par with male/female OR man/ woman identities. Not doing so meant trans experience would not be captured and lead to a 'hierarchy of identities' 2. Q3 was too problematic in too many ways to be asked because: it sounded like 'political correctness' in a way that it was alienating to non-trans people; the answer categories were too complex, not mutually exclusive, probably not exhaustive; and the question was unlikely to generate meaningful data in all but very large scale data collection because of the assumed small number of people responding 3. Q3 was necessary to capture aspects of transgender experience not captured in Qs 1 and 2 but the number of categories needed to be reduced, the wording refined and the routing to, or way from, the Q improved.
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving the routing from Q2a to Q2b would make it clearer that non-trans people do not have to answer Q3a 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More positive and direct questions were suggested (e.g. 'Do you feel that any of these terms apply to you?')

<p>Answer categories for question 3a –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trans male to female 2. Trans female to male 3. Cross-dressing/ transvestite person 4. Androgyne/ polygender/ genderqueer person 5. Intersex person 6. Other (please specify) 7. This question does not apply to me 	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was understood that the non-trans people did not need to answer the question; having option 7, 'This question does not apply to me', was thought to confuse this by suggesting perhaps they should have answered 2. If people read the question by mistake, they might choose the 'Other (please specify)' category 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The categories were 'wordy' and not easy to read (compared to 3b) ▪ Having the word 'person' after the categories humanised transgender people
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Some categories such as 'androgyne', 'genderqueer' and 'intersex' were not well understood and seen as perplexing</u> • <u>Views varied as to whether</u> 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was thought that a long list of transgender identities would probably cause more problems than it solved. ▪ But, some way of identifying the 'trans' experience of people who would answer male or female in Qs 1 and Q2 but who wanted to indicate their trans experience was necessary (especially for people: in the process of

<p><u>'cross-dressing' was a lifestyle preference or an identity and whether it should be included in the list</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>It was questioned whether categories 1 and 2 were necessary as this information should be implied from Qs 1a and 2a</u> 	<p>transitioning; who were 'technically' male/ female but whose identity might be the opposite, both or nether; who cross-dress)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A long list of trans categories would probably be alienating to many non-trans people who would see it as 'political correctness gone mad' ▪ The categories were not agreed or universally understood with the following issues: ▪ Trans male to female and Trans female to male – implied a change of sex that some people would not be happy with; the terms 'Trans man' and 'Trans woman' were thought to be better OR they could both be replaced with 'Transgender' ▪ Intersex – disagreement over whether this was a gender identity and should be included ▪ 'Cross-dressing – category potentially too broad and could include 'any woman who puts a tie on' (although not understood in this way among group participants) ▪ Transvestite - seen to have 'sleazy' and 'sexual' connotations; cross-dressing person was preferred ▪ Other (please specify) was either unnecessary or an important way of being inclusive ▪ This question does not apply to me – interpreted as having hostile connotations of, 'No, I'm normal', thereby making the categories above seem 'abnormal'; OR seen as a 'Prefer not to say' category
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Having 'Other (please specify)' in Q1a and 2a was thought to potentially remove the need for a long list of transgender identities. 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An 'open' other category in Q1 and Q2 might remove the need for Q3 (such as 'Other (please specify)' or another similar form of words) ▪ Add 'Prefer not to say' or 'None of the above' to the answer options ▪ If Q3a must be used, simplify the wording of the categories (3b was preferred) and try to reduce the number of categories; keeping 'Other (please specify)' would help in this regard

Option 2

Question 1b (compared to Q1a)

Question 1b – Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Question understood to be about self-description or self-definition. It was inferred from this that it was asking about gender/ gender identity, although the answer categories appeared to contradict this in that they used sex categories 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trans people had the same understanding as non-trans people of the question (see adjacent cell).
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Across the non-trans groups Q1b was preferred over Q1a because <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ of the emphasis on freedom to self-define; ○ wording that asked for self-description was ‘softer’, ‘nicer’, ‘more diplomatic’ and probably a more ‘politically correct way of asking’ ▪ Where Q1b was not preferred over Q1a, this was because it was seen as ‘tip toeing’ around asking a direct question or as more ‘verbose’ 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q1b was universally preferred across the trans groups because of its emphasis on self-description rather than external description. ▪ The question could be made clearer that it was asking for a self-description of gender or gender identity (see suggested wording below).
<p>Suggested improvements</p>	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The question wording could be made clearer by asking, ‘Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender <i>or</i> gender identity?’
<p>Answer categories for question 1b –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
Understanding	Understanding

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Even though some people thought that the answers were problematic because of their emphasis on sex categories (not self-description), they felt that non-trans people could straightforwardly answer 'male' or 'female' ▪ 'Other' would be confusing and amusing to some non-trans people because they would not be familiar with transgender or other self-descriptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants felt they <i>could</i> answer 'male', 'female' or 'other' but that the terms were not necessarily mutually exclusive and <i>other aspects of their identity would be lost</i> ▪ 'Male'/ 'female' was preferred by people who always were/ always considered themselves this way ▪ 'Other' was accepted by people who considered themselves as having male/ masculine and female/ feminine qualities (or neither); who were currently 'transitioning' or who had recently done so; or were still trying to establish their identity; or who felt they did not have a fixed identity ▪ 'Other' was accepted, rather than preferred, because the wording was problematic and offensive (described as 'horrible', 'repugnant', 'demeaning', etc.)
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The 'other' category is needed to accommodate people who do not describe themselves as 'male' or 'female' ▪ BUT the wording will be offensive to trans people because it treats them like 'aliens' or because it could imply they are not male or female 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By answering 'male'/ 'female' or 'other' there was a danger that other parts of the identities could be lost such as people who answered male/ female would not describe aspects of their transgender history or experience; people who answered 'other' might also sometimes identify as male/ female) ▪ 'Other' was acceptable provided there was complete anonymity and answering it this way would be clearly beneficial to trans people ▪ 'Other' was better than 'male'/ 'female'/ 'transgender', which unacceptably treats trans people as a separate class of

	people
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Adding 'please specify' after 'Other' might make it less offensive</u> ▪ <u>'Other' could be replaced by 'Neither option applies to me'</u> ▪ <u>Good routing/ direction from the 'Other' option to Q3 might also lessen the offensive wording</u> 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using the categories 'man' and 'woman' rather than 'male' and 'female' would show that the questioner understood issues of gender/ gender identity and reduce 'distrust' of these types of questions ▪ Q1b should be reworded (as above) and either reword the 'Other' category to make it less offensive and more inclusive OR add the better categories from Q3a and/ or Q3b after 'male'/ 'man' and 'female'/ 'woman' (the former option being seen as more practical) ▪ Add 'please specify' after 'Other' or replace 'Other' with 'In another way'/ 'Another form of identity'/ 'It's complicated (please explain)' ▪ Add a 'Prefer not to say' option

Question 2b (compared to Q2a and 2c)

Question 2b – ..and were you born?	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understood 'were you born' to mean how others defined them on their birth certificate ▪ Question seen to be about sex at birth in the context of the previous question (1b) ▪ Question easy to understand because sex at birth is not an issue for them 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'were you born' is vague and open to confusion because is not clear the Q is asking for self-definition, definition by others or a legal definition ▪ It was open to interpretation whether the question was asking for sex or gender identity, although it was inferred that it was about sex at birth
Issues	Issues

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q2b was preferred over Q2a because Q1b was preferred and therefore this question seemed to follow more naturally ▪ <u>Q2b was preferred over Q2c because it was thought to use ‘disempowering language’ for trans people because it emphasised how others described them (this was not a view shared by trans people – see Q2c)</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appreciated that the intention was to find out a person’s sex at birth compared to their gender identity now BUT the question was seen as inappropriate, insensitive and/ or offensive to people who had always felt male/ female at birth but who considered their body a ‘mistake’ compared with their identity ▪ The phrase ‘and were you born’ and the connection between Q2a and 2b made people who always felt male or female feel angry and ‘uncomfortable’ because it felt as if they were being ‘forced’ or ‘tricked’ into revealing their history (having a ‘Prefer not to say option’ would reduce but not necessarily remove these feelings)
<p>Suggested improvements</p>	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There was disagreement over rewording of the question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some felt that it would be acceptable to tighten the wording to ask ‘and how were you defined on your birth certificate’; ○ Others thought that even ‘were you’ in this question was offensive and illegal under the GRA. ▪ A question that allowed more ambiguity and ‘wiggle room’ such as Q2c was seen to be better in that it did not refer directly to a birth certificate and allowed the person to choose to answer
<p>Answer categories for question 2b –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	

Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answering ‘male’ and ‘female’ was unproblematic to non-trans people because their sex was straightforward 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People who felt they had always been male/ female and/ or who held a GRC and/ or were living in ‘stealth’ said they would answer ‘male’/ ‘female’, except in specific circumstances (see section 2.1). Others viewed the issue as a ‘factual’ matter and said they would answer as they were registered on their birth certificate at birth
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Other’ category seen as necessary but problematic for the reasons given in Q1b and 2a 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the question was about sex (not gender identity) the answer categories should be ‘male’, ‘female’ ‘other’ OR ‘male’, female’, intersex’ ▪ Some participants questioned whether the ‘other’ category was necessary at all
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise the ‘other’ category (see previous suggestions) 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q2c was seen as better, to be followed by the categories, ‘male’, ‘female’ and, possibly, ‘intersex’ ▪ Revise the ‘other’ category (see previous suggestions) ▪ Add ‘Prefer not to say’

Question 3b (compared to Q3a)

Question 3b – Answer this question if the options in question 1 did not allow you to fully describe how you think of yourself.

Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

Non-transgender views	Transgender views
Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See 3a 	Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See 3a
Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See 3a 	Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See 3a
Suggested improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See 3a 	Suggested improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See 3a

Answer categories to question 3b –

1. Transgender
2. Transsexual
3. Cross-dresser/ transvestite
4. Gender variant
5. Intersex
6. Other (please specify)

Non-transgender views	Transgender views
Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If people read the question by mistake, they might choose the ‘Other (please specify)’ category 	Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3b was preferred across the trans groups because it was less ‘wordy’, easier to read and the categories appeared more straightforward. It was thought that fewer categories were better
Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>See 3a</u> 	Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See also issues discussed in 3a ▪ The categories were not mutually exclusive and some people would want to choose more than one despite the instruction to choose the one that describes them ‘best.’ They were also not agreed or universally understood with the following issues: ▪ Transgender - with one exception, ‘transgender’ was seen as an ‘umbrella’ term that included the others that followed; it was therefore seen as unnecessary.

	<p>The exception related to a person currently in transition who felt this category best described them for the time being.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transsexual – while technically correct it was a clinical term and some participants said they would not ‘think of themselves’ in this way. ▪ Cross-dresser/ transvestite - seen to have ‘sleazy’ and ‘sexual’ connotations; cross-dressing person was preferred ▪ Gender variant – welcomed as a recognition of people who were both male and female or who did not have a ‘binary’ identity; although the term ‘genderqueer’ was preferred because of its political and playful connotations ▪ Intersex – disagreement over whether this was a gender identity and should be included ▪ Other (please specify) was either unnecessary or an important way of being inclusive ▪ Having the word ‘person’ after the categories humanised transgender people
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Having ‘Other (please specify)’ in Q1a and 2a was thought to potentially remove the need for a long list of transgender identities. 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Add ‘Prefer not to say’ or ‘None of the above’ to the answer options

Option 3

Question 2c (compared to Q 2a or 2b)

Question 2c – ..and at birth, were you described as?	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understood ‘and at birth, were you described as’ to mean how others defined them on their birth certificate 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q2c was less vague than Q2a and 2b because it was more clearly asking for description/ definition by others

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Question seen to be about biological sex at birth in the context of the previous question (where 1b was used) ▪ Question easy to answer because sex at birth was not an issue for them ▪ Some clarification needed in terms of who was doing the 'describing' (e.g. parents, doctors, registrar); although it was widely inferred that all of these would be involved in producing a definition on their birth certificate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was open to interpretation whether the question was asking for sex or gender identity, although it was inferred from the answer categories that it was probably about sex at birth or birth registration ▪ It was not acceptable as a standalone question because it removed any 'agency' or self-description from trans-people. It was more acceptable when contrasted with Q1b because self-description was compared to how others had described them ▪ Appreciated that the intention was to find out a person's sex at birth compared to their gender identity now, but the question was seen as inappropriate, insensitive and/ or offensive to people who had always felt male/ female at birth but who considered their body a 'mistake' compared with their identity
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Non-T people held two views on whether the wording used in Q2c was 'empowering' or 'disempowering' to trans people:</u> ▪ <u>Empowering - because it was 'sympathetic' to the fact that others had defined trans people in a way that was not of their choice</u> ▪ <u>Disempowering - because it emphasised how others described their sex rather than how trans-people defined it themselves</u> 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q2c was preferred over Q2a and 2b because it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ clarified that the question was seeking the definition of sex by others; ○ recognised that the power to define identity was not always in the trans person's 'own hands'; ○ was a 'snappier' way of asking how people were registered at birth without being so specific that it left no room for people with a GRC to have a choice over how they answered ▪ The phrase 'at birth, were you described

	<p>as' and the connection between 1b and 2c could still make people who always felt male or female feel 'uncomfortable' because it felt as if they were being 'forced' or 'tricked' into revealing their history (having a 'Prefer not to say option' helped to reduce but not necessarily remove these feelings)</p>
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Question could possibly be clarified by asking how people were described on their birth certificate in a 'factual' or 'legal' sense; although there were potential difficulties if people took this literally and did not have their birth certificate to check 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There was disagreement over rewording of the question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some felt that it would be acceptable to tighten the wording to ask 'and how were you defined on your birth certificate'; ○ Others thought that even 'were you described' in this question was offensive and illegal under the GRA.
<p>Answer categories for question 2c –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other 	
<p>Non-transgender views</p>	<p>Transgender views</p>
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answering 'male' and 'female' was unproblematic to non-trans people because it was not something they had to consider; their sex was straightforward 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People who felt they had always been male/ female and/ or who held a GRC and/ or were living in 'stealth' said they would answer 'male'/ 'female', except in specific circumstances (see section 2.1). ▪ Others viewed the issue as a 'factual' matter and said they would answer as they were registered on their birth certificate at birth
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wording of 'other' category seen as 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the question was about sex (not gender

<p>necessary but problematic for the reasons given in Q1b and 2a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some questioned if the 'other' category was necessary since, if the question was asking about birth registration, all people would be classified as 'male' or 'female' (it was recognised that this might not be sensitive to people who were born as intersex) 	<p>identity) the answer categories should be 'male', 'female' 'other' OR 'male', female', intersex'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some participants questioned whether the 'other' category was necessary at all, although it was recognised this could be insensitive to people born intersex
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the 'other' category (see previous suggestions) 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q2c should stay as it is but the answer categories should be 'male', 'female' and, possibly, 'intersex' Revise the 'other' category (see previous suggestions) Add 'Prefer not to say'

Option 4

Question 1c

Question 1c – Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The question and key terms in it (such as 'gender identity', 'gender', 'assigned at birth' and 'the same as') were not well understood and were thought to make the question very confusing There was too much being asked in one question. It would be better to separate the issues into two or more questions to improve understanding (as in options 1 or 2) 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people liked and had used the question but there was disagreement over the meaning of key words (such as 'gender identity', 'gender', 'assigned at birth' and 'the same as') within and across the trans groups, suggesting the Q is unreliable among trans people Although some people initially thought that this was the best question to use to ask about gender identity, deliberation during the group made them decide that the question was too complex

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>It was widely agreed and accepted that non-trans people would not understand the question, especially if first language was not English</u>
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-trans participants tended to dislike the question completely, although some liked aspects of it ▪ Where it was disliked this was because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It had to be read several times and was therefore confusing and open to misunderstanding; ○ The language was unfamiliar and/ or impenetrable (e.g. described as 'Star Treky') ○ <u>The words 'assigned at birth' were felt to be disempowering to some trans people who had struggled to achieve their identity</u> ▪ Where it was liked this was because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It potentially compressed two questions into one reducing the number of questions to answer ○ <u>Potentially identified people who had undergone gender reassignment</u> ▪ Some non-trans people were hostile to the question saying it would make them 'laugh out loud' and/ or they 'would not answer it' 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ T participants tended to dislike the question, although some liked aspects of it ▪ Where it was disliked this was because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was too complex with too much going on in one question ○ It was thought to use 'ridiculous trans lingo' associated with 'queer academia' ○ The phrase 'assigned at birth' disempowered trans people by emphasising a definition of identity that was not their own ○ The emphasis on 'assignment' implied gender reassignment which restricted who would be included in the definition of trans people ○ It could force people with a GRC or in deep stealth to reveal their trans history/ experience ▪ Where it was liked this was because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It recognised to some extent that people could change gender identity and a transitional process ○ It recognised that gender identity/ gender could be assigned in a way that was not the trans person's choosing ▪ The question tended to be liked most by people with an 'out', clear and fixed

	gender identity who were also sometimes actively involved in trans organisations
<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reword to say ‘Is your gender OR gender identity the same as your birth certificate?’ ▪ It was suggested that definitions of key terms could be placed in a preamble to the question. This was rejected by other participants as making the question more, not less, complex; it was also questioned why you would give a definition of gender identity but not other forms of identity (for example, ethnicity, sexual orientation) 	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alternatives suggested were ‘Do you consider yourself to be transgender?’; ‘Do you consider yourself to be a transsexual person within the definition of the Equality Act?’ ▪ Both were rejected because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not everyone would understand the question ○ The terms used were too restrictive and too focused on legal definitions, which were open to interpretation, and most trans people were unlikely to be familiar with them ○ They potentially forced some trans people to ‘out themselves’ or not to answer ▪ Providing definitions of key terms was regarded as making the question more, not less, confusing
<p>Answer categories for question 1c –</p> <p>1. Yes</p> <p>2. No</p>	
Non-transgender views	Transgender views
<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants were initially unsure how they would answer but eventually said they would answer ‘yes’ 	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answering ‘yes’ or ‘no’ was not straightforward for people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ who had not ‘transitioned’ (undergone gender reassignment) and had no intention of doing so; ○ who saw their gender/ gender identity as both masculine and feminine (or neither);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ who were still in the process of discovering their identity and whose identity was not fixed; ○ who felt their identity varied or was not 'binary'; and those ○ who were cross-dressers whose gender identity was not necessarily permanent.
<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The answer categories worked from a non-trans point of view 	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some participants had been involved in equalities monitoring and surveys where the question had been used and found it gave unreliable results (far more people chose the 'no' option than they expected)
<p>Suggested improvements</p>	<p>Suggested improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Is your gender identity <i>always</i> the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?' This was rejected as still unsatisfactory for people who felt their identity varied or was not fixed.

3.3 Summary

- Deliberative focus groups were used with transgender and non-transgender participants to gauge their initial reaction to the proposed questions on gender identity in terms of their acceptability, whether they were understood and whether the information they captured would be reliable.
- Non-transgender participants found questions on gender identity acceptable provided they could be routed away from more specific questions on transgender identity.
- Transgender participants held differing views about the acceptability of asking about changes in sex/ gender identity but were more likely to reveal their transgender identity where:
 - (a) there was an opportunity for self-description of identity alongside 'factual' questions about birth sex;

(b) there were clear and legally binding guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality when completing a survey; and

(c) they could see a clear potential benefit to transgender people in answering the questions.

- There was a need to clarify in the questions on sex and gender identity whether they were asking for self-description or description by others (for example, by a doctor or birth certificate). This was particularly important for transgender people for whom sex and gender identity were not straightforward.
- Questions aimed at measuring change of sex or gender identities since birth were straightforward for non-transgender people because their birth sex and current sex were the same. The answer options 'male' and 'female' were therefore understandable for them overall.
- Whether transgender people would answer 'male', 'female' or 'other' to questions on sex and gender identity depended on whether they felt they would answer 'factually' or as they saw their identity themselves. Where they were asked to provide 'factual' information about their birth sex they were more likely to do so in relation to points (a), (b) and (c) described above. An 'other' answer option was seen as in need of rewording to make for sensitive and acceptable.
- A separate question on transgender identity was necessary because other questions on sex and gender identity failed to capture all aspects of transgender identity, history and experience.
- A single, stand alone question that attempted to capture change in gender identity since birth (Q1c) was considered, after deliberation, to be too confusing by both transgender and non-transgender participants. It was therefore rejected.

4 Cognitive Testing Findings: Round 1 of Stage 3

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the key findings for the three versions of the questions tested in round 1 and are presented question by question. Sixteen face-to-face interviews were conducted in round 1, eight with Trans participants and eight with non-Trans participants. In round one, the interviewers asked each participant to complete one version of the questions, which was presented in a self completion paper instrument. After the participant had answered the questions, the interviewer probed further to explore the question and answer process the participant used. This process was repeated for each version.

Questions are referred to using the numbering used in the cognitive 'test' questionnaire (which can be found in appendix A). The numbering reflects the position of the question in the test questionnaire.

4.2 Developing the questions for cognitive testing

Before we describe the findings from stage 3, it is important to explain how we moved from the findings from stage 2 (focus groups with trans and non-trans participants) to the questions that were agreed for testing for stage 3: cognitive interviews with trans and non-trans participants.

Following some advice from the Commission's legal department, the questions were re-considered in light of the Equality Act: where the protected characteristics are those intending, currently going through, or having been through gender reassignment. It was felt, at this stage, that the questions used until that point were not completely capturing this element of the Act and that they needed , in some way, to address gender reassignment.

Gender identity question

Focus groups with trans and non-trans participants pointed to questions being linked to self definition, as opposed to definition by others ('Are you?'). A decision was made to test three versions of the identity question:

1. a question which focussed on how one would describe themselves (Would you describe yourself as a...);
2. a question about how one would best describe how they think of themselves (Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?); and,
3. a question which sought to address gender identity (Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?).

In addition, sex categories (male and female) and gender categories (man and woman) were included as it was hoped that the cognitive interviews in round 1 would give us some indication of which categories worked best for both trans and non-trans participants, regardless of whether one was asking a question about sex or gender. While participants in the focus groups talked about the confusion between sex and gender in such questions, the findings implied that (on the whole) questions could be answered regardless of whether sex or gender categories are provided.

Two different means for collecting 'other' responses were trialled ('in some other way' and 'in another way'), based on feedback which suggested that 'other' was viewed as dehumanising and insensitive. The presence of an 'other' category was seen as essential, for transgender people who did not fit the male/female **and/or** man/woman categories, but the wording could be substantially improved and softened.

Birth sex question

There was a clear message, from the focus groups, that the word 'described' effectively made the birth sex question sound like how others had described someone's sex at birth. This was especially important for people who felt they were wrongly assigned a sex at birth. Three versions of essentially the same question, all retaining the sex categories 'male' and 'female', were included in versions 1, 2 and 3 ('At birth were you described as...'), however the answer categories differed slightly in the following ways:

1. one question included both 'intersex' **and** 'I prefer not to say', as the third and fourth options;
2. one question included **only** the 'I prefer not to say' option (in addition to male and female); and,
3. one question came first (before the question about current identity) and included an 'intersex' category while **omitting** the 'I prefer not to say' option.

The inclusion of 'I prefer not to say' was felt important for use by transgender people who would not wish to disclose their birth sex, especially when being asked alongside a question about current identity. A decision was taken to retain the 'intersex' category for testing in two versions as there was not enough evidence from the focus groups to suggest that it was a redundant category. While we know that in the UK, a child will either be registered 'male' or 'female' on their birth certificate; it could be that those born 'intersex' would still want to choose the intersex category. Equally, there may be transgender people who were not born intersex but may wish to choose this category. The focus of the testing, therefore, was to explore whether intersex is needed as an additional category and whether it causes confusion, to non-trans participants.

Gender reassignment/transitioning questions

As noted in chapter 2, the research team added two new questions after stage 2 focus groups, which were designed to address gender reassignment as a protected characteristic and a personal process (rather than a medical process). Without the inclusion of a question which addressed intention to undergo gender reassignment, it was felt that the existing questions would not allow public bodies, employers and others collecting data to fully collect evidence for trans services users, employees and people within other given populations (surveys for example), using the legal definition within the Act. The questions were designed to work for both trans and non-trans people, with only trans participants being routed to and therefore answering the second question, which was:

1. a question which establishes whether the person has thought about moving, or has already moved from their birth sex to the gender they (now) identify with – and gives some examples of the kinds of processes this might involve,

for example, wearing different clothes or having gender reassignment surgery;
and

2. (for those who answer 'YES' to the preceding question), a question which establishes which steps or stages the individual has already been through, to achieve this move from their birth sex to the gender they identify with.

Transgender identity question

Evidence from the trans focus groups concluded that it was necessary to have a transgender identity question for transgender people who wish to reveal their transgender identity, history and/or experience. We decided that two versions of a transgender identity question would be trialled and tested.

1. One question would come after a birth sex and identity question and following on from the instruction 'GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender'. The question stem wording would mirror that particular version of the identity question, although it would give a number of trans identity answer options.
2. The other question would follow the (new) gender reassignment questions, hence should not require routing instructions as only transgender individuals would move on to be asked this.

Focus group findings provided the team with some direction around the number of, and how to phrase the answer categories (to ensure that the categories are mutually exclusive, removing the term 'transgender' as it is seen as an umbrella term, and replacing 'transvestite' with 'cross dressing person', and 'genderqueer' with gender variant).

Findings from the cognitive interviews round 1

Version 1 of the test questions

Q1 (Q1.1) Would you describe yourself as a...

1. Man,
2. Woman
3. In some other way (please specify)

Q2 (Q1.2) and at birth were you described as...

1. Male
2. Female
3. Intersex
4. I prefer not to say

Overall findings for the questions tested in Version 1

The first set of questions tested contained a gender identity question and a birth sex question, with the aim of satisfactorily measuring gender identity in just two questions.

The questions in version 1 did work as intended irrespective of whether the participant was transgender or non-transgender. Testing showed that non-trans participants found the questions very easy, barely reading them, and just ticking the correct option. However, some trans participants found the questions sensitive because the information was personal and could be seen as intrusive. There was one occasion in testing when a trans participant said she had always felt uncomfortable answering these types of questions:

‘It’s as much wishful thinking as much as anything else...I feel uncomfortable saying male. It’s a sweeping term but what society expects; you are something or something else.’

(Trans woman, aged 42)

We now report on how each individual question in version 1 worked.

1. Question 1 (Q1.1) in Version 1: Gender identity

How the question worked overall

This question worked as intended in testing. Trans participants either selected man or woman, or, in some other way, depending on how they viewed their gender. Non-trans participants selected the gender they identified with and having a third option did not confuse or prevent them from answering the question. The question was well

understood. Participants on the whole liked the wording 'describe yourself' and this tended to work well.

'Describe yourself as...It's whether you fit into the normal binary identity or feel that you are perhaps outside of it.'

(Trans woman, aged 80)

The question wording was strengthened by the third answer option because it recognised and allowed participants to describe themselves in a way they wanted to; not just fitting into one of the binary options man and woman. Below we report on 1) the appropriateness of using 'man' and 'woman' and 2) how this question was answered in testing.

How different types of non-trans and trans participants answered the question in testing

Participants only selected one option. Trans participants who had completed transition selected the gender they had transitioned to, and did not find the question sensitive. Other trans participants either selected:

1. the gender associated with their birth sex, as this is how they usually completed forms, especially those related to with employment. This happened rarely, and these participants found the question sensitive, or
2. the gender they see themselves as, whether man, woman, or in some other way.

How the terms 'man' and 'woman' were understood in the question

Testing found that 'man' and 'woman' could be problematic terms, although any negative reactions to these options were reduced by the third option being available (we report more on this below). The reasons were that:

1. 'Man' and 'woman' can be understood as sexualised roles, or

2. Participants felt uncomfortable to select these if they were in the process of changing from their birth sex to the gender they identify with because they did not feel that they could yet justify choosing 'man' or 'woman' as it felt like they would be 'lying'.

One participant who found the terms 'man' and 'woman' problematic suggested that it would be better to replace these terms with 'male role' and 'female role'. Findings from later questions echoed this, as 'male' and 'female' are biological terms and therefore 'factual' rather than gender which has implied social connotations.

Reaction and how the option 'In some other way (please specify)' affected the question

Trans participants articulated that an option like 'In some other way' allowed them to be honest, for example, if they do not view themselves as either man or woman, or were in the process of transitioning.

Testing showed that this option could be used to describe:

- Dual cross dresser,
- Gender queer,
- Trans female,
- Trans gender, and
- Intersex.

'I don't particularly identify with either of these two statements. I feel I'm somewhere in the middle.'

(Trans woman, aged 42)

Testing found that although trans participants found the wording of this option satisfactory, they preferred the wording 'In another way' which was used in question one (Q2.1) in version 2. In addition, testing showed that the use of 'please specify' as an instruction could imply that you *have to* provide details. In testing we did not have any participants who did not specify when they selected 'in some other way',

although they could have been hesitant to provide details or even to select this option. This could result in under measurement of trans identity because such respondents may not get picked up.

Non-trans participants were easily able to select an option to describe themselves and they did not find the option confusing. Participants understood the purpose of this answer option.

Question 2 (Q1.2) in Version 1: Birth sex

Testing found that this question was generally understood as intended by both non-trans and trans participants. Participants understood the question was asking about how they were described on their birth certificate and/or how the medical professional or their parents had described them when they were first born.

Non-trans participants found questions one and two too similar, therefore repetitive; but nevertheless easy to answer.

‘Well I suppose they are getting at the same thing really’
(Female, aged 54)

How participants felt about answering this question

It was felt that this question could be sensitive for participants who have transitioned because it reminded them of their past, and those who hold a GRC are not legally required to disclose details of their gender history. A participant who had (completely) transitioned said the question was offensive and believed she had the right not to answer it. This participant also felt that selecting ‘I prefer not to say’ could imply that she is a trans person. This participant did answer the question and the other versions of these questions, despite her concerns.

How participants felt about and understood the answer option 'Intersex'

Both trans and non-trans respondents agreed that the question was more inclusive by including an 'intersex' option. However, it was noted that on a birth certificate in England one can only be described as male or female, therefore raising one question about the relevance of this option. Participants who are born intersex could find this option adds confusion and/or sensitivity because they would not have been registered as intersex on their birth certificate, and could hesitate over whether to choose the sex registered on their birth certificate, or identify that they were born intersex. One participant, for example, ticked the sex registered on her birth certificate when she was born and placed a small tick outside the intersex box too.

Not all non-trans participants were confident in their understanding of what intersex meant, but this did not hinder their ability to answer the question. Those who guessed what intersex meant, were accurate, which suggests that alongside the other answer options its meaning can be inferred.

How participants felt about and understood the answer option 'I prefer not to say'

Participants liked the option 'I prefer not to say' and thought it was good that it was offered. When it was missing in other versions of the questions, this was felt to be an omission. Participants felt this option could be used by someone who is trans or is going through the gender reassignment process. As outlined earlier, one worry was that ticking this option may be interpreted as not wishing to reveal you are a trans person.

Recommendations for the questions tested in Version 1

Q1 (Q1.1) Gender identity

- Consider replacing 'Man' and 'Woman' in the answer options with 'Male' and 'Female'.
- Consider replacing 'In some other way' with 'In another way' and replace the instruction please specify with a line so participants can provide further information if they wish too.
- Consider adding the instruction please tick one option so participants are instructed on how to answer the question.

Q2 (Q1.2) Birth Sex

- Consider asking the birth sex question before the gender identity question, e.g. consider asking this question before the previous question.
- Consider retaining 'intersex' and 'prefer not say' for round 2 to collect further evidence on how these answer options work.
- Consider testing in round 2 the addition of the instruction Please tick one option so participants are guided on how to answer the question.

Version 2 of the test questions

<p>Q1 (Q2.1) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. In another way
<p>Q2 (Q2.2) and at birth were you described as...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. I prefer not to say <p>GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender</p>
<p>Q3 (Q2.3) Which of the following best describes you? (tick all that apply)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transgender man 2. Transgender woman 3. Gender variant person 4. Cross-dressing person 5. Intersex person 6. In another way (please specify)

Overall findings for the questions tested in Version 2

The questions worked as intended with all participants and on the whole, trans participants marginally preferred the questions tested in version 2. This was because the questions seemed friendlier or were written in a way the participant would have written them.

Non-trans participants found the questions easy to answer. The routing instruction worked as intended, although non-trans participants did refer to Q3 on occasion, either out of curiosity, or to double check if they should answer it.

Participants were asked for their overall feedback. Some trans participants thought it would better to integrate the options at question three (Q2.3) in question one (Q2.1) making it a more open question, and include an 'I prefer not to say' option.

Question 1 (Q2.1) in Version 2: Gender identity

The omission of 'intersex' as an option and how it affected the question

Testing showed that intersex could be considered to be a missing option at this question. Participants felt that question 2 in version 1 (Q1.2) was more inclusive for having the intersex option.

How participants understood 'best describes you' in the question

Participants understood this as intended, to mean which of the available options is the closest description of you. There was a slight concern however, voiced occasionally by non-trans participants, which related to the negative connotations surrounding the use of the word 'best' in this context. It was as though 'best' implied ambiguity and coupled with the categories 'Male', 'Female' and 'In another way', could cause offence to some trans people.

How participants understood and felt about the answer option 'in another way'

'In another way' was preferred by participants compared to 'in some other way' as being softer; or more open. Participants understood this answer option as intended. It was suggested that this option could be used to indicate an intersex person, or someone waiting for a sex change.

This answer option was liked by trans participants because it offered an option to describe themselves in a way that they felt comfortable. In testing, this option was used by participants to indicate they:

- were in the process of transitioning; or,
- did not see themselves as simply male or female.

'I don't feel like a woman or a man, I am just me.'

(Androgynous/polygender/genderqueer person, aged 26)

'I like this option because it gives me the ability to express myself in a more comfortable way.'

(Trans woman, aged 42)

Omission of 'Prefer not to say' at the question.

Testing showed that this option should not be omitted.

Question 2 (Q2.2) in Version 2: Birth sex

Participants thought about how they were described at birth even if they held a GRC certificate. Some trans participants noted that intersex was not available at this question like it had been at question two in version one, and that this was an omission.

How participants felt about answering this question

Trans participants who found question two (Q1.2) sensitive in version one had similar concerns with this question, namely that it is asking about something that they found sensitive because it is a reminder of the past; or they were being asked to identify their trans identity. In testing, there were participants who responded to the idea of answering a question like this on a monitoring form as 'horrified' or that they 'wouldn't want their employer to find out' though this view was not universally held.

How participants felt about the answer option 'I prefer not to say'

Testing showed that participants believed that this option could be used to indicate

- Intersex; or
- That the question is not relevant.

There were three reactions to 'I prefer not to say' being offered as an answer option at this question that had been previously raised in response to other versions:

1. It was necessary to have the choice to select it;
2. They would never select it because it would infer that they have a trans identity which they would not want to reveal; or
3. They felt this option was irrelevant because only male or female are indicated on the birth certificate.

How the routing instruction to question 3 worked

The capitalisation at the start of the routing instruction led to a group of participants simply reading 'Go to Question 3' and not the rest of the instruction. Non-trans participants who mis-routed realised their 'mistake' when they read the question, on the whole. One non-trans participant selected 'in another way' and wrote male (Male participant with low education - aged 45).

Trans participants who felt that question one and question two in version 2 did not allow them to describe themselves in a satisfactory way were asked to answer question three (Q2.3). There were two reactions to this question in testing. One reaction was to feel it was too intrusive and if it had to be asked, the options should be integrated with question 1 and thereby giving equal weight and not separating 'out' Trans identities from the binary classification of male and female. These participants did not answer the question. The second reaction was to find the question acceptable, and it worked as intended. Participants recognised that they could select multiple options, and did so if appropriate. They liked being able to do this as it made the question more inclusive. It was found that this question was missing an 'I prefer not to say' option.

We report on additional findings below.

More evidence is needed on the inclusion and wording of the answer option 'Cross-dresser'

Testing revealed mixed evidence on how well this answer option worked. Some trans participants felt that 'cross dresser' should not be included at this question because it is to do with sexual preference, not trans identity. There was a participant who described herself as 'dual cross dresser' at answer option six, but did not select 'cross dressing person' because she understood this option to be about sexual preference.

However, one participant did use this option, who also described herself as 'gender queer'. The participant liked this option because it recognised a trans identity not recognised by the law.

There were also references made to transvestites by participants when they talked about this answer option. The evidence was unclear on whether 'cross dresser' should be included at all, and whether it should be captured with 'transvestite' or as a separate answer option.

How the other answer options were understood at this question

Trans participants understood the other answer options as intended. It was pointed out that more familiar terms for transgender man and transgender woman are trans man and trans woman and the words should not be connected such as there should be a space between 'trans' and 'man').

A number of participants mis-routed to this question.

How trans participants who mis-routed reacted to this question

Mis-routing to this question was sensitive for trans participants who felt that first two questions were sufficient to satisfactorily describe themselves. One participant felt that this question was forcing her to identify her trans identity.

How non-trans participants who mis-routed reacted to this question

Non-trans participants who mis-routed to this question either:

- Realised they had mis-routed on reading this question and did not answer the question; or
- Selected the sixth option and wrote male.

If non-trans participants answer this question, then over-reporting will result. This highlights the importance of getting the routing correct.

Recommendations for the questions tested in Version 2

Q1 (Q2.1) Gender identity

- Consider changing the wording to 'Which of the following best describes your gender?'
- Consider whether we should include 'intersex' at this question
- Consider adding 'I prefer not to say' at this question.
- Consider adding the instruction please tick one option so participants are instructed on how to answer the question.

Q2 (Q2.2) Birth Sex

- Consider slightly amending the routing instruction so it reads If question 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender please 'Go to Question 3'.
- Consider adding the instruction please tick one option so participants are instructed on how to answer the question.

Version 3 of the test questions

Q1 (Q3.1) At birth were you described as...

1. Male
2. Female
3. Intersex

Q2 (Q3.2) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?

1. As a man
2. As a woman
3. In some other way

Q3 (Q3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, or have you already moved, from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, for example changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery?

1. Yes → Go to Q4 (3.4)
2. No → End

Q4 (Q3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Please tick one option

1. I am thinking about going through these stages
2. I am currently going through these stages
3. I have already been through these stages
4. I have been through these stages, but then transitioned back
5. I am not currently thinking of going through any of these stages

Q5 (Q3.5) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?

(tick all that apply)

1. Transgender man
2. Transgender woman
3. Gender variant person
4. Cross-dressing person
5. Intersex person

- | |
|---|
| 6. In some other way (please specify) _____ |
| 7. None of the above |

Overall findings for Version 3

There did seem to be a preference for the questions tested in version 3 by trans participants because:

- The questions allowed them to describe themselves honestly; and because
- They liked the order of the questions, especially when starting with the birth sex question first.

There was a group of participants who found it slightly confusing moving from male and female to man and woman, but they were easily able to answer both question one and two. Finally, as in previous rounds of testing versions 1 and 2, there were some respondents in the non-trans group who barely read the questions, however they still answered the question correctly and could follow the routing instructions.

Question 1 (Q3.1) in Version 3: Birth sex

This question is very similar to question 2 in versions 1 and 2.

Participants retained their same understanding of this question as they had when they answered the other versions. It was noted that this version of the question did include 'intersex'. The question was considered to be missing an 'I prefer not to say' option.

Question 2 (Q3.2) in Version 3: Gender identity

Participants answered this question thinking about how they view their gender. Testing this question revealed that participants can answer this question in the intended way even if sex and gender are blurred.

How 'In some other way' was used by participants

This was used to describe:

- A man because they can never be a female because they do not have an X chromosome;
- Someone who was not born as a woman and can never be a woman because of the natural process her body went through at puberty (Trans woman intending to transition - aged 47);
- Individuals who did not like the simple binary option male or female; or
- Those who are in the process of transitioning or questioning their sexuality.

On a rare occasion, a non-trans participant (Male 42 years of age with medium education) questioned the relevance of this option and another non-trans participant (Male 59 years of age with no formal education) was confused by this option but in neither case did this stop the participants answering this question as intended

Question 3 (Q3.3) in Version 3: Transitioning

Overall findings on how this question worked

This question was the only version of a transitioning question that was tested; trans participants found it sensitively worded. It was felt that this question flowed well and assisted participants to answer question four. Participants liked the use of the term 'moving' rather than 'changing' or 'transitioning' in the question stem. However, it was felt that this question could be sensitive for trans participants (those with and without a GRC certificate) because of the personal and sensitive nature of the topic. In testing there was one participant who left this question blank because she found the question intrusive (trans woman - aged 47). Another trans participant (trans woman who had not transitioned) said she did not have any problems with the question now but would have done in the past. We do not know the reasons why this participant could have found this question problematic in the past. The participant felt the question is now a nice and open but pointed out that a transitioned participant could either answer 'yes' or 'no' at question three depending on whether they were comfortable in remembering or revealing their past.

Testing showed that there were some trans participants who found the question wording and answer options acceptable but still would not answer this question because they only want to think about how they are now and not the past. In addition, there were concerns about answering a question like this on a form at work in case the employer was concerned about time off work for gender reassignment surgery.

Understanding and appropriateness of the examples in the question

It was revealed during testing that the question could benefit from explicitly stating 'are you currently moving' because it was felt the question moves from 'thinking about' to 'having completed transitioned'.

Participants found the examples helpful. For example, a participant recognised a category answer that covered the fact that he wore women's clothes outside of the office and that he is taking hormones. Participants liked the inclusion of 'changing your name' as it made the question more inclusive by, for example, allowing a participant to reveal his Facebook name rather than the name on the deed poll. His Facebook name is the name he wants to be known by (trans man - aged - 26). Some participants felt that the question should refer to sex reassignment surgery rather than gender reassignment surgery because it is not one's gender that is reassigned but one's sex.

Question 4 (Q3.4) in Version 3: Trans identity according to the law

Testing revealed that this question could be considered as both acceptable to ask or none of anyone's business. In testing only rarely was the latter view expressed.

Trans participants tended to feel this question was sensitively worded and the answer options were comprehensive and appropriate. One trans participant felt that the question was too restrictive by allowing her to only tick one option, highlighting how comfortable this participant was with the question wording. Another participant selected answer options one, two and three to indicate he was going through the process (trans man - aged 26). It was also suggested that the answer for option four (I have been through these stages, but then transitioned back) could benefit from being more inclusive, so including someone going through *some* of the changes. It was also found that the use of the term 'transitioned' in option four was not sensitive, despite being the only reference to this in the whole question.

Question 5 (Q3.5) in Version 3: Transgender identity

This question was similar to the question tested as question three (Q2.3) in version 2. Participants retained their same understanding of this question as they had in question two. On some occasions, the slight wording change was not always noticed by trans and non-trans participants. Some participants liked the wording because it referred to 'gender identity' rather than 'best describes you'.

A sub-group of the participants who suggested that the answer options at question three should be integrated with question one in version two felt the same about this question believing that the answer options in question five (Q3.5) should have been integrated with question 1 (Q3.1). The reasons remained the same, for example giving equal weight to trans identities as male and female and/or because it would mean that only one question would need to be asked to measure gender identity inclusively.

Another finding was that the question could benefit from the answer option 'transsexual' because it suggests movement whereas trans woman (or trans man) could suggest completed change, and so are static descriptions. Testing also showed that participants liked the 'none of the above' and the option to describe themselves 'in another way'. These enabled people who did not want to be pigeon holed into an option, and were able to describe themselves in the way they felt comfortable.

Recommendations for the questions tested in Version 3

Q1 (Q3.1): Birth sex

- Consider retaining this as the first question.
- Consider using round 2 as an opportunity to collect further data on intersex and whether this should be included as an answer option.
- Consider adding 'I prefer not to say' at this question
- Consider using round 2 as an opportunity to test whether the question would benefit from guiding participants to select one option with the instruction 'Please tick one option'.

Q2 (Q3.2): Gender identity

- Although evidence from round 1 suggests participants prefer the terms 'male' and 'female'. It should be noted that the codes 'man' and 'woman' did work as intended generally. Consider using round 2 as an opportunity to collect further information on whether it would be appropriate to use male/female or man/woman.
- Therefore consider retaining the question as worded.
- Consider simplifying the answer codes to just 'Man' and 'Woman'
- Consider slightly rewording the answer option 'in some other way' to 'In another way'
- Consider adding the instruction 'please tick one option' so participants are instructed on how to answer the question.

Q3 (Q3.3): Transitioning

- Consider retaining the question with a couple of small amendments which can be tested in round 2.
- We would suggest that we add a phrasing to the question to include participants going through the change e.g. Have you ever thought about moving, are you currently moving or have you already moved from your birth sex to the gender you identify with?
- Following discussions with Commission we would also suggest that we test how the question works if the examples are bracketed and separated from the question.
- Also following discussion with the Commission we would also advise that we use round 2 to test a differently worded question so we have fully explored the most appropriate wording to achieve the measurement aims of this question. See suggestion below.

Q3 Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth, or do you intend to?

(For example how you present yourself, taking hormones, changing your name or having surgery?)

1. Yes → Please go to Q4
2. No → END

Q4 (Q3.4): Trans identity according to the law

- Consider retaining this question with only a slight amendment to answer option 4 so it includes people going through some of the changes e.g. I have been through all or some of these stages and then transitioned back.
- Following discussion with the Commission, we would also advise that we use round 2 to test a differently worded question so we have fully explored the most appropriate wording

to achieve the measurement aims of this question. The suggestion, that has been made is:

Q4. Which of the following options best applies to you?

Please tick one option

1. I am thinking about going through this process
2. I am currently going through this process
3. I have already been through this process
4. I have been through this process, then changed back
5. None of the above _____

Q5 (Q3.5): Transgender identity

- As we found that participants had a preference for the wording ‘describes how you think of yourself’ at question two (Q2.1) in version 2 we would suggest that this question is slightly amended to ‘Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?’ Round 2 would be an opportunity to test this question with the answer options
- We would suggest that the answer option ‘Transsexual person’ is included at this question as the third answer option
- Also as it was not clear from round 1 if cross-dressing should be included we would suggest that this answer option is retained and re-tested in round 2.
- Consider adding ‘Transvestite person’ to the answer option ‘Cross dressing’ so we gather evidence in round 2 of where this should be included in the question.
- Consider adding the answer option ‘In another way:_____’ to allow participants to describe themselves in a way that they want to, if they want too.
- Consider adding ‘I prefer not to say’ too and removing the ‘None of the above’ option.

4.3 Summary of findings from stage 3, round 1 of cognitive interviews

Table 6 Summary of how the gender identity questions worked in round 1 cognitive interviews

Round 1		
<p>Q1 (Q1.1) Would you describe yourself as a...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Man, 2. Woman 3. In some other way (please specify) 	<p>Q1 (Q2.1) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. In another way 	<p>Q2 (Q3.2) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a man 2. As a woman 3. In some other way
Key findings for the gender identity questions were:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On the whole all three versions of this question worked as intended for both trans and non-trans participants. Testing did reveal that this question could be potentially sensitive for participants who would find any question about their gender/sex sensitive. ▪ Testing showed that participants liked the wording used in 2.1 and 3.2. Participants liked the reference to ‘how you think of yourself’ in 2.1 and in 3.2 participants liked the question because it specified gender, which made the question more focused than the alternative versions tested. ▪ Testing did show that trans participants preferred the terms ‘male’ and ‘female’ rather than ‘man’ and ‘woman’ because these terms were biological facts and not socially constructed terms. It was harder for some trans participants to identify with being a ‘man’ or a ‘woman’, especially if they were in the process of transitioning, whereas for those same participants ‘male’ and ‘female’ could be easily chosen. ▪ Testing showed that ‘n another way’ was preferred over ‘In some other way’ for being softer. Trans and non-trans participants felt that the addition of a third answer option made the question more inclusive. ▪ Also testing showed that participants did not like ‘please specify’ because it was felt that if they were being instructed to say what the ‘other way’ was, and participants did not see this as optional. 		

Recommendations for the gender identity questions were:

- Consider using round 2 to gather further information on whether the question should refer to ‘gender’ or ‘think of yourself’.
- Consider using the terms ‘male’ and ‘female’ rather than ‘man and ‘woman’.
- Consider using ‘In another way’ rather than ‘In some other way’. Rather than having ‘Please specify’ add a line so participants can provide further information if they wish too.
- Consider whether an ‘intersex’ option should be included at this question.
- Consider testing in round 2 the inclusion of instruction ‘Please tick one option’ so participants are instructed on how to answer the question.

Table 7 Summary of how the birth sex questions worked in round 1 cognitive interviews

Round 1		
Q2 (Q1.2) and at birth were you described as...	Q2 (Q2.2) and at birth were you described as...	Q1 (Q3.1) At birth were you described as...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Intersex 4. I prefer not to say 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. I prefer not to say <p>GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Intersex
Key findings for the birth sex questions were:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On the whole all three versions of this question worked as intended for both trans and non-trans participants. There were only minor differences between the wordings of these questions, so it is not surprising that one version was not clearly preferred over any of the others. ▪ Further evidence is needed about whether intersex should be included at this question. Intersex was considered to make the question more inclusive however participants questioned the relevance of this answer option because on the birth certificate in England you can only be described as male or female. Participants either thought 		

about what was written on their birth certificate or how the medical professional/their parents had described them when they were born, which was also how they were then described on their birth certificate.

- 'I prefer not to say' was liked by participants
- Testing found that this question could be potentially sensitive for a group of trans participants, because either they always found questions about their gender/sex sensitive or because they had a GRC certificate which meant that they did not have to reveal anything about their sex at birth. Participants were able to, and did answer the question, albeit being uncomfortable on rare occasions.
- Findings suggest this question should always be asked before the gender identity question in order to follow chronological order.
- Testing the routing instruction in version 2 (Q2.2) highlighted the importance of its visual design. There were a group of participants who mis-routed to the trans identity question because they just read the first part (Go to Question 3) which was in capitals and not the explanation. If a routing instruction like this is used, consider slightly amending it so it reads 'If question 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender please Go to Question 3' to encourage it to be read.

Recommendations for the birth sex questions were:

Consider asking the 'at birth question' before the gender identity question

Consider using round 2 as an opportunity to collect further data on 'intersex' and 'I prefer not to say' to say if these answer options should be included

Consider adding the instruction 'please tick one option' so participants are instructed on how to answer the question.

Consider testing in round 2 whether adding the instruction 'please tick one option' assists participants to select just one option.

5 Cognitive Testing Findings: Round 2 of Stage 3

5.1 Introduction

Following analysis from round 1 and consultation with the Commission, we identified that we needed to test two question versions in round 2. The aim of this round was to fine tune the questions, to ensure that the correct wording is recommended for each question in order for public bodies and others to be able to satisfactorily measure gender identity (further details of the methodology is presented in chapter 2). For the cognitive interviews in round 2, and because we were now at the stage where we were testing just two alternatives of each question, interviewers alternated the versions so that half of the sample received one version of each question first and the other half received the other version of each question first. This design was put into place to give each version equal and fair ‘first time’ exposure.

As in round 1, sixteen face-to-face interviews were conducted, eight with trans participants and eight with non-trans participants. The interviewers asked each participant to complete one version of a question or at most two questions in a self-completion paper questionnaire before the interviewer probed to explore how the participant answered the question or questions. During probing, the interviewer showed the alternative version of the question or questions and asked participants their view on the alternative version. This process was repeated for each question, apart from question 5 which was one version.

5.2 Findings from the cognitive interviews round 2

Text that has been crossed out indicates a change in question wording between rounds.

Question 1 (Original 1.2 & Original 2.2): Birth sex

Q1 (Original 1.2) and At birth were you described as... <u>Please tick one option</u>	Q1 (Original 2.2) and At birth were you described as... <u>Please tick one option</u>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Male <input type="checkbox"/> - Female <input type="checkbox"/> - Intersex <input type="checkbox"/> - I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Female <input type="checkbox"/> 3. I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/> <p><u>GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender</u></p>
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Overall findings

Both test questions were kept from round 1 with slight modifications to the wording. As in round 1, both were well understood and worked as intended. On the whole participants selected the same answer at both questions (we report below about the one occasion this did not happen). Generally participants thought about the sex that had either been assigned to them by the medical professional when they were born, and/or what was put on their birth certificate when they were born. On rare occasions, trans and non-trans participants asked who they should be thinking about when they answered the question. There was one older participant who thought the first question he was asked to complete (original 2.2) was about his sexuality. Despite his confusion, the participant answered the question correctly.

Which version of the question was preferred by participants and their ease in answering the question

Almost unanimously, participants preferred Q1 (original 1.2) because of the inclusion of intersex, even if they were not sure or confident in their understanding, as it made the question inclusive:

‘Like this much better than the question you sometimes see that says at birth were you male? Because some trans people will say they were never male at birth or even female or anything else for that matter. This question just suggests ‘did other people label you as this? This is a good way of putting it.’

(Trans man, completely transitioned, aged over 51)

It was pointed out that if this option was not included then more people would select 'I prefer not to say'. When Q1 (original 1.2) was not the outright preferred question, it was either because the participant was not intersex and therefore did not care whether it was included or not, or because the participant liked either question.

Both trans and non-trans participants answered this question quickly; some barely read the question before answering it. There were also participants who went straight to the answer options and looked for the appropriate answer to tick without reading the question, assuming the question was asking them about their sex. A trans participant who adopted this practice when probed, realised that she had indicated the sex she identifies with and not her sex at birth. The participant was comfortable with the question and changed her answer, however it should be noted that this approach may in general impact the quality of answers. .

How participants with Gender Recognition Certificates could answer the question

In testing one participant pointed out that once she has her GRC she would answer this question indicating her acquired sex. Therefore, participants who adopt this answer practice will not be captured as having a transgender identity. It should be noted that in testing, all the participants who had transitioned, answered thinking about their sex at birth in both rounds of testing. Of course we cannot say for sure what proportion of participants with trans histories will answer honestly, and we suspect that the context in which such a question will be asked will heavily influence honest reporting and disclosure of trans histories/identities.

Understanding and the inclusion of intersex at this question

No one answered using option in round 2. Testing the two versions of the questions revealed that it would be useful for the question to include 'intersex' because participants, when shown Q1 (original 2.2.), either spontaneously articulated that 'intersex' was missing or felt that Q1 (original 1.2) was better for having it:

'It acknowledges that there is more than just male and female.'

(Trans man, aged 41).

On one occasion, a trans participant felt that there should be space available within this option for participants to include further details, if they wished. However, providing further details could be considered too personal and is not necessary for current monitoring purposes.

The presence of 'intersex' did not affect how participants answered the question, even those participants who did not know what it meant, or had the wrong understanding. In this group there were participants who did not notice it, or did not notice it was missing depending on the version of the question they were answering. This was because the participant just looked for the answer option that was appropriate for them. When probed, participants were asked what they thought 'intersex' meant. There were non-trans participants who were not confident in their understanding, although they actually had the correct understanding. When 'intersex' was misunderstood it was understood to mean either;

1. (being) Into sex; or,
2. being gay.

How participants felt about being asked first about their birth sex

Findings from round 1 indicated that this question should be asked first. The order of the question did not raise any concern for non-trans participants, who saw this as the natural order. Although reversing the order helped to reduce the sensitivity of this question for trans participants, it did not completely remove it.

There were trans participants who wondered why it was necessary to ask this question, either because:

1. it was to do with their past which they would rather not think about;
2. they felt that this was obviously a question for trans participants;
3. or they saw it as a factual question that they would answer, albeit a sensitive one.

Testing showed that the context in which this question is asked could affect how a participant felt about answering it. For example, on a health form where the relevance was clear, the participant would answer honestly. The cognitive interviews

revealed that some trans participants would be more hesitant to answer this question honestly on an employment form if they could not see its relevance, or were concerned about outing themselves at work. One participant explained that she would give a 'protective lie' and would not reveal her sex at birth.

There was one occasion in testing when a participant (trans) did not answer both versions of the question in the same way. This was because the participant did not like being asked about her birth sex. So for the first question she selected 'I prefer not to say' and then selected female when shown the second version (of the same question). This difference does appear to be influenced by the style of the interview, as the participant had already started to think through the question during the probes when she was shown the second version.

How participants felt about the inclusion of 'I prefer not to say'

Generally, participants thought it was good that both questions offered 'I prefer not to say'. Table 8 illustrates how non-trans and trans participants understood this answer category.

Table 8 How participants thought ‘I prefer not to say’ could be used

Non-Trans understanding	Trans understanding
<p>Used by someone to describe that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ they are different; or ▪ that they have had a sex change. 	<p>Used by someone to describe that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ They are confused; ▪ They are gender neutral; ▪ They have a right not to say/to have to explain themselves/out themselves; ▪ They are trans; or ▪ They do not associate with their birth sex.

One participant said that she would never select the ‘I prefer not to say’ option on an employment form because this would be viewed as a non-conformist response and therefore may indicate that she has a trans history.

Recommendations for Question 1 to measure participants’ birth sex

<p>Q1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider retaining this as the first question with the answer options ‘intersex’ and ‘I prefer not to say’. ▪ To help address issues of sensitivity and to also frame this set of questions we would recommend that an introductory text be provided before this question to reassure participants about data confidentiality and how this will be achieved. ▪ Although there is no evidence to say how well the instruction ‘Please tick one option’ has worked, there is evidence from question two which suggests that this instruction has worked as intended. For consistency, and as there is no evidence to suggest otherwise, we would suggest this instruction is retained. ▪ There will be participants who will decide not to reveal their birth sex, for example, persons who hold a GRC. However, as they are not legally obliged to, this is a group which may be under-reported at this question. This will impact on the accuracy of the measurement of the trans population when this set of questions is used and needs to be understood by those collecting these data.
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Question 2 (original 2.1 & original 3.2): Gender identity

<p><u>Q2</u> (original 2.1) Which of the following <u>best</u> describes how you think of yourself? <u>Please tick one option</u></p> <p>1. Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. In another way: <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>	<p><u>Q2</u> (original 3.2) Which of the following describes how you think of your gender? <u>Please tick one option</u></p> <p>1. Man <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Woman <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. In another way: <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>
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Overall findings

Both of these questions were slightly modified after round 1 and worked as intended. Generally, participants found both versions of this question fairly easy to answer, though question two (original 3.2) was thought to be more clear for referring to gender. Participants referred to the answer options of question two (original 2.1) to understand better what the question was asking them, as they could be described best in a number of ways, for example, by their occupation, friends, and personality

Which version participants’ preferred

Testing from round 2 did not reveal a clear question preference. Participants who preferred question two (original 2.1) preferred it because it was an open question. Participants who preferred the wording in question two (original 3.2) did so because they liked the fact that the question specifically referred to gender. On the whole, participants who preferred the wording of this question preferred the answer options ‘male’ and ‘female’ offered in question two (original 2.1) suggesting that yet again, these are the best terms to use in a question about gender identity.

How participants felt about the sex and gender options at this question

Participants preferred the answer options ‘male’ and ‘female’ to ‘man’ and ‘woman’ because the sex terms were seen as being factual and straightforward. Participants indicated that ‘man’ and ‘woman’ were age specific terms. For example, a trans

participant (aged 21) preferred question 2 (original 2.1) because she found it more inclusive as she did not associate herself as being a woman. Participants articulated that before the ages of 17-18 they would associate with being a boy/girl and not a man/woman. A trans participant selected both man and 'in another way' and wrote in 'boy' by this option. It was pointed out that younger people may select 'In another way' because they do not associate with being a woman/man yet because of their age. One trans participant felt that there can be a gender spectrum which made it difficult to select just one option.

Participants could answer the question in the intended way even if they did not understand and or realise that question 2 (original 2.1) used 'sex' categories and question two (original 3.2) used 'gender' categories.

On the whole, participants irrespective of education level or how easy they found it to articulate their thoughts, found it difficult to explain what 'man and 'male' meant to them and the female equivalents in the context of the question. For example, participants described 'woman' as 'female' and vice versa.

How participants felt about 'best describes' compared to 'describes' in the question wording

There were mixed reactions to the inclusion of the term 'best'. Trans and non-trans participants questioned the relevance of the use of 'best' because it suggested an uncertainty, the closest description, or a problem. It was felt that people would know how they see themselves, so it is not necessary to include within the question. Conversely, there were also both trans participants who liked the inclusion of 'best' because it showed a moving journey and trans participants who were indifferent on this issue.

How participants answered this question

A trans and a non-trans participant decided to select two options at both versions of question two to indicate how they see themselves. The non-trans participant ticked 'male' and wrote 'man' in the space available after 'in another way' at question two

(original 2.1) and when asked to answer the alternative version the person wrote 'human person' after ticking 'in another way' because he wanted to write in something different to that written in the previous version of the question. The trans participant wrote 'male-ish' at option 3. A non-trans participant wanted to write 'cheerful' for option 3 because this was the best way she would think of herself.

How participants understood 'In another way' in both versions of the question

'In another way' was not consistently understood amongst non-trans participants, with participants not sure how this could be used, or considering it was irrelevant because 'you should know one way or the other'. Some participants thought it could indicate that one was:

1. Gay;
2. Transvestite;
3. Intersex; or
4. Had had a sex change.

Irrespective of how this option was understood, it did not prevent non-trans participants answering the question in the intended way.

Trans participants liked this option because it gave a third option and moved away from the binary male and female options. Participants liked the layout as it allowed them to provide more information if they desired.

Recommendations for Question 2 to measure participants' gender identity

Q2

- Consider using question two (original 2.1) as 'male' and 'female' as answer options worked better than 'man' and 'woman', whilst dropping the reference to 'best', or including it but in brackets: (best).
- Also consider retaining 'In another way: _____' as this answer option's wording and layout worked as intended.
- Consider retaining the instruction 'Please tick one option' but look at placing the instruction in bold to assist participants to select one option only.

Question 3 (Original 3.3 & New 2.3): To measure transitioning

<p>Q3 (Original 3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, <u>are you currently moving</u> or have you already moved from your birth sex to the gender you identify with?</p> <p>(This could include changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery).</p> <p>1. Yes → Please go to Q4 2. No → END</p>	<p>Q3 (New 2.3) <u>Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth, or do you intend to?</u></p> <p>(<u>For example how you present yourself, taking hormones, changing your name or having surgery?</u>)</p> <p>1. Yes → Please go to Q4 2. No → END</p>
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Overall findings

Generally participants understood both versions of question 3 as intended: ‘just asking if you’ve moved’ (Male, aged 21). Trans participants liked both versions of question three because it showed that there was movement in the transitioning process (or a journey) and that transitioning could take different forms. Occasionally, both trans and non-trans participants looked at question four before answering question three, either to check their answer and/or because they were curious. In testing, this did not impact on how they answered question three.

However, understanding and preference does seem to have been affected according to which version the participant was first exposed to, though there was a group of participants who preferred the second version they saw, irrespective of which question it was. We did find that question three (original 3.3.) was harder for participants to understand than the alternative version, irrespective of education level, and whether they were trans or non-trans participants. This was demonstrated by either participants re-reading the question, commenting on it being a long question to understand, or saying that there was a lot going on with this question compared to question 3 (New 2.3). Question three (New 2.3) was felt to be less bulky; nicer for referring to process; less wishy washy, or it just seemed to flow better.

Sensitivity

Non-trans and trans participants, on the whole, did not find either question sensitive. There was one non-trans participant in his seventies, who did find this question sensitive, yet he reiterated to the interviewer that he was not 'gay' so the questions were not relevant to him. One trans participant said he would not answer the question on an equal opportunities monitoring form if he worked in a small firm and could be identified. Despite these concerns, both these participants did answer the question accurately in testing.

How question 3 (Original 3.3) about 'moving to the birth sex to the gender you identify with' was understood

In round 2 there were non-trans and trans participants who instinctively thought when reading the question quickly that it was going to be about moving house or country, or moving after retirement. Participants with this interpretation only understood the question when they got to the end of it. For example, a participant explained that:

'It completely goes to moving home, or moving to another country. It gender or sex.'

(Female, aged 34)

However, it was found that trans participants liked the word 'moving' because it was an easygoing term.

As in round 1, 'birth sex' was well understood and one participant said: 'when you are born that's when you find out what you are...you're either a man or a woman' (Male, aged 21). A trans participant felt the phrase 'your birth sex to the gender you identify with' to be a trans friendly term.

How question 3 (New 2.3) about 'a process to change' was understood

This question was well understood and well received by both non-trans and trans participants. It was described by one participant as a nice way of describing transitioning from their perspective. Participants liked this question because it

referred to a 'process', indicating that this could include thinking about a change, and showed an understanding of the Equality Act. Further trans participants liked this question because it showed an understanding that transitioning could take many forms, including thinking about it, and was not restricted to having forms of surgery. This made the question more inclusive because not everyone who wants to can go through all the stages because of their circumstances. For example, the question recognises that if a person makes the change in their mind and starts even just wearing men's shoes because this is what they can do at the moment, this is recognised in the question as a change.

'Am I what I was born as or am I am considering something different?'

(Non-trans Female, aged 34)

How the examples worked in both questions

Participants found the examples for both questions useful, clear to understand, and felt nothing was missing. Trans participants liked that there were a range of examples, other than ones to do with 'surgery'. Participants had a preference for the examples presented in question 3 (original 3.3).

Testing the two versions revealed that 'surgery' (alone) was considered more inclusive than 'gender reassignment surgery (GRS)' by trans participants because this could include chest and facial surgery. A trans participant suggested amending 'gender reassignment surgery' to 'sex reassignment surgery' or 'gender confirmation surgery'.

We explored how participants understood 'how you present yourself' which is given as one of the examples in question 3 (New 2.3). This was well understood by non-trans participants and trans participants as how you show yourself to other people.

Trans participants gave the following examples:

1. how one sees one self;
2. modifying your name;
3. wearing male clothes to work; or
4. choosing unisex toilets.

One trans participant felt this example could add confusion because some people may not see this as changing their sex.

Recommendations for Question 3: To measure transitioning

Q3

- Consider using the wording in question 3 (New 2.3) and the examples in question 3 (original 3.3) e.g.

Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth, or do you intend to?

(This could include changing your name, wearing different clothes taking hormones or having any gender reassignment surgery).

- Yes → Please go to Q4
- No → END
- In testing, we mistakenly did not include a tick box after 'yes' and 'no' so occasionally participants circled the answer code number or did not answer. Following testing we would recommend that these are included (as shown above).
- To encourage participants who are concerned about revealing any moves towards transitioning, it is very important there is an introduction to these questions, which reiterates data confidentiality. We advise that guidance on ensuring data confidentiality and how data should be anonymised is available to organisations using the questions.

Question 4 (Original 3.4 & New 2.4): To measure trans identity according to the legal definition

<p>Q4 (Original 3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about going through, or have already been through, to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?</p> <p>Please tick one option</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am thinking about going through these stages <input type="checkbox"/> 2. I am currently going through these stages <input type="checkbox"/> 3. I have already been through these stages <input type="checkbox"/> 4. I have been through all or some of these stages, but then transitioned back <input type="checkbox"/> 5. I am not currently thinking of going through any of these stages? 	<p>Q4. (NEW2.4) Which of the following options best applies to you?</p> <p>Please tick one option</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am thinking about going through this process <input type="checkbox"/> 2. I am currently going through this process <input type="checkbox"/> 3. I have already been through this process <input type="checkbox"/> 4. I have been through this process, then changed back <input type="checkbox"/> 5. None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> _____
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Overall findings for both versions

Testing these questions revealed that both questions measured the legal definition of trans. Almost all participants selected the same option when answering each version. Testing revealed that there were participants who felt that neither question stated which stage of transitioning was the focus. On the whole, participants did correctly answer the questions whilst thinking about how they viewed their own transition. There was a rare occasion when a trans man understood it in the context of surgery only and he felt this was too narrow, as it is about transitioning from the person's perspective. This participant selected option three because he had gone through gender reassignment surgery.

How participants who have had gender reassignment surgery answered the question

Trans participants who had gone through gender reassignment surgery either selected option three (in both versions) because they viewed this as the last stage to their transition, or selected option two (in both versions) because, even though they had surgery, they would always have to take hormones. We presume that the differences in understanding will not affect the measurement aim of measuring trans identity according to the Equality Act. In one case, a participant hesitated on how to answer the question at question four (New 2.4) because he had the latter view. This participant selected option two and three at question four (New 2.4) but decided to select option three in question 4 (Original 3.4) because the preamble at this question made it easier for him to decide on one answer.

How the options were used in testing

The table below presents how the options were used in testing in both versions of Q4.

Table 9 How the answer options were used

Answer option	Evidence
Option 1,4 and 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No evidence reported
Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Going through the steps to get a Gender Recognition Certificate ▪ Had the Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS) but aware treatment/surgery may be needed in the future and or always going to be taking hormones
Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Had the GRS surgery (even though will be taking hormones for the rest of his/her life). ▪ Made the transition (but not had GRS surgery)

How context could affect the question

Although participants found the question acceptable, they felt that the context could affect their answering. So, for example, if in the workplace some trans participants would tick option 4 (been through the stages). However, if answering in a health context then some trans participants would tick options 2 and 3.

Missing answer options and sensitivity over option 4

Both versions were felt to be missing 'I prefer not to say' for participants who do not want to reveal their trans history.

It was noted that question four (original 3.4) was missing 'None of the above:_____'. Those participants who were not sure how this could answer category would be used, felt it was appropriate for this option to be available.

Suggestions for how this option could be used were:

1. For a person who does not fit a box; or
2. Someone who does not want to 'out' themselves.

There was one occasion in testing when a participant wrote on the card beside 'None of the above', 'innate, a typing error' because the participant thought this option was irrelevant. Conversely, another participant wrote on her card 'there was not enough space to write in after this option'.

There was one case in round 2, when a participant felt that option 4 (in both versions) was sensitive because he is always being asked by psychiatrists if he has changed his mind and wants to change back. However, this sensitivity did not impact on how the question was answered.

Version preference

There was no clear preference in testing for one version over the other as table 10 shows.

Table 10 Preferences for each version of question 4

Q4 (Original 3.4) Thinking about the stages...	Q4. (NEW2.4) Which of the following options best applies to you?
QUESTION WORDING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Liked the preamble at the start and this made the question clearer and easier to answer compared to the alternative.▪ How to think about transitioning was also	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A clearer question▪ The question easily flows from the preceding question. This is a less wordy question.

Q4 (Original 3.4) Thinking about the stages...	Q4. (NEW2.4) Which of the following options best applies to you?
<p>clearer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liked the phrase move from birth sex to the gender you identify with because sex has a legal definition covered by the Corbett's definition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not repetitive like Q4 (original 3.4) which was felt to be repeating question three (Q3.3 original)
ANSWER OPTIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prefers 'stages' because it is a more of an inclusive term compared to 'process' because it is not a medical term implying surgery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prefers 'process' because it is a more of an inclusive term compared to 'stages', and because it is not a medical term implying surgery ▪ Process is a more inclusive term than stages because it shows the linear process, whereas stages suggests milestones which evokes landmarks which is inappropriate, for example, seeing a doctor about it or telling friends.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prefers the options at this question because the options in 2.4 are gossipy. ▪ Liked the use of 'transition' over 'changed back' in option 4 because it shows it could involve not only surgery but also thoughts. Also indicates the gradual process and not a sudden change indicated by change back. 	
OTHER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liked the layout 	

Recommendations for Question 4: To measure gender reassignment according to the legal definition

- We would recommend that question 4 (New 2.4) is taken forward and we have recommended an amended question 3 (New 2.3) is used. Both questions have worked well together.
- As there were participants who understood 'process' with a narrower meaning than intended, and there were participants who felt the transition end-point was not clear, we would suggest that participants are reminded of the examples e.g.

Continuing to think about these examples, which of the following options best applies to you?

- As the intention of this question is to measure any moves to change from birth sex to the acquired gender we would suggest that the instruction is retained without modification.
- Consider adding as the final answer option 'I prefer not to say'.

Question 5 (NEW 2.5): Transgender Identity

Q5 (New 2.5) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

Tick all that apply

Trans man

Trans woman

Transexual person

Gender variant person

Cross dressing/transvestite person

Intersex person

In another way: _____

I prefer not to say

The question was understood as intended by trans participants and the answer options worked relatively well (with a few modifications suggested). The answer options were seen as inclusive and covered the ways in which people would want to answer (if they chose to do so at all). The 'tick all that apply' instruction was observed, on the whole, and was seen as necessary (for those who may wish to identify in more than one way), as were the categories 'in another way' and 'I prefer not to say'. The inclusion of the word 'person' at the answer options which use it was generally like.

There were trans participants who either refused to answer this question, or expressed their dislike for it – describing it as 'offensive' and questioning whether it was relevant or necessary to ask. Trans participants who do not identify with being 'trans', but see themselves as men or women said they would either:

- Feel unable to answer the question as it stands as it omits an option for 'man' or 'woman' – there were participants who added in answer options to the list for 'man'/'woman' or 'male'/'female';
- Choose 'trans man' or 'trans woman' if they had to (if, for example, there were no alternatives for 'man' and 'woman') but would prefer to see 'man'/'woman' in the list;
- Tick 'I prefer not to say'; or,
- Refuse to answer it, and leave it blank altogether.

It was felt that the addition of two separate additional answer options for 'man' and 'woman' may encourage some to consider this question, as it would provide a more suitable response option and therefore encourage response.

How the answer option transsexual person was understood

The 'transsexual person' option was very clearly associated with people who have undergone some form of gender reassignment (including the 'full' surgery, a change in name and a change of birth certificate) and there were some participants who preferred this option over 'trans man'/'trans woman'. It was chosen occasionally by those about to undergo gender reassignment surgery, for example, one trans woman participant chose it but said that she would also want an option for 'woman' that she could choose once she had gone through surgery. One participant pointed out that

the category 'transsexual person' could overlap with trans man and trans woman and finally a young trans man expressed a dislike for the term since he felt that it conjures up stereotypical images of people dressing up and wearing make up.

Revisions needed to the answer categories

As well as the suggestions for two additional answer categories for 'man' and 'woman' (or 'male' and 'female'), to be used by those who have 'destroyed details' of their trans history, there were also a number of other suggestions for the answer categories within this question. These are:

- Instead of using 'trans man' and 'trans woman', use either 'man with a trans history', 'woman who has been through gender reassignment' or 'person with a trans history'. These descriptions were preferred by some over the existing options. Others said that they did not mind ticking the existing categories ('trans man' and 'trans woman').
- Replace 'trans woman' with M-T-F and 'trans man' with F-T-M (however this view was not held by all). One trans man, for example, liked the fact that there were no references to MTF or FTM on this form, commenting that most forms do have these.

How the answer option 'cross dressing person/transvestite person' was understood

The evidence was mixed in relation to how people understood these categories. However the findings do suggest that cross dressing and transvestite person should be separated as it was felt keeping them together may offend some people. It was also pointed out that someone may cross dress but would not see themselves as a transvestite.

There were mixed interpretations of the terms 'transvestite person' and 'cross dresser'. Some participants saw a 'transvestite person' as having connotations with sexual gratification and a 'cross dressing person' to be someone who wishes to dress in the clothes of the opposite sex either full or part time. However, there were participants who viewed being 'transvestite' as more of a lifestyle choice and cross dressing as a more of a sexual thing.

Recommendations

- Consider retaining the question wording, though drop the word 'best' as a) it implies that just one answer should be chosen, and b) it was found to be problematic at other (similar) questions.
- Although 'trans man' and 'trans woman' were seen to overlap with 'transsexual person', we feel that it is worth retaining all the categories as evidence was found that each are necessary.
- While some trans participants did point out that the list of answer options should also include 'man' and 'woman', as separate codes to 'trans man' and 'trans woman' we feel they should not be included here. There is a risk that these options will be chosen by non-trans people, especially if they mistakenly route themselves to this question, There is an option for a trans person to describe themselves 'in another way' here, with space to write in 'man', 'woman' if they wish to.
- Consider separating 'cross dressing person' from 'transvestite person' so that those who wish to identify with either will not be offended.
- Consider retaining all the other answer categories as worded for example:

Q5 Which of the following ~~best~~ describes how you think of yourself? Tick all that apply

Trans man

Trans woman

Transsexual person

Gender variant person

Cross dressing person

Transvestite person

Intersex person

In another way: _____

I prefer not to say

Summary of findings from stage 3, round 2 of cognitive interviews

Table 11 Summary of how the gender identity questions worked in round 2* cognitive interviews

Round 2	
<p>Q2 (original 2.1) Which of the following <u>best</u> describes how you think of yourself? <u>Please tick one option</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. In another way: _____ 	<p>Q2 (original 3.2) Which of the following describes how you think of your gender? <u>Please tick one option</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Man 2. Woman 3. In another way: _____
Key findings for the gender identity questions were:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There were mixed findings on which question wording was better with participants liking the working in Q2 (original 2.1) because it was open and Q2 (original 3.2) because it was more focused. ▪ As we found in round 1 testing, trans participants preferred the terms ‘male’ and ‘female’ rather than ‘man’ and ‘woman’ because these terms were biological facts and not socially constructed terms. In addition, both trans and non-trans participants felt that ‘man’ and ‘woman’ were age specific with the implication that younger participants may select the third option. ▪ The third answer option worked as intended and participants liked the format. There is no evidence to suggest the question needs ‘Please specify’ to encourage a response. 	
Recommendations for the gender identity questions were:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider using Q2 (original 2.1) as on the whole this question worked best. ▪ Consider retaining the instruction ‘Please tick one option’ because generally it worked. 	

*Changes from round 1 are underlined

Table 12 Summary of how the birth sex questions worked in round 2* cognitive interviews

Round 2	
<p>Q1 (Original 1.2) and At birth were you <u>described as...</u></p> <p><u>Please tick one option</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Intersex 4. I prefer not to say 	<p>Q1 (Original 2.2) and At birth were you described as...</p> <p><u>Please tick one option</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. I prefer not to say <p><u>GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender</u></p>
Key findings for the birth sex questions were:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On the whole both versions of this question worked as intended for both trans and non-trans participants. ▪ Evidence from this round of testing suggests that this question should be asked first, although potentially sensitive, it is less so for being asked in chronological order. We would recommend that an introductory text in writing is provided before these questions are asked which explains why the data are being collected, how the data will be protected under the Data Security Act, and how respect of the participants' answers will be ensured by the organisation, for example confidentiality and anonymity ensured throughout. There was concern by trans participants that this may not be observed, especially in small firms and in the private sector organisations. ▪ 'Intersex' should be retained at this question as so should 'I prefer not to say'. It was felt that it was an omission not to offer intersex. The presence of intersex did not impact on how participants answered this question, even if the participant did not understand what it meant or was not confident in their understanding. 	
Recommendations for the birth sex questions were:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider retaining this as the first question with the answer options 'intersex' and 'I prefer not to say'. ▪ To help address issues of sensitivity, we would recommend that an introductory text be provided before this question to reassure participants about data confidentiality and how this will be achieved. ▪ Although there is no evidence to say how well the instruction 'Please tick one option' has worked at this question, there is evidence from question two which suggests that this instruction has worked as intended. For consistency and as there is no evidence to suggest that including this instruction negatively impacts on how the question has 	

worked we would suggest this instruction is retained.

- There will be participants who will decide not to reveal their sex at birth for example persons who hold a GRC certificate. However, as they are not legally obliged to, this is a group which may be under-reported at this question. This will impact on the accuracy of the measurement of the trans population when this set of questions is used.

*Changes from round 1 are underlined.

5.3 Overarching issues from cognitive interviews in both round 1 and round 2

Sex and gender

Testing revealed that the concepts of sex and gender were not generally understood by trans and non-trans participants in either round of testing. However, participants were able to answer the questions in the intended way, even if they did not realise/understand that they were using 'gender' or 'sex terms'. In testing there were participants who just knew they were either male, female or described themselves in another way, or described themselves as either man, woman or in another way. Therefore it does not matter, in terms of the measurement aims being achieved, if participants do not understand the nuances of the sex and gender terms being used.

It was also found in testing that participants preferred the sex terms 'male' and 'female', rather than the gender terms 'man' and 'woman' because the former are factual and/or because these terms do not have socially constructed connotations.

Opinion versus fact

Testing this question revealed that there was a group of participants who considered the birth sex questions as factual questions in contrast to the gender identity questions which were seen as opinion questions.

Importance of setting the scene

Although both trans and non-trans participants thought it was good that this research is happening. '*To be able to actually be honest about yourself is very liberating*' (Trans man, aged 42), it was pointed out that 'there is nothing so undermining to the transgender population to be questioned for the sake of it' (Trans man, aged 51). It

was very clear in testing that the reason for asking these questions would need to be clear at the outset for both trans and non-trans participants. Questions such as the transgender identity question and the transitioning question may not be answered on an employment form because certain trans participants would not want to reveal their trans identity to their employer (irrespective of whether they hold a GRC or have transitioned or not). They had concerns that revealing their identity might cause them disadvantage. There was less concern about answering these types of question on a form in a GP practice or in a hospital. These findings show that irrespective of how well the context is set or if the question works as intended, the sensitivity and the context in which they are being asked could result in the question or questions not being answered.

6 Context, mode of delivery and issues in monitoring gender identity

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we discuss some of the issues which arose throughout the different stages of research with trans and non-trans participants. A key challenge for those collecting this information will be how to do so, both in terms confidentiality and the best modes of data collection.

Participants in the focus groups and cognitive interviews were asked to express their views on the context and mode in which they would honestly answer gender identity questions.

6.2 Context in which participants would answer gender identity questions

The focus groups revealed that the context in which trans people are asked about their gender identity could affect how likely they would be to answer the questions.

These related to:

- the extent to which the place in which the data would be collected gave participants the privacy to answer;
- perceived risk of discrimination arising from completing the equalities monitoring forms, either through revelation of transgender history or positive discrimination against non-transgender people; and
- the fact that including questions on gender identity in monitoring was a positive recognition of the existence of transgender people that made some feel more likely to complete such surveys.

Most participants had experience of being asked monitoring questions or survey questions on sex, gender and/ or gender identity to date in a variety of contexts. In general, these included employment applications, employer surveys (public and private sector), car insurance applications and voluntary sector service organisations. More specifically among transgender participants, they included hospitals, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) organisations and surveys of transgender

people. Notably, no participant thought that they had seen a question that was completely satisfactory, and non-transgender people thought that the relevance of asking for this type of information had never been fully explained (such as being asked about something which seemed quite obvious: birth sex and current gender identity). Three factors relating to the context of delivery were discussed in the groups and these are described below.

A clear message that came out of both rounds of cognitive testing was that whichever mode is adopted, it is essential that the context is set for why these questions are being asked. This finding echoes what was revealed in the focus groups. Trans and non-trans participants in the cognitive interviews felt that the following should be mentioned in a written introduction:

- Why the data are being collected;
- What the data will be used for;
- How data confidentiality and anonymity will be ensured at all times so no one apart from those who should have access will have access to their data and will be treated with respect at all times; and
- Ensure the data is protected under the Data Protection Act.

Place in which the data would be collected

It was agreed by trans people across the focus groups that privacy was required to complete the questions and that public places (for example, a reception desk at a doctor's surgery or police station) would be completely unacceptable. Conducting interviews at a person's home where other household members were present was also seen as problematic because of the difficult situations, hostile reactions or discriminatory consequences that could arise. Providing or allowing time to find a private space where people could complete a form was preferred.

6.3 Level of understanding about the purpose of asking

The level of understanding about the purpose of asking questions on gender identity for equality monitoring purposes varied considerably in the non-transgender and transgender groups; and some participants were still unclear about how data would be used in the context of the Public Sector Equality Duty, even after this was explained. People who had a greater understanding of equalities monitoring as a way to potentially reduce inequalities and promote equality were more sympathetic towards answering. By contrast those who did not understand the purpose of asking equalities monitoring questions in general were less likely to be sympathetic towards answering them, although issues related to the right to privacy about information perceived to be personal and sensitive was also intertwined with this view. Three main views about asking questions on gender identity emerged:

Such questions are potentially beneficial to transgender people and to society

Asking equalities monitoring questions was viewed positively as the 'right thing to do' because it might help to reduce discrimination and promote equality. Among both non-transgendered and transgender participants the discussion of gender identity questions that could be used to meet the equality duty, was seen as a progressive and welcome recognition of transgender people in society. Among non-transgender people this view tended to be held by younger people, people from minority ethnic groups and a gay participant. The transgender groups were divided over how beneficial equalities monitoring would be to them, although no clear groupings emerged in relation to this divide. It was noted that asking the questions, and asking them in appropriate language that indicated the questioner had an awareness of transgender people, was important in creating feelings of social recognition in society. It also made some transgender participants feel more positive about an organisation or service and more likely to cooperate with their equalities monitoring.

Such questions are intrusive but necessary

Although the questions felt intrusive to some participants, this was balanced with an acceptance that the information was needed to help to try to reduce inequality and

promote equality. This view was held among transgender and non-transgender participants and was often coupled with an acceptance that they would answer the questions provided they seemed relevant to the context in which they were being asked. Non-transgender people also expressed the view that they would get used to answering these questions over time as they became more familiar with them. They also expressed the view that this was the 'way things were going' in terms of the greater importance that was being placed on promoting equality and protecting minority or disadvantaged groups from discrimination.

Such questions are immaterial and intrusive

Some participants believed a person's identity should not be taken into consideration in employment or access to services and therefore participants did not understand why public bodies would need to know this information. Asking such questions was considered 'intrusive' and an 'invasion of privacy' and participants who held this view said they would refuse to answer the questions or that there should be a 'Prefer not to say option' for each question. Among some non-transgender participants this view was held because they felt their privacy was being invaded in general, although it tended to be held by older and white ethnic group participants. Among some transgender participants the view was held by people who had always considered themselves male or female and who felt they were being 'forced' or 'trapped' into revealing a personal history that they had left behind (these issues are discussed further in chapters 4 and 5).

Perceived risk of discrimination arising

There were trans and non-trans participants in the focus groups who feared discriminatory consequences from completing equalities monitoring forms. For trans participants there was the actual or feared experience of losing jobs, being denied jobs, hostile reactions and transphobic violence, or worse treatment in relation to a particular service. Although there were participants who felt that the Equality Act (2010) provided them some protection from discrimination and legal redress, others were more sceptical. There was also debate in one of the transgender focus groups about which transgender people would be protected. In this context reassurances

about anonymity and confidentiality in the collection, storage and use of data were even more important.

One concern from some non-transgender participants was that monitoring information could be used for positive discrimination against them because they are non-transgendered. This suggests that, in addition to reassurances of anonymity and confidentiality, this group will require basic information about the ways in which equalities monitoring data can and cannot be used to reduce discrimination and promote equality.

Relevance and meaningfulness of asking

Ensuring that the relevance of asking for information on sex and gender identity and explaining how it was intended that the data would be used was thought to be an important way of encouraging people to complete questions on gender identity. Transgender and non-transgender participants said they would be less sympathetic to completing a question on gender identity if they could not see its relevance to reducing discrimination in a particular context (for example, a survey of bin collection). Examples that were considered relevant by participants included accessing healthcare, if assured there would be no discrimination, and when addressing transphobic hate crime and discrimination. Explaining how equalities monitoring information might make a difference in all contexts would help increase the likelihood of completion. However, some transgender people felt that they would not identify themselves in small-scale surveys where the number of transgender people was unlikely to generate analytically useful information or make an actual difference to the delivery of a service (for example, one transgender participant questioned whether it would really make any difference if it was identified that he was the only transgender participant in a survey of local library users). This suggests that it might be more appropriate to ask questions on gender identity covering larger target population groups.

Compulsory or voluntary nature of the questions proposed

A group of transgender participants felt they could not answer the proposed questions or contribute to their refinement until they knew whether it would be compulsory or voluntary to answer them. In particular, there was a need to clarify the extent to which questions around sex at birth or description of identity at birth were asking for self-definition or legal definition, for example, on a person's birth certificate. Without such clarification there might be the implication that transgender people had answered 'fraudulently' or 'dishonestly', which would prevent them from answering because of possible perceived legal consequences (for example, in relation to pensions, taxation or insurance if a monitoring form were somehow compared to previous forms they had completed for these purposes since).

At the same time, there were concerns that model questions intended to be voluntary could be carried over into legal contexts for the purposes of insurance, tax or pensions where self-defined concepts of gender identity at birth would not necessarily apply. It would therefore be important for the Commission to state in which contexts such questions could be used; distinguishing voluntary questions on identity for equalities monitoring and other questions about sex or gender identity that must be answered 'factually' as a matter of law.

Being 'out' as transgender or having a history of being transgender

There were two completely opposite views among transgender participants about the extent to which they would be able to answer the questions 'honestly' and 'truthfully' in a way that indicated their transgender experience. The first, among participants who were 'out' about their history or experience of transgender and/ or identified as transgender, was that they would be happy to answer any questions that revealed a change between their birth sex and subsequent achievement of their gender identity as transgender or male/ female (including some people who held a GRC); this was provided they thought that doing so would be beneficial to transgender people and there would be no personal discriminatory consequences for them as a result. The reason for this view was that these participants wanted to demonstrate their existence as transgender people to make a political point that they were part of society.

The second view was that the participants had always been male or female and that any attempt to reveal their 'transgender' history through questions like the example ones would prevent them answering them. In particular, this group (which included some people holding GRCs and/ or people living in 'deep stealth') said they felt that they were being 'forced', 'tricked' or 'entrapped' into answering questions in ways that they did not want to. This also 'nullified' the effort and expense they had gone to in order to achieve their current identity (for example, paying for a legal change of name or for a GRC). While some of this group said they did not want to identify themselves as 'trans' and would always answer male or female to such questions; others said there were certain circumstances in which they might identify as having a history or experience of transgender. These included where:

- clear information was given about how their 'transgender' history and experience would be protected, involving complete anonymity and confidentiality of the data collected in line with section 22 of the Gender Recognition Act (2004),^{iv}
- it was clear that answering the question would help reduce discrimination against transgender people;
- the questions did not try to 'pin them down' into answering questions about their sex on their birth certificate, now or in the past, that would make them feel 'uncomfortable' and would potentially be illegal;
- the questions asked were broad in the way they asked for details of sex, gender or gender identity at birth so that they allowed them to *choose* whether they wanted to reveal their 'transgender' history rather than feeling 'tricked' or 'forced' into doing so. (Having a 'Prefer not to say option' was also thought to indicate that whether or not to answer was a choice in a way that might make some transgender people more likely to reveal their history).

Anonymity and confidentiality of responses

The importance of confidentiality of information tended to be presumed in the non-transgender groups but was still seen as an important requirement to answer questions on gender identity because of the personal nature of the information involved. Nonetheless, it was less of an issue for the non-transgender participants

than the transgender ones, because potential discriminatory consequences were not thought to arise from leaked information about their sex or gender identity.

By comparison, participants in the transgender groups required much more information about the level of confidentiality of data and anonymity in the way data would be collected and received before they could consider answering questions. Although some transgender people who were 'out' and politically active said they 'did not care who knew' they were transgender, others had deep concerns about the reactions they would receive and the discrimination they might face if their identity or experience was revealed.

In order for all or most transgender people to answer questions on gender identity, transgender participants felt that equalities monitoring or surveying needed to be seen to be conducted to the highest professional standards; with specific information about who would and would not see the information returned and how data collected would be handled in line with the Data Protection Act *and* the Gender Recognition Act. Indeed, our participants indicated that they sought information about how their anonymity and confidentiality would be protected in the collection of data as well as for professionalism, credibility and evidence that people collecting data were meeting professional standards and legal requirements. Although some participants were sceptical about the legal protection they had (saying that few organisations collecting equalities monitoring data would meet the criteria of the GRA), others felt reassured that this – and the Data Protection Act – provided them with a legal 'remedy'. A particular issue of note in order for transgender people to answer questions on gender identity was that equalities monitoring forms needed to be separated from personal details (for example, on application forms, work surveys, surveys of service) at the point of completion and returned to different people or in others ways in which they could not be re-linked.

6.4 Mode of delivery

Focus group participants and cognitive interview participants were asked about a number of different modes of administration of the questions in which equalities

monitoring data or surveys data could be collected; their preferences for particular modes; and the reasons that informed these preferences.

Focus group participants tended to say that they would prefer paper self completion for its perceived greater privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. Cognitive interviews revealed that some participants preferred an online self completion for its ease, privacy and confidentiality. Other participants preferred face-to-face interviews because they felt they are a more personal way to collect the information if the interviewer is respectful.

Table 13 below presents the findings from the focus group and both rounds of testing on mode.

Table 13 Findings on the mode of administration from the focus groups and both rounds of cognitive testing

		Focus group	Cognitive interviews
Mode	Participant Characteristic	Comments regarding each mode	
Online	▪ Trans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerned that the information could be traced to their personal computer, workstation or email address. ▪ Automatic routing could ‘close down’ questions which are actually relevant to them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anonymity can be ensured ▪ This is the only mode the participant would feel comfortable answering these questions.
	<i>Trans and Non-Trans</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most secure/private mode to answer these questions. ▪ Easiest mode/most convenient/no paper work ▪ Can fill it in at one’s own convenience

		Focus group	Cognitive interviews
Mode	Participant Characteristic	Comments regarding each mode	
Paper	<i>Trans and Non-Trans</i>	Preferred mode to ask these questions because of the perceived greater privacy, anonymity and confidentiality it can provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No findings reported in either round
Any self completion	<i>Trans</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids the danger of personal information being overheard by others which could result in hostile reactions or discriminatory consequences for a Trans person Saves the embarrassment of answering the interviewer's questions 	
	<i>Trans and Non-Trans</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable because they don't have to talk about such sensitive and private matters openly Provides greater confidence and anonymity and More time to consider responses More practical and cost effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anonymity and privacy can be ensured

		Focus group	Cognitive interviews
Mode	Participant Characteristic	Comments regarding each mode	
Face-to-Face	<i>Trans</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptable only to a rare group of participants participating in the focus groups. There were participants who considered this mode a non-starter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good way to ask these questions as it is more personal and the interviewer can see the participant and vice versa. Can be difficult if you feel the interviewer is disrespecting you or judging you. Would only do it face-to-face
	<i>Trans and Non-Trans</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better than the phone. Allows complex topics such as gender identity to be explained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showcards would be great especially if the interviewer really does not know your answer.
Telephone	<i>Trans</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other modes fine but not by the phone. Feel obliged to answer the questions quickly. Would not answer the questions on the phone, because the voice would 'give it away'. Impersonal and cannot explain to the interviewer like you can in a face-to-face.
	<i>Trans and Non-Trans</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncomfortable/too personal to answer on the phone Difficult for disabled people

		Focus group	Cognitive interviews
Mode	Participant Characteristic	Comments regarding each mode	
			who could benefit from visual cues
	<i>Non Trans</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficult to follow pronunciation/ emphasis/ ▪ Don't know who you are talking too
Interviewer administered	<i>Trans and Non-Trans</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unacceptable to ask these questions when it can be ascertained by their appearance. ▪ Could only work if prior appointments are made and clearly explaining why the data was being collected, how it would be used to promote equality and give a warning before a sensitive question is asked. 	

7 Conclusions, reflections and lessons learnt

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter we outline the recommended questions, including what they capture, and points to consider from the project findings.

7.2 Recommended questions

We would advise that an introductory text in writing is provided before these questions are asked to provide an explanation of the purpose, to encourage participation and to gain participants’ trust to answer the questions honestly. This should explain why the data are being collected, how the data will be protected under the Data Protection Act, and how respect of the participants’ answers will be ensured by the organisation, for example confidentiality and anonymity ensured throughout. There was concern raised by some trans participants that this may not be observed, especially in small firms and in the private sector organisations.

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
<p>Q1 At birth were you described as...</p> <p><i>Please tick one option</i></p> <p>Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Intersex <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>a) We would recommend that this question is asked first and a clear explanation is given for collecting the information. Confidentiality and anonymity should be assured (where possible).</p> <p>b) This question captures the sex ascribed to individuals at birth. A small number of individuals are described as intersex at birth, rather than male or female, therefore this option should be included. The sensitivity of the question requires a ‘prefer not to say’ option. This question, when used in</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
	<p>combination with question 2, will allow for a transgender history and gender identity to be captured.</p> <p>c) Testing did reveal that there could be a group of trans participants who would not be comfortable answering a question like this in <i>any</i> monitoring form because they either do not have to reveal this identity, because they are legally protected from doing so (hold a GRC certificate), or feel uncomfortable revealing this. There will always be a group of participants who will not want to reveal this information.</p>
<p>Q2 Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?</p> <p><i>Please tick one option</i></p> <p>Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>In another way: <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>	<p>a) This question captures the identity of individuals now. The insertion of the ‘in another way’ option was considered to be important for those individuals who may not think of themselves as male or female, and this terminology is preferred to the usual option ‘other’. This question, when used in combination with question 1, will allow for a transgender history and gender identity to be captured.</p> <p>c) Testing found that the terms ‘male’ and ‘female’ are less problematic than ‘man’ and ‘woman’ because the former are seen as biological facts and not socially constructed like the latter terms. Additionally, despite concerns raised in the focus groups around the potential confusion of using traditional sex</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
	<p>categories when asking how one describes themselves (i.e. about gender), evidence from cognitive interviews suggests that the categories ‘male’ and ‘female’ do work, and they work well for both trans and non-trans individuals.</p> <p>c) Where there is limited space in a form or questionnaire, or where the information requirements do not need to capture the legal definition of gender reassignment, this question and question 1 are adequate for capturing a transgender history and gender identity.</p> <p>However there will be people with a transgender identity and/or history who will not disclose it through questions 1 and 2, either because they hold a GRC or because they simply do not wish to. A reliance on these two questions alone may therefore result in underestimation.</p>
<p>Q3 Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth to the gender you identify with, or do you intend to?</p> <p>(This could include changing your name, wearing different clothes taking hormones or having any gender reassignment surgery).</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> → Please go to Q4</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> → End.</p>	<p>a) Question 3 enables a better capture of gender reassignment in line with the definition protected by the 2010 Equality Act., in that it refers to the process. We recommend this question is used in combination with Q4, which will enable capture of where individuals are in the process.</p> <p>b) Non-trans participants understood the question and this will end their set of answers.</p> <p>However there will still always be trans</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
	people who will choose not to answer this question (see above).
<p>Q4 Continuing to think about these examples, which of the following options best applies to you?</p> <p><i>Please tick one option</i></p> <p>I am thinking about going through this process <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am currently going through this process <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have already been through this process <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have been through this process, then changed back <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>a) Question 4 only works in conjunction with question 3, as it refers to the examples used in the previous question. Transgender individuals will be routed to question 4. Question 4 enables a better capture of where individuals are in the process, in line with the definition of gender reassignment protected by the 2010 Equality Act. The options elicit intention to, currently undergoing, and having gone through gender reassignment (as defined by the individual).</p> <p>b)The 'prefer not to say' option was recommended by participants. The 'none of the above' answer option gives participants the opportunity to write in an alternative response if they wish to.</p>

Suggested questions	Data captured/Recommendations
<p>Q5 Which of the following describes how you think of yourself? <i>Tick all that apply</i></p> <p>Trans man <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Trans woman <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Transsexual person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Gender variant person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Cross dressing person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Transvestite person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Intersex person <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>In another way: <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>a) This question will allow those collecting this information to monitor the different gender identities in the trans population.</p> <p>b) We would advise that where possible, this question is included since it provides an opportunity for people to express themselves in the way that they want to.</p> <p>c) The ‘prefer not to say’ option was recommended by participants, and the option to self-define ‘in another way’. The use of ‘person’ enables a human identity, rather than simply a category. The options ‘transvestite’ and ‘cross dresser’ were recommended separately as they can be different identities, as were the options to define as a ‘trans man’ or ‘trans woman’. The list of answers is not exhaustive, but represents most forms of identity and self identity, without becoming onerously long.</p>

7.3 Reflections and lessons learnt

The stakeholders of this research have provided some very useful input which has not only informed the research but has also been extremely valuable to the Commission in thinking about how it promotes equality and advises on equalities monitoring.

The impressive response that we had to the call for volunteers suggests that the efforts made to contact trans people across the country had been successful. Additionally a good mix of volunteers in terms of geographical location, and individual

characteristics was observed which allowed us to ensure that we invited participants to focus groups and participants for interviews who represented different kinds of transgender people in terms of for example, their identity, age or transitioning status. The exact composition of the samples for each stage of the research can be found in chapter 2.

Those in the monitoring role must recognise that there will always be trans people who will never reveal their trans history, and many have legal protection so that they are not required to do so in any circumstances. Much needs to be done in raising awareness of why trans monitoring is taking place and how the data are to be used and stored.

Appendices

Appendix A: Questions tested in Round 1

VERSION 1	VERSION 2	VERSION 3
<p>1.1) Would you describe yourself as a...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Man, 2. Woman 3. In some other way (please specify) <p>ALL GO TO QU 2</p>	<p>2.1) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. In another way <p>ALL GO TO QU 2</p>	<p>3.1) At birth were you described as...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Intersex <p>ALL GO TO QU 2</p>
<p>1.2) and at birth were you described as...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. Intersex 4. I prefer not to say 	<p>2.2) and at birth were you described as...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male 2. Female 3. I prefer not to say <p>GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender</p>	<p>3.2) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a man, 2. As a woman 3. In some other way
	<p>2.3) Which of the following best describes you? (tick all that apply)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transgender man 2. Transgender woman 3. Gender variant person 4. Cross-dressing person 5. Intersex person 6. In another way (please 	<p>3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, or have you already moved, from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, for example changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes → go to 3.4 2. No → end

	specify)	
		<p>3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?</p> <p>Please tick one option</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am thinking about going through these stages 2. I am currently going through these stages 3. I have already been through these stages 4. I have been through these stages, but then transitioned back <p>I am not currently thinking of going through any of these stages</p>
		<p>3.5) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender? (tick all that apply)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transgender man 2. Transgender woman 3. Gender variant person 4. Cross-dressing person 5. Intersex person 6. In some other way (please specify) <p>None of the above</p>

Appendix B: Questions tested in Round 2

New changes introduced since round 1 are shown in red font below

Version 1	Version 2
<p>Q1 (New1.1) At birth, were you described as....</p> <p>Please tick one option</p> <p>1. Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. Intersex <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>4. I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1 (New2.1) At birth, were you described as....</p> <p>Please tick one option</p> <p>1. Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. I prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Q2 (New1.2) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?</p> <p>Please tick one option</p> <p>1. Male <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. In another way <input type="checkbox"/>: _____</p>	<p>Q2 (New2.2) Which of the following describes how you think of your gender?</p> <p>Please tick one option</p> <p>1. Man <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Woman <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. In another way <input type="checkbox"/>: _____</p>
<p>Q3. (Original 3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, are you currently moving or have you already moved from your birth sex to the gender you identify with?</p> <p>(This could include changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes → Please go to Q4 • No → End <p>Q4 (Original 3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about going through, or have already been through, to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with,</p>	<p>Q3. (NEW 3.3) Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth, or do you intend to?</p> <p>(For example how you present yourself, taking hormones, changing your name or having surgery?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes → Please go to Q4 2. No → END <p>Q4. (NEW2.4) Which of the following options best applies to you?</p>

which of the following options best applies to you?

Please tick one option

1. I am thinking about going through these stages
2. I am currently going through these stages
3. I have already been through these stages
4. I have been through all or some of these stages, but then transitioned back
5. I am not currently thinking of going through any of these stages

Please tick one option

1. I am thinking about going through this process
2. I am currently going through this process
3. I have already been through this process
4. I have been through this process, then changed back
5. None of the above _____

Q5 (New 2.5) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

Tick all that apply

1. Trans man
2. Trans woman
3. Transsexual person
4. Gender variant person
5. Cross dressing/transvestite person
6. Intersex person
7. In another way: _____
8. I prefer not to say

Appendix C: Trans and Non-trans Probe Sheets used in Round 1

See page 140

The Main Objectives for the interview (MG)

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To examine participant's understanding of the new survey questions (trans and non trans) To explore whether the new survey questions capture full information (i.e. answer categories are adequate). To examine issues of potential sensitivity in the survey context. To explore whether participants understand the instructions and routing of the paper instrument. |
|---|

Stage one introduction

- Introduce yourself, **the National Centre, and the study**
- This study is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), an independent research institute and registered charity, on behalf of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (COMMISSION) to develop questions on gender identity which can be used by different public bodies.
- As a result of the Equality Act introduced in 2010, it is likely that bodies such as public sector employers, government departments, local councils and the National Health Service, etc. will be expected to regularly publish data on their workforce and service users from April 2011. To be able to do this they will need a question, or questions on gender identity. Currently, in Britain, there has been limited progress in developing such a question or questions. A number of surveys and workforce monitoring systems have attempted to include a question on gender identity, but can sometimes confuse issues of sex, gender and sexual orientation in the questions.
- The purpose of this research is to develop a question or questions which public bodies can confidentially use to measure the gender identity of their work force and or service users. These questions will need to be understood and answered by people who are non-transgender and transgender. The term 'transgender' is often used as umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex, including transsexual people (those who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their acquired gender), transvestite/cross-dressing people, and those who do not identify as male or female.
- Explain that the questions could be asked in a face-to-face interview, or on the phone on in a self completion form. Explain that we are currently testing the questions in a self completion as feedback from an earlier round of focus groups showed a preference for this by some.
- Explain that you will be giving them a self completion q'aire which you would like them to answer, and at specific points, you will ask them some questions about how they are finding the questions. **Explain that we are testing 3 versions of the Qs and they will be asked all 3.**
- Explain that both transgender and non-trans gender people are being interviewed for this study; and that it is only by trying out the questions with a range of people that we will be able to see how acceptable these questions are and whether the questions are working as intended.
- Explain that is not necessary to be knowledgeable about gender identity or transgender issues.
- Explain we are not so much interested in the answers they give but **how they understand the questions** and the process by which they arrive at their answers. **Stress there are no right or wrong answers** and this **isn't a test**. We are just trying to explore if the questions work as the researchers intend. Explain if they have any difficulty answering the questions it shows the questions need to be improved. Explain they do not have to answer any question they don't want to.
- **Stress the confidentiality of the process**; all the findings will be reported anonymously. The participants name will not be on the questionnaire or any of the notes you write up. Please make sure they understand this.
- Remind them that the interview will last around 30 minutes.
- Explain that you will be recording the interview so that you don't have to make lots of notes during the interview. Check this is OK with the participant. If any:
 - **trans Rs** ask, who will have access to the recording, tell them that **only yourself and Michelle Gray** only will have access. The recordings at all times will be kept securely, so encrypted digital recorders, and encrypted and password protected files and will be destroyed at the end of the project (April 2011).
- Ask whether they have any questions before you start.

Name of Interviewer: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Serial Number: _____ (e.g. P3070_MB101/ KJ101)_____

Stage Two: Think Aloud

Aim: To explain the Think Aloud process.

- Explain the 'Think aloud' technique using a scenario of your choice (the windows example is given below but you may wish to use an alternative) to encourage participants who feel comfortable thinking aloud to do so. For this study we will be relying on probes to reveal how the self completion questions have worked.

Windows example

Explain to your participant that you would like them to talk you through what they are thinking about at each question as they work through the paper questionnaire if they feel comfortable doing so. Run through the windows example with them giving a demonstration - 'How many windows are there in your home?' and ask them to describe what they are thinking as they work through their answer.

Stage Three: Setting the scene for testing four options of the questions on a self completion instrument.

Aims:

- **To gain consent to observe the participant fill in the questionnaire.**
- **To note any difficulties you observe so you can probe on them after each option is completed.**
- Explain that we are testing **three** versions of questions, which we refer to as option 1, option 2 and so on.
- Explain that you would like them to answer the questions for each version on the self-completion q'aire which you will give to them. After they have answered the questions in one version you will ask them how they found the questions in that version and then move to the next version.
- Explain that the q'aire hasn't been professionally designed and that the focus of testing is to get the wording correct.
- Give the participant the option 1 self completion q'aire and ask them to fill it in.
- If appropriate observe how they go about filling the in questionnaire. You may wish to consider the following:
 - Do they read the instructions?
 - Do they follow the routing/instructions correctly?
 - Do they change their survey answers at all?
 - Do they leave any questions blank?
 - Did they hesitate at any questions?
- **Ask the participant to stop filling in the questionnaire after they have completed each option. So you will start by asking them to fill in the questions in option 1.**
 - **Option 1 self completion front page is printed on white paper**
 - **Option 2 self completion front page is printed on green paper**
 - **Option 3 self completion front page is printed on yellow paper**

Stage Four: Specific Question by Question Probing

Aims:

- To get general feedback on the questions in each option.
- To explore whether participants understood the instructions and routing.
- Use the probes below and your own probes (based on earlier observations and the think aloud) to explore the issues above.

OPTION 1: TESTING 2 QUESTIONS IN THIS VERSION

1) (1.1) Would you describe yourself as a...

1. Man,
2. Woman
3. in some other way (please specify)

2) (1.2) ..and at birth were you described as...

1. Male
2. Female
3. Intersex
4. I prefer not to say

Q1 and Q2 in option 1

- To explore how option 1 worked overall especially looking at issues around sensitivity and whether there are any Q order effects.
- How do Rs feel about these two Qs following on from each other?
- Do Rs feel the 2 Qs are asking about the same things in different ways?
- Are there particular sensitivity issues raised by these Qs being asked together?
- Are there any other issues raised by these Qs being asked together?

Q1

- To measure how the R views their gender.
- Does this Q allow Rs to describe their GENDER satisfactorily both trans and non-trans?
- Can non-transgender people answer this Q correctly (even if they are confused e.g. by answer option 3)?

Q2

- To measure R's sex at birth
- How do transgender Rs feel about this Q.? Are they comfortable to answer a Q asking about their sex at birth?
- How do non-transgender Rs feel about this Q?

Overall views on option 1

- How did you find these two questions?
- Was there anything you weren't sure about when you answered these 2 Qs? What was this?/ Were these? (Explore for overlap)

Q1 (1.1) Probes

To explore the R's Q and A process

- How did you decide on your answer? How easy or difficult was this? Why?
- *Explore* how R has understood and used the answer options.
- What did you understand by 'describe yourself as a' in this question?
- In your own words, what do you think this question is getting at, or asking?
- What did you understand by 'in some other way' in this question? *Probe for examples if appropriate*
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?
- *OBSERVATION*- Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so.

Q2 (1.2) Probes

To explore the R's Q and A process

- In your own words what do you think this question is asking?
- How did you decide on your answer?
- Was there anything that you weren't sure about or uncomfortable with when you answered this question? *What was this/were these? Explore how this impacted on how the R answered the Q.*
- Do any of the answer options overlap or do they mean different things?
If not covered in an earlier probe for this question
- In what circumstances do you think 'I prefer not to say' could be used?
- What did you understand by intersex at this Q?
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why explore in what circumstances/situations?

OPTION 2: TESTING 3 QUESTIONS IN THIS VERSION

GIVE Rs OPTION 2's Q'AIRE AND ASK R TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS
(Option 2 self completion has a front cover printed on green paper)

1) (2.1) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself...

1. Male,
2. Female
3. in another way

2) (2.2) and at birth were you described as...

1. Male
2. Female
3. I prefer not to say

GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender.

2) (2.3) Which of the following best describes you?

(tick all that apply)

1. Transgender man
2. Transgender woman
3. Gender variant person
4. Cross-dressing person
5. Intersex person
6. In another way (please specify)

Q1,2 and 3 in version 2

- To explore how option 2's Qs worked overall especially looking at issues around sensitivity and whether there are any Q order effects.
- How do non-trans gender participants feel about Q1 and Q2 following on from each other – and if misrouted what were there thoughts on the follow up Q? Did they think the Qs overlapped? Why?
- How do transgender participants feel about the three Qs in option 2. Did they answer Q3? Why? Why not?
- Are there particular sensitivity issues raised by these Qs being asked together?
- Are there other issues raised by these Qs being asked together?

Q1.(2.1)

- To measure how the R views their sex.
- Does this Q allow transgender people to describe their sex satisfactorily?
- Can non-transgender people answer this Q correctly (even if they are confused e.g. by answer option 3)?

Q2.(2.2)

- To measure R's sex at birth
- How do transgender Rs feel about this Q.? Are they comfortable to answer a Q asking about their sex at birth?
- How do non-transgender Rs feel about this Q? (Is it repetitive? What would they do if asked this Q)
- Explore how R understood the routing instructions and what they did.

Q3.(2.3)

- To measure transgender identity

- To explore understanding of the Q and how the answer options work.
- To explore sensitivity of the Q wording and the answer options.

Overall views on option 2

- Overall, how did you find these 2/3 questions to answer?
- How easy or difficult did you find being asked about how you describe yourself followed by how you were described at birth?
- Did you think the first two questions (Q1 and Q2 in this version) were asking about 2 separate things or were they asking about the same thing?
- Was there anything you weren't sure about or uncomfortable with when you answered these Qs? What was this/were these? *Probe fully*
- How easy or difficult did you find it to follow the instructions in this version?
- Were there any Qs you would not answer if you were asked for example on a monitoring form? Why?

Q1 (Q2.1) Probes

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'best describes how you think of yourself' in this question?
- How did you decide on your answer to Q1 (in this version)? How easy or difficult was this?
- What do you understand by 'in another way' when answering this question? *Probe for examples if appropriate*
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?
- *OBSERVATION*- Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so.

Q2 (Q2.2) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'and at birth were you described as' in this question?
- In what circumstances do you think people may select 'I prefer not to say'? *Probe for examples*
- How easy or difficult was it to decide on an answer? *Explore how R decided on their answer*

If not covered by an earlier probe at this question

- Do any of the answer options overlap or do they mean different things?

To explore how the routing instruction worked

- *Explore* if R noticed the instruction? If no, ask the R to read the instruction.
- In your own words what do you think this instruction is asking?
- Please talk me through why you decided/decided not to answer the next Q, Q3 (Q2.3)?

Q3 (Q2.3) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'which of the following best describes you'?
- How easy or difficult was it to decide on your answer? Why?
- Were there any answer options that you felt were inappropriate? Which ones? Why?
- How do you think 'In another way (please specify)' could be used at this question?
- Do any of the answer options overlap or do they all mean different things?
- Are there any options that are missing from this list?
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?

OBSERVATION- Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so

OPTION 3: TESTING 5 QUESTIONS IN THIS VERSION

GIVE Rs OPTION 3's Q'AIRE AND ASK R TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS (Option 3 self completion has a front cover printed on yellow paper)

1) (3.1) At birth were you described as...

1. Male
2. Female
3. Intersex

2) (3.2) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?

1. As a man,
2. As a woman
3. In some other way

3) (3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, or have you already moved, from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, for example changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery?

1. Yes → **go to 4** (3.4)
2. No → end

4) (3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Please tick one option

5. I am thinking about going through these stages
6. I am currently going through these stages
7. I have already been through these stages
8. I have been through these stages, but then transitioned back
5. I am not currently thinking of going through any of these stages

5) (3.3) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?

(tick all that apply)

1. Transgender man
2. Transgender woman
3. Gender variant person
4. Cross-dressing person
5. Intersex person
6. In some other way (please specify)
7. None of the above

Q1,2,3,4 and 5 in version 3 (Q3.1, Q3.2, Q3.3, Q3.4 and Q3.5)

- To explore how option 3 works overall especially looking at issues around sensitivity and whether there are any Q order effects.
- How do non-trans gender participants feel about Q1, Q2 and Q3 in this version following on from each other – and if misrouted what were there thoughts on the follow up Qs? Did they think Q1 and 2 overlapped? Why?
- How do transgender participants feel about the Qs in option 3? Were there any Qs which were consider too intrusive for them to answer? If yes why? If no why not?
- Are there particular sensitivity issues raised by these Qs being asked together?
- Are there other issues raised by these Qs being asked together?

Q1. (Q3.1)

- To measure R's sex at birth
- How do transgender Rs feel about this Q.? Are they comfortable to answer a Q asking about their sex at birth?
- How do non-transgender Rs feel about this Q?

Q2 (3.2)

- To measure how the R views their gender.
- Does this Q allow transgender people to describe their GENDER satisfactorily?
- Can non-transgender people answer this Q correctly (even if they are confused e.g. by answer option 3)?
- Explore how R understood the routing instructions and what they did.

Q3 (3.3)

- To measure thoughts about transitioning and actual transition
- How do non transgender R feel about this question – will they answer it
- To examine whether this Q works as attended amongst non-transgender participants.
- Does the Q filter Rs correctly to Q4 (3.4)

Q4 (3.4)

- To measure if the R has thought about or undergone some move from their birth sex to the gender they identify with
- To explore how the answer options work
- To explore sensitivity of the Q wording and the answer options.

Q4 (3.5)

- To measure the legal definitions of transgender identity
- To explore sensitivity and acceptability of answering this Q (wording and answer options)

Overall views on option 3

- How did you find these questions to answer? *Explore* ease and acceptability.
- How easy or difficult did you find being asked about how you were described at birth and then about how you think about your gender?
- How easy or difficult did you find it to follow the routing instructions in this version?

Q1: At birth were you described as.....

Q1 (3.1) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- How easy or difficult was it to decide on an answer? Explore reasons – if difficult explore why including issues around sensitivity describing sex at birth *if appropriate*.
- What did 'intersex' mean to you at this question?

Q2: Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?..

Q2 (3.2) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did 'gender' mean to you at this question?
- How did you decide on your answer to Q2 (in this version)? How easy or difficult was this?
- Why do you think people may use 'in some other way' when answering this question? *Probe for examples if appropriate*
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?
- *OBSERVATION-* Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so.

Q3: Have you ever thought about moving, or have you already moved, from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, for example changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery?

Q3 (3.3) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- In your own words what do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult did you find this question? Explore if appropriate why this was difficult.
- Was there anything you weren't sure whether to include when you answered this question? How did you decide to include/exclude this?
If not covered by an earlier probe
- How did you feel about answering this question?
- Would you answer this question if you were asked on a monitoring form? Explore why and why not.

Q4: Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Q4 (3.4) Probes Explore sensitively

- What did you understand by 'Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with' at this question?
- How easy or difficult was it for you to answer this question? *Why? If appropriate* Was there anything that you weren't sure whether to include or exclude when you answered this question?
- Was there any answer options that you weren't sure whether to select? If yes How did you decide on your answer?
- Was there any wording or phrasing that you felt was inappropriate in the question and in the answer options?
- How would you feel about answering a question like this on a monitoring form?

If not covered by the above probes

- The answer options refer to going through these stages, what did you understand this to mean, at this question?
- *OBSERVATION-* Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so *if appropriate.*

Q5: Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?
(tick all that apply)

Q5 (3.5) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'which of the following best describes how you think of your gender' in the context of this question? Examples?
- How did you go about answering this question? How easy or difficult was this? *Why?*

If not covered by the above probes

- How did you find the answer options at this question? Were there any that you didn't like? Were there any that you liked seeing listed?
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? *Why?*
- *OBSERVATION-* Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so *if appropriate.*

Stage Five: Version Preference

- Thinking back over the three versions of the questions you answered, please rank option 1, 2 and 3 in the order of your preference, starting with the one you preferred the most please.
- *Explore* why R preferred this version **the most**
- Where there aspects in any of the other options which you liked? What were these?
- *Explore* why R preferred this version **the least**

- Was there any version of the questions which you would definitely not answer if you were asked in a monitoring form? Why? Explore use in different contexts. .

Stage Six: Consideration of mode and the context of delivery (if time allows)

Explore R's

- Experiences of filling in similar questions in the past, if any?
- Description of experiences and contexts
- Acceptability of asking the question for them

- Comfort answering the different questions if:
 - Self completed online
 - Interviewer administered – hearing the Qs out aloud/ at home/ presence of others
 - By telephone
 - Compared to the mode that we are currently testing the questions in i.e. self completed on paper
- F2F/telephone – given a showcard and then stating the number or letter of the answer would this be easier/more comfortable/still sensitive

- Other comments on the Qs AND OR the mode

End of interview:

THANK YOUR PARTICIPANT

ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THEY MAY HAVE AND

REASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY.

Remember to give the £10 High Street Voucher and thank you letter

The Main Objectives for the interview (for Meera’s population)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To examine participant’s understanding of the new survey questions (trans and non trans) To explore whether the new survey questions capture full information (i.e. answer categories are adequate).To examine issues of potential sensitivity in the survey context. To explore whether participants understand the instructions and routing of the paper instrument.
Stage one introduction

- Introduce yourself, **the National Centre, and the study**
- This study is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), an independent research institute and registered charity, on behalf of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (COMMISSION) to develop questions on gender identity which can be used by different public bodies.
- The purpose of this research is to develop a question or questions which public bodies can confidentially use to measure the gender identity of their work force and or service users.
- Explain that the questions could be asked in a face-to-face interview, or on the phone on in a self completion form. Explain that we are currently testing the questions in a self completion as feedback from an earlier round of focus groups showed a preference for this by some people.
- Explain that you will be giving them a self completion q’aire which you would like them to answer, and at specific points, you will ask them some questions about how they are finding the questions.
- **Explain that we are testing 3 versions of the Qs and they will be asked all 3.**
- .Explain that is not necessary to be knowledgeable about gender identity issues.
- Explain we are not so much interested in the answers they give but **how they understand the questions** and the process by which they arrive at their answers. **Stress there are no right or wrong answers** and this **isn’t a test**. We are just trying to explore if the questions work as the researchers intend. Explain if they have any difficulty answering the questions it shows the questions need to be improved. Explain they do not have to answer any question they don’t want to.
- **Stress the confidentiality of the process**; all the findings will be reported anonymously. The participants name will not be on the questionnaire or any of the notes you write up. Please make sure they understand this.
- Remind them that the interview will last around 30 minutes.
- Explain that you will be recording the interview so that you don’t have to make lots of notes during the interview. Check this is OK with the participant. If they ask who will have access to the recording, tell them that only the small research team at the institute and yourself will, and that recordings are stored securely i.e. they are password protected.
- Ask whether they have any questions before you start.

Name of Interviewer: _____ Date of Interview: _____ Serial Number: _____ (e.g. P3070_MB101/ KJ101)____
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Stage Two: Think Aloud

Aim: To explain the Think Aloud process.

- Explain the 'Think aloud' technique using a scenario of your choice (the windows example is given below but you may wish to use an alternative) to encourage participants who feel comfortable thinking aloud to do so. For this study we will be relying on probes to reveal how the self completion questions have worked.

Windows example

Explain to your participant that you would like them to talk you through what they are thinking about at each question as they work through the paper questionnaire if they feel comfortable doing so. Run through the windows example with them giving a demonstration - 'How many windows are there in your home?' and ask them to describe what they are thinking as they work through their answer.

Stage Three: Setting the scene for testing four options of the questions on a self completion instrument.

Aims:

- **To gain consent to observe the participant fill in the questionnaire.**
- **To note any difficulties you observe so you can probe on them after each option is completed.**
- Explain that we are testing **three** versions of questions, which we refer to as option 1, option 2 and so on.
- Explain that you would like them to answer the questions for each version on the self-completion q'aire which you will give to them. After they have answered the questions in one version you will ask them how they found the questions in that version and then move to the next version.
- Explain that the q'aire hasn't been professionally designed and that the focus of testing is to get the wording correct.
- Give the participant the option 1 self completion q'aire and ask them to fill it in.
- If appropriate observe how they go about filling the in questionnaire. You may wish to consider the following:
 - Do they read the instructions?
 - Do they follow the routing/instructions correctly?
 - Do they change their survey answers at all?
 - Do they leave any questions blank?
 - Did they hesitate at any questions?
- **Ask the participant to stop filling in the questionnaire after they have completed each option. So you will start by asking them to fill in the questions in option 1.**
 - **Option 1 self completion front page is printed on white paper**
 - **Option 2 self completion front page is printed on green paper**
 - **Option 3 self completion front page is printed on yellow paper**

Stage Four: Specific Question by Question Probing

Aims:

- To get general feedback on the questions in each option.
- To explore whether participants understood the instructions and routing.
- Use the probes below and your own probes (based on earlier observations and the think aloud) to explore the issues above.

OPTION 1: TESTING 2 QUESTIONS IN THIS VERSION

1) (1.1) Would you describe yourself as a...

4. Man,
5. Woman
6. in some other way (please specify)

2) (1.2) ..and at birth were you described as...

5. Male
6. Female
7. Intersex
8. I prefer not to say

Q1 and Q2 in option 1

- To explore how option 1 worked overall especially looking at issues around sensitivity and whether there are any Q order effects.
- How do Rs feel about these two Qs following on from each other?
- Do Rs feel the 2 Qs are asking about the same things in different ways?
- Are there particular sensitivity issues raised by these Qs being asked together?
- Are there any other issues raised by these Qs being asked together?

Q1

- To measure how the R views their gender.
- Does this Q allow Rs to describe their GENDER satisfactorily both trans and non-trans?
- Can non-transgender people answer this Q correctly (even if they are confused e.g. by answer option 3)?

Q2

- To measure R's sex at birth
- How do Transgender Rs feel about this Q.? Are they comfortable to answer a Q asking about their sex at birth?
- How do non-transgender Rs feel about this Q?

Overall views on option 1

- How did you find these two questions?
- Was there anything you weren't sure about when you answered these 2 Qs? What was this?/ Were these? (Explore for overlap)

Q1 (1.1) Probes

To explore the R's Q and A process

- How did you decide on your answer? How easy or difficult was this? Why?
- *Explore* how R has understood and used the answer options.
- What did you understand by 'describe yourself as a' in this question?
- In your own words, what do you think this question is getting at, or asking?
- What did you understand by 'in some other way' in this question? *Probe for examples if appropriate*
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?

- *OBSERVATION*- Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so.

Q2 (1.2) Probes

To explore the R's Q and A process

- In your own words what do you think this question is asking?
- How did you decide on your answer?
- Was there anything that you weren't sure about or uncomfortable with when you answered this question? *What was this/were these? Explore how this impacted on how the R answered the Q.*
- Do any of the answer options overlap or do they mean different things?
If not covered in an earlier probe for this question
- In what circumstances do you think 'I prefer not to say' could be used?
- What did you understand by intersex at this Q?
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why explore in what circumstances/situations?

OPTION 2: TESTING 3 QUESTIONS IN THIS VERSION

GIVE Rs OPTION 2's Q'AIRE AND ASK R TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS
(Option 2 self completion has a front cover printed on green paper)

1) (2.1) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself...

4. Male,
5. Female
6. in another way

2) (2.2) and at birth were you described as...

4. Male
5. Female
6. I prefer not to say

GO TO QUESTION 3 if questions 1 and 2 did not allow you to fully describe your gender.

2) (2.3) Which of the following best describes you?

(tick all that apply)

7. Transgender man
8. Transgender woman
9. Gender variant person
10. Cross-dressing person
11. Intersex person
12. In another way (please specify)

Q1, 2 and 3 in version 2

- To explore how option 2's Qs worked overall especially looking at issues around sensitivity and whether there are any Q order effects.
- How do non-transgender participants feel about Q1 and Q2 following on from each other – and if misrouted what were their thoughts on the follow up Q? Did they think the Qs overlapped? Why?
- How do transgender participants feel about the three Qs in option 2. Did they answer Q3? Why? Why not?
- Are there particular sensitivity issues raised by these Qs being asked together?
- Are there other issues raised by these Qs being asked together?

Q1.(2.1)

- To measure how the R views their sex.
- Does this Q allow transgender people to describe their sex satisfactorily?
- Can non-transgender people answer this Q correctly (even if they are confused e.g. by answer option 3)?

Q2.(2.2)

- To measure R's sex at birth
- How do transgender Rs feel about this Q.? Are they comfortable to answer a Q asking about their sex at birth?
- How do non-transgender Rs feel about this Q? (Is it repetitive? What would they do if asked this Q)
- Explore how R understood the routing instructions and what they did.

Q3.(2.3)

- To measure transgender identity
- To explore understanding of the Q and how the answer options work.
- To explore sensitivity of the Q wording and the answer options.

Overall views on option 2

- Overall, how did you find these 2/3 questions to answer?
- How easy or difficult did you find being asked about how you describe yourself followed by how you were described at birth?
- Did you think the first two questions (Q1 and Q2 in this version) were asking about 2 separate things or were they asking about the same thing?
- Was there anything you weren't sure about or uncomfortable with when you answered these Qs? What was this/were these? *Probe fully*
- How easy or difficult did you find it to follow the instructions in this version?
- Were there any Qs you would not answer if you were asked for example on a monitoring form? Why?

Q1 (Q2.1) Probes

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'best describes how you think of yourself' in this question?
- How did you decide on your answer to Q1 (in this version)? How easy or difficult was this?
- What do you understand by 'in another way' when answering this question? *Probe for examples if appropriate*
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?
- *OBSERVATION*- Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so.

Q2 (Q2.2) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'and at birth were you described as' in this question?
- In what circumstances do you think people may select 'I prefer not to say'? *Probe for examples*
- How easy or difficult was it to decide on an answer? *Explore how R decided on their answer*

If not covered by an earlier probe at this question

- Do any of the answer options overlap or do they mean different things?

To explore how the routing instruction worked

- *Explore* if R noticed the instruction? If no, ask the R to read the instruction.
- In your own words what do you think this instruction is asking?
- Please talk me through why you decided/decided not to answer the next Q, Q3 (Q2.3)?

Q3 (Q2.3) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'which of the following best describes you'?
 - How easy or difficult was it to decide on your answer? Why?
 - Were there any answer options that you felt were inappropriate? Which ones? Why?
 - How do you think 'In another way (please specify)' could be used at this question?
 - Do any of the answer options overlap or do they all mean different things?
 - Are there any options that are missing from this list?
 - Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?
- OBSERVATION*- Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so

OPTION 3: TESTING 5 QUESTIONS IN THIS VERSION

GIVE Rs OPTION 3's Q'AIRE AND ASK R TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS (Option 3 self completion has a front cover printed on yellow paper)

1) (3.1) At birth were you described as...

- 4. Male
- 5. Female
- 6. Intersex

2) (3.2) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?

- 4. As a man,
- 5. As a woman
- 6. In some other way

3) (3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, or have you already moved, from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, for example changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery?

- 3. Yes → **go to 4** (3.4)
- 4. No → end

4) (3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Please tick one option

- 9. I am thinking about going through these stages
- 10. I am currently going through these stages
- 11. I have already been through these stages
- 12. I have been through these stages, but then transitioned back
- 5. I am not currently thinking of going through any of these stages

5) (3.3) Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?

(tick all that apply)

- 8. Transgender man
- 9. Transgender woman
- 10. Gender variant person
- 11. Cross-dressing person
- 12. Intersex person
- 13. In some other way (please specify)
- 14. None of the above

Q1,2,3,4 and 5 in version 3 (Q3.1, Q3.2, Q3.3, Q3.4 and Q3.5)

- To explore how option 3 works overall especially looking at issues around sensitivity and whether there are any Q order effects.
- How do non-trans gender participants feel about Q1, Q2 and Q3 in this version following on from each other – and if misrouted what were there thoughts on the follow up Qs? Did they think Q1 and 2 overlapped? Why?
- How do transgender participants feel about the Qs in option 3? Were there any Qs which were consider too intrusive for them to answer? If yes why? If no why not?
- Are there particular sensitivity issues raised by these Qs being asked together?
- Are there other issues raised by these Qs being asked together?

Q1. (Q3.1)

- To measure R's sex at birth
- How do transgender Rs feel about this Q.? Are they comfortable to answer a Q asking about their sex at birth?
- How do non-transgender Rs feel about this Q?

Q2 (3.2)

- To measure how the R views their gender.
- Does this Q allow transgender people to describe their GENDER satisfactorily?
- Can non-transgender people answer this Q correctly (even if they are confused e.g. by answer option 3)?
- Explore how R understood the routing instructions and what they did.

Q3 (3.3)

- To measure thoughts about transitioning and actual transition
- How do non transgender R feel about this question – will they answer it
- To examine whether this Q works as attended amongst non-transgender participants.
- Does the Q filter Rs correctly to Q4 (3.4)

Q4 (3.4)

- To measure if the R has thought about or undergone some move from their birth sex to the gender they identify with
- To explore how the answer options work
- To explore sensitivity of the Q wording and the answer options.

Q4 (3.5)

- To measure the legal definitions of transgender identity
- To explore sensitivity and acceptability of answering this Q (wording and answer options)

Overall views on option 3

- How did you find these questions to answer? *Explore* ease and acceptability.
- How easy or difficult did you find being asked about how you were described at birth and then about how you think about your gender?
- How easy or difficult did you find it to follow the routing instructions in this version?

Q1: At birth were you described as.....

Q1 (3.1) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- How easy or difficult was it to decide on an answer? Explore reasons – if difficult explore why including issues around sensitivity describing sex at birth *if appropriate*.
- What did 'intersex' mean to you at this question?

Q2: Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?..

Q2 (3.2) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did 'gender' mean to you at this question?
- How did you decide on your answer to Q2 (in this version)? How easy or difficult was this?
- Why do you think people may use 'in some other way' when answering this question?
Probe for examples if appropriate
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? Why?
- *OBSERVATION*- Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so.

Q3: Have you ever thought about moving, or have you already moved, from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, for example changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery?

Q3 (3.3) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- In your own words what do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult did you find this question? Explore if appropriate why this was difficult.
- Was there anything you weren't sure whether to include when you answered this question? How did you decide to include/exclude this?
If not covered by an earlier probe
- How did you feel about answering this question?
- Would you answer this question if you were asked on a monitoring form? Explore why and why not.

Q4: Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Q4 (3.4) Probes Explore sensitively

- What did you understand by 'Thinking about the stages you may have thought about or already been through to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with' at this question?
- How easy or difficult was it for you to answer this question? *Why? If appropriate* Was there anything that you weren't sure whether to include or exclude when you answered this question?
- Was there any answer options that you weren't sure whether to select? If yes How did you decide on your answer?
- Was there any wording or phrasing that you felt was inappropriate in the question and in the answer options?
- How would you feel about answering a question like this on a monitoring form?

If not covered by the above probes

- The answer options refer to going through these stages, what did you understand this to mean, at this question?
- *OBSERVATION-* Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so *if appropriate.*

Q5: Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender?
(tick all that apply)

Q5 (3.5) Probes:

To explore the R's Q and A process

- What did you understand by 'which of the following best describes how you think of your gender' in the context of this question? Examples?
- How did you go about answering this question? How easy or difficult was this? *Why?*

If not covered by the above probes

- How did you find the answer options at this question? Were there any that you didn't like? Were there any that you liked seeing listed?
- Do you think this question could be sensitive for some participants? *Why?*
- *OBSERVATION-* Did the participant select one answer only? If the participant selected multiple answers explore why they did so *if appropriate.*

Stage Five: Version Preference

- Thinking back over the three versions of the questions you answered, please rank option 1, 2 and 3 in the order of your preference, starting with the one you preferred the most please.
- *Explore* why R preferred this version **the most**
- Where there aspects in any of the other options which you liked? What were these?
- *Explore* why R preferred this version **the least**
- Was there any version of the questions which you would definitely not answer if you were asked in a monitoring form? *Why?* Explore use in different contexts. .

Stage Six: Consideration of mode and the context of delivery (if time allows)

Explore R's

- Experiences of filling in similar questions in the past, if any?
- Description of experiences and contexts
- Acceptability of asking the question for them

- Comfort answering the different questions if:
 - Self completed online
 - Interviewer administered – hearing the Qs out aloud/ at home/ presence of others
 - By telephone
 - Compared to the mode that we are currently testing the questions in i.e. self completed on paper
- F2F/telephone – given a showcard and then stating the number or letter of the answer would this be easier/more comfortable/still sensitive

- Other comments on the Qs AND OR the mode

End of interview:

THANK YOUR PARTICIPANT

ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THEY MAY HAVE AND

REASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY.

Remember to give the £10 High Street Voucher and thank you letter

Appendix D: Trans and Non-trans Probe Sheets used in Round 2

(Version 1 questions asked first)

The Main Objectives for the interview (for Michelle's population)* VERSION 1 Qs ASKED FIRST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To examine participant's understanding of the new monitoring/survey questions (trans and non trans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore whether the new monitoring/survey questions capture full information (i.e. answer categories are adequate). To examine issues of potential sensitivity in the survey context.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore whether participants understand the instructions and routing
Stage one introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce yourself, the National Centre, and the study This study is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), an independent research institute and registered charity, on behalf of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (COMMISSION) to develop questions on gender identity which can be used by different public bodies. As a result of the Equality Act introduced in 2010, it is likely that bodies such as public sector employers, government departments, local councils and the National Health Service, etc. will be expected to regularly publish data on their workforce and service users from April 2011. To be able to do this they will need a question, or questions on gender identity. Currently, in Britain, there has been limited progress in developing such a question or questions. A number of surveys and workforce monitoring systems have attempted to include a question on gender identity, but can sometimes confuse issues of sex, gender and sexual orientation in the questions. The purpose of this research is to develop a question or questions which public bodies can confidentially use to measure the gender identity of their work force and or service users. These questions will need to be understood and answered by people who are non-transgender and transgender. The term 'transgender' is often used as umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex, including transsexual people (those who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their acquired gender), transvestite/cross-dressing people, and those who do not identify as male or female. Explain that the questions could be asked in a face-to-face interview, or on the phone or in a self completion form. Explain that we are currently testing the questions in a self completion mode as feedback from an earlier round of focus groups showed a preference for this by some. Explain that you will be giving them questions which are printed on card and that for some questions we have two versions. Explain that you would like them to answer the questions, and at specific points, you will ask them some questions about how they are finding the questions. Where there are two versions, we would like to find out which version they prefer, and why. Please explain that they are unlikely to be asked ALL of these questions in routine monitoring or a survey. We are testing which questions work best, and why. They may only be asked one or two of these questions. Explain that both transgender and non-trans gender people are being interviewed for this study; and that it is only by trying out the questions with a range of people that we will be able to see how acceptable these questions are and whether the questions are working as intended. Explain that it is not necessary to be knowledgeable about gender identity or transgender issues. Explain we are not so much interested in the answers they give but how they understand the questions and the process by which they arrive at their answers. Stress there are no right or wrong answers and this isn't a test. We are just trying to explore if the questions work as the researchers intend. Explain if they have any difficulty answering the questions it shows the questions need to be improved. Explain they do not have to answer any question they don't want to. Stress the confidentiality of the process; all the findings will be reported anonymously. The participants name will not be on the questionnaire or any of the notes you write up. Please make sure they understand this. Remind them that the interview will last around 30 minutes. Explain that you will be recording the interview so that you don't have to make lots of notes during the interview. Check this is OK with the participant. If any trans Rs ask, who will have access to the recording, tell them that only yourself and Michelle Gray will have access. The recordings at all times will be kept securely, so encrypted digital recorders, and encrypted and password protected files and will be destroyed at the end of the project (April 2011).

- Ask whether they have any questions before you start.

Name of Interviewer: _____

Date of Interview: _____ Serial Number: _____ (e.g. P3070_MB101/
KJ101)_____

Stage Two: Think Aloud

Aim: To explain the Think Aloud process.

- Explain the 'Think aloud' technique using a scenario of your choice (the windows example is given below but you may wish to use an alternative) to encourage participants who feel comfortable thinking aloud to do so. For this study we will be relying on probes to reveal how the questions have worked.

Windows example

Explain to your participant that you would like them to talk you through what they are thinking about at each question if they feel comfortable doing so. Run through the windows example with them giving a demonstration - 'How many windows are there in your home?' and ask them to describe what they are thinking as they work through their answer.

Stage Three: Setting the scene for testing the questions

Aims:

- **To gain consent**
- **To observe the participant answering the questions.**
- **To note any difficulties you observe so you can probe on them**
- Explain that we are testing **two** versions of **some** questions. Where we have different versions of questions we refer to them as version 1 and version 2. Explain that you will take the participant through this during the interview.
- Explain that you would like them to answer the questions on the cards. Explain that at specific points you will ask them how they are finding the questions.
- Remind them that the purpose of this study is to develop one question or a set of questions which can be used to measure gender identity.
- Give the participant the set of cards and ask them to answer the first question.
- If appropriate observe how they go about answering the questions. You may wish to consider the following:
 - Do they read the instructions?
 - Do they follow the routing/instructions correctly?
 - Do they change their survey answers at all?
 - Do they leave any questions blank?
 - Did they hesitate at any questions?

Stage Four: Specific Question by Question Probing

Aims:

- To get general feedback on the questions.
- To explore whether participants understood the instructions and routing.
- Use the probes below and your own probes (based on earlier observations and the think aloud) to explore the issues above.

Q1. (New 1.1) At birth, were you described as...Male, Female, Intersex, I prefer not to say

Question testing aims

- To explore what participants think this question is asking (i.e. do they think about how the doctors/midwife/their parents described them when they were born, or what it says on their (original) birth certificate).
- To explore whether the 'intersex' category impacts on how people answer – so, do participants notice it? Are they thrown by it being there? Are they clear what it means? Would the question perform just as well without it?
- To explore any sensitivity around asking this as a first question
- To explore any reluctance to being asked this question (esp. from trans Rs).

Probes:

Q1 Version1 (New 1.1)

- In your own words, what do you think this question was asking you?
- How did you decide to choose the answer that you did?
- What are your thoughts on the answer categories?
- What did you understand by the option 'intersex'? *Explore whether R noticed it, and if so whether it impacted on how they answered.*
- (If R did not chose 'I prefer not to say') Why do you think people might choose 'I prefer not to say'?
- How did you feel about being asked this as the first question?

Q1. (New 2.1) At birth, were you described as...Male, Female, I prefer not to say

Question testing aims

- To explore the 'at birth' question **without** the intersex category – does the absence of this category make this question any easier or more difficult to answer?
- Relating to the above, whether participants feel that by missing 'intersex', we are missing an important option

Probes:

Q1 Version 2 (New 2.1)

- This question is the same as the previous one, but doesn't have the 'intersex' option, do you think this is a good thing, a bad thing or does it not bother you either way? Do you prefer this question or the previous one, and why?

**Q2 (New 1.2). Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?
Male, Female, In another way**

Question testing aims

- To explore how participants understand this question, and whether the use of typically 'sex' categories helps or hinders their ability to answer it?
- To explore whether the answer categories seem logical, when being asked 'how you think of yourself'
- To explore how the space we have left participants to write in their 'other' answer at the third option (In another way) works. Do we need an instruction such as 'please specify' for example

Probes:

Q2 Version 1 (New 1.2)

- How did you go about answering this question?
- This question asks 'best describes how you think of yourself' – what did you take this to mean? Does the word 'best' make a difference? If yes explore Why?
- Can you describe to me, in your own words, what being 'male' means to you in this question?
- Can you describe to me, in your own words, what being 'female' means to you in this question?
- When you answered this question, were you thinking about sex, gender, neither, both or are you not able to say? Why?
- How do you think 'in another way' could be used in this question?
- INTERVIEWER EXPLORE THE : _____ - (remind R of the space to write in an answer and ask) Was it clear to you why this line came after the third option? Why? Is it important to have the **option** to write in if you wish? Would it be better if it said **please specify**?
- How did you feel about answering this question?

**Q2. (New 2.2) Which of the following describes how you think of your gender?
Man, Woman, In another way**

Question testing aims

- To explore how participants understand this question
- To explore whether participants notice the difference, or whether the word 'gender' makes answering it any easier/more difficult
- To explore whether the use of typically 'gender' categories (man/woman) helps or hinders their ability to answer it
- To explore whether the answer categories seem logical, when being asked 'how you think of your gender'

- To explore how the space we have left participants to write in their 'other' answer at the third option (In another way) works. Do we need an instruction such as 'please specify' for example (as in 1.1)

Probes:

Q2 Version 2 (New 2.2)

- This question is slightly different, what are your immediate reactions to it?
- The question asks 'describes how you think of your gender' – what did you take this to mean? The previous question asked 'best describes' and this one does not include 'best'. Does this make any difference to the question? If yes – Explore why.
- How did you find the answer options at this question? How easy or difficult would you find it to select one from the three listed?
- What did 'man' mean to you in this question?
- What did 'woman' mean to you in this question?
- *(for younger participants, i.e. aged 16-25)* How do these answer options work for you? Are these terms that you would use to describe your gender or would you use something else? *Explore what else*
- *(For older participants i.e. 26 +)* Explore if the term woman and man are age determined.
- When you answered this question, were you thinking about sex, gender, neither, both or are you not able to say? Why?
- INTERVIEWER EXPLORE THE : _____ - *(remind R of the space to write in an answer and ask)* Was it clear to you why this line came after the third option? Why? Would it be better if it said **please specify**?
- How do you think 'in another way' could be used in this question?
- How did you feel about answering this question? Do you prefer this question or the previous one, and why?

Q3. (Original 3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, are you currently moving or have you already moved from your birth sex to the gender you identify with?

(This could include changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery).

Yes → Please go to Q4 (the question below)

No → END

Q4 (Original 3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about going through, or have already been through, to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Question testing aims Q3 (Original 3.3)

- To explore how this question works and is understood by (both) trans (and non-trans) participants

- To explore the use of the term 'moving' and whether this feels like the right way to describe transitioning
- To assess whether people feel comfortable being asked about 'moving' from birth sex to (current) gender
- To explore how the examples used work - are they inclusive? Are they appropriately worded? Are there too many?
- To gather evidence around whether 'the gender you identify with' makes a difference to how they answer

Question testing aims Q4 (Q3.4)

- To explore how this question works with (both) trans (and non-trans) participants
- To explore the necessity of including it within this battery of questions
- To check that only trans people are answering it and whether they think it covers the different stages one might go through/have been through
- To explore how 'transitioned' works in this question
- To explore the use of the term 'moving' and whether this feels like the right way to describe transitioning
- To assess comfort levels in being asked this question

Probes:

Q3 Version 1 (Original 3.3)

- How did you go about answering this question?
- Can you tell me what you think this question is getting at?
- What were your thoughts about being asked it? How did it make you feel?
- This question refers to '*moving, are you currently moving or have you already moved*' - what went through your mind when you read this and is it clear what it means?
- This question refers to 'birth sex' - what went through your mind when you read this and is it clear what it means?
- The question refers to 'the gender you identify with' – what went through your mind when you read this and answered? Is it clear what it means?
- Did you read the examples? *If yes:* What are your thoughts on these?
- How do you feel about the use of the term gender reassignment surgery at this question? How did you understand this, in the question?
- Can you think of anything missing from the examples we have used?

Probes:

Q4 Version 1 (Original 3.4)

- How did you go about answering this question?
- Can you tell me what you think this question is getting at?
- Is the instruction clear and easy to understand?
- How easy or difficult did you find it to choose from the answer options listed?
- This question refers to 'transitioned', how do you think this term works in the context of this question? How did you understand this, in the context of this question?
- What are your thoughts on the answer options? Do they cover the ways in which different people would want to answer or are we missing anything?
- How do you feel about answering it?

VERSION 2 Q3

Q.3 (NEW 2.3) Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth, or do you intend to?

(For example how you present yourself, taking hormones, changing your name or having surgery?)

1. Yes – Please go to Q4

2. No – Go to Q5

VERSION 2 Q4

Q4 (New 2.4) Which of the following options best applies to you?

Question testing aims Q3 (Version 2) (New 2.3)

- To explore how this question works and is understood by (both) trans (and non-trans) participants
- To assess whether people feel comfortable being asked about a 'process to change from the sex they were described as at birth'
- To explore how the examples used work - are they inclusive? Are they appropriately worded? Are there too many?

Question testing aims Q4 (Version 2) (NEW 2.4)

- To explore how this question works and is understood by trans participants
- To explore the use of the description a 'process'
- To gather evidence around whether this question works better than it's alternative and if so why?
- To explore how the examples used work - are they inclusive? Are they appropriately worded? Are there too many?
- To explore whether there is a need for a 'None of the above' option

Probes:

Q3 Version 2 (New 2.3)

- What are your thoughts about this question?
- Is this question easier or harder to understand than the previous question? Why? Explore reasons for ease and difficulty in understanding INTERVIEWER FULLY EXPLORE REASONS
- How easy or difficult was it to decide on your answer to this question? Why? INTERVIEWER FULLY EXPLORE REASONS
- This question refers to going through 'any part of a process' - what went through your mind when you read this? And is it clear what it means?
- The question refers to 'change from the sex you were described as at birth' – what went through your mind when you read this? Is the question clear to understand? Why is this?
- Did you read the examples? *If yes:* What are your thoughts on these?
- What did you understand by 'how you present yourself' in that example?
- Can you think of anything missing from the examples we have used?
- If you had to choose one question to answer, would it be the previous question or this one? **WHY?** INTERVIEWER ESTABLISH WHETHER R PREFERS X OR Y

Probes:

Q4 Version 2 (New 2.4)

- What are your thoughts about this question?
- Is this question easier or harder to understand than the previous question? Why? Explore reasons for ease and difficulty in understanding INTERVIEWER FULLY EXPLORE REASONS (including the instruction and whether the answer options are appropriate)
- How easy or difficult was it for you to choose an answer option? Why?
- Is this question easier or harder to answer than the previous question? Why? INTERVIEWER FULLY EXPLORE REASONS
- In the previous question, one of the answer options refers to 'transitioned back' and at this question there is an answer option which refers to 'changed back', which *phrasing do you prefer?* Why?
- Here we have a 'none of the above' option, can you think why someone might want to choose this? Is it necessary? Why?
- Do you think it is important to have the option to write in an answer? Why?
- The question refers to 'a process' – what went through your mind when you read this?

Q5 (New 2.5) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?**Question testing aims**

- To explore how this question works and whether it is acceptable to ask it
- To explore how 'transitioned' works in this question
- To explore the answer options used
- To explore whether all of the answer options are necessary or whether some could be combined/dropped
- To assess comfort levels in being asked this question

Probes:**Q5 (New 2.5)**

- How did you go about answering this question?
- How easy or difficult did you find it to choose from the answer options listed? Why?
- Can you tell me what you see as the differences between the answer options, but also whether you think any are actually the same
- Do you think trans man and trans woman separately are needed? Does the term 'trans' work?
- What did you understand by the option 'transsexual'? Should this option be on this list?
- Should cross-dresser and transvestite be separate?
- What do you think of the answers that say 'person'? Is it better to use it, or can it be removed?
- What are your thoughts on the answer options? Do they cover the ways in which different people would want to answer?
- Where there any options, that you don't think should be included at this question? Why?
- INTERVIEWER EXPLORE the :_____ at code 7 'In another way' - (*remind R of the space to write in an answer and ask*) Was it clear to you why this line came after this option? Why? Is it useful to be able to write in the answer, if you choose?

Stage five: Consideration of mode and the context of delivery and other comments (if time allows)

Ask R if they have any other comments/feedback on the questions.

Explore R's

- Experiences of filling in similar questions in the past, if any?
- Description of experiences and contexts
- Acceptability of asking the question for them

- Comfort answering the different questions if:
 - Self completed online
 - Interviewer administered – hearing the Qs out aloud/ at home/ presence of others
 - By telephone
 - Compared to the mode that we are currently testing the questions in i.e. self completed on paper
- F2F/telephone – given a showcard and then stating the number or letter of the answer would this be easier/more comfortable/still sensitive

- Other comments on the Qs AND OR the mode

End of interview:

THANK YOUR PARTICIPANT

ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THEY MAY HAVE AND

REASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY.

Remember to give the £10 High Street Voucher and thank you letter

The Main Objectives for the interview (for Meera’s population)* VERSION 1 Qs ASKED FIRST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To examine participant's understanding of the new monitoring/survey questions (trans and non trans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore whether the new survey questions capture full information (i.e. answer categories are adequate).To examine issues of potential sensitivity in the survey context.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore whether participants understand the instructions and routing.
Stage one introduction

- Introduce yourself, **the National Centre, and the study**
- This study is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), an independent research institute and registered charity, on behalf of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (COMMISSION) to develop questions on gender identity which can be used by different public bodies.
- The purpose of this research is to develop a question or questions which public bodies can confidentially use to measure the gender identity of their work force and or service users.
- Explain that the questions could be asked in a face-to-face interview, or on the phone or in a self completion form. Explain that we are currently testing the questions in a self completion mode as feedback from an earlier round of focus groups showed a preference for this by some people.
- Explain that you will be giving them questions which are printed on card, and that for some questions we have two versions. Explain that you would like them to answer the questions, and at specific points, you will ask them some questions about how they are finding the questions. Where there are two versions, we would like to find out which version they prefer, and why.
- **Please explain that they are unlikely to be asked ALL of these questions in routine monitoring or a survey. We are testing which questions work best, and why. They may only be asked one or two of these questions.**
- Explain that it is not necessary to be knowledgeable about gender identity issues.
- Explain we are not so much interested in the answers they give but **how they understand the questions** and the process by which they arrive at their answers. **Stress there are no right or wrong answers** and this **isn't a test**. We are just trying to explore if the questions work as the researchers intend. Explain if they have any difficulty answering the questions it shows the questions need to be improved.
- Explain they do not have to answer any question they don't want to.
- **Stress the confidentiality of the process**; all the findings will be reported anonymously. The participants name will not be on the questionnaire or any of the notes you write up. Please make sure they understand this.
- Remind them that the interview will last around 30 minutes.
- Explain that you will be recording the interview so that you don't have to make lots of notes during the interview. Check this is OK with the participant. If they ask who will have access to the recording, tell them that only you and other members of the research team working on this project will have access, and that recordings are stored securely i.e. they are password protected. No one else will have access.
- Ask whether they have any questions before you start.

Name of Interviewer: _____ Date of Interview: _____ Serial Number: _____ (e.g. P3070_MB101/ KJ101)____
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Stage Two: Think Aloud

Aim: To explain the Think Aloud process.

- Explain the 'Think aloud' technique using a scenario of your choice (the windows example is given below but you may wish to use an alternative) to encourage participants who feel comfortable thinking aloud to do so. For this study we will be relying on probes to reveal how the questions have worked.

Windows example

Explain to your participant that you would like them to talk you through what they are thinking about at each question if they feel comfortable doing so. Run through the windows example with them giving a demonstration - 'How many windows are there in your home?' and ask them to describe what they are thinking as they work through their answer.

Stage Three: Setting the scene for testing the questions

Aims:

- **To gain consent**
- **To observe the participant answering the questions.**
- **To note any difficulties you observe so you can probe on them**
- Explain that we are testing **two** versions of **some** questions. Where we have different versions of questions we refer to them as version 1 and version 2. Explain that you will take the participant through this during the interview.
- Explain that you would like them to answer the questions on the cards. Explain that at specific points you will ask them how they are finding the questions.
- Remind them that the purpose of this study is to develop one question or a set of questions which can be used to measure gender identity.
- Give the participant the set of cards and ask them to answer the first question.
- If appropriate observe how they go about answering the questions. You may wish to consider the following:
 - Do they read the instructions?
 - Do they follow the routing/instructions correctly?
 - Do they change their survey answers at all?
 - Do they leave any questions blank?
 - Did they hesitate at any questions?

Stage Four: Specific Question by Question Probing

Aims:

- To get general feedback on the questions.
- To explore whether participants understood the instructions and routing.
- Use the probes below and your own probes (based on earlier observations and the think aloud) to explore the issues above.

Q1. (New 1.1) At birth, were you described as....Male, Female, Intersex, I prefer not to say

Question testing aims

- To explore what participants think this question is asking (i.e. do they think about how the doctors/midwife/their parents described them when they were born, or what it says on their (original) birth certificate).
- To explore whether the 'intersex' category impacts on how people answer – so, do participants notice it? Are they thrown by it being there? Are they clear what it means? Would the question perform just as well without it?
- To explore any sensitivity around asking this as a first question
- To explore any reluctance to being asked this question (esp. from trans Rs).

Probes:

Q1 Version1 (New 1.1)

- In your own words, what do you think this question was asking you?
- How did you decide to choose the answer that you did?
- What are your thoughts on the answer categories?
- What did you understand by the option 'intersex'? *Explore whether R noticed it, and if so whether it impacted on how they answered.*
- (If R did not chose 'I prefer not to say') Why do you think people might choose 'I prefer not to say'?
- How did you feel about being asked this as the first question?

Q1. (New 2.1) At birth, were you described as....Male, Female, I prefer not to say

Question testing aims

- To explore the 'at birth' question **without** the intersex category – does the absence of this category make this question any easier or more difficult to answer?
- Relating to the above, whether participants feel that by missing 'intersex', we are missing an important option

Probes:

Q1 Version 2 (New 2.1)

- This question is the same as the previous one, but doesn't have the 'intersex' option, do you think this is a good thing, a bad thing or does it not bother you either way? Do you prefer this question or the previous one, and why?

**Q2 (New 1.2). Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?
Male, Female, In another way**

Question testing aims

- To explore how participants understand this question, and whether the use of typically 'sex' categories helps or hinders their ability to answer it?
- To explore whether the answer categories seem logical, when being asked 'how you think of yourself'
- To explore how the space we have left participants to write in their 'other' answer at the third option (In another way) works. Do we need an instruction such as 'please specify' for example

Probes:

Q2 Version 1 (New 1.2)

- How did you go about answering this question?
- This question asks 'best describes how you think of yourself' – what did you take this to mean? Does the word 'best' make a difference? If yes explore Why?
- Can you describe to me, in your own words, what being 'male' means to you in this question?
- Can you describe to me, in your own words, what being 'female' means to you in this question?
- When you answered this question, were you thinking about sex, gender, neither, both or are you not able to say? Why?
- How do you think 'in another way' could be used in this question?
- INTERVIEWER EXPLORE THE : _____ - (*remind R of the space to write in an answer and ask*) Was it clear to you why this line came after the third option? Why?
- How did you feel about answering this question?

**Q2. (New 2.2) Which of the following describes how you think of your gender?
Man, Woman, In another way**

Question testing aims

- To explore how participants understand this question
- To explore whether participants notice the difference, or whether the word 'gender' makes answering it any easier/more difficult
- To explore whether the use of typically 'gender' categories (man/woman) helps or hinders their ability to answer it
- To explore whether the answer categories seem logical, when being asked 'how you think of your gender'
- To explore how the space we have left participants to write in their 'other' answer at the third option (In another way) works. Do we need an instruction such as 'please specify' for example (as in 1.1)

Probes:

Q2 Version 2 (New 2.2)

- This question is slightly different, what are your immediate reactions to it?
- The question asks 'describes how you think of your gender' – what did you take this to mean? The previous question asked 'best describes' and this one does not include 'best'. Does this make any difference to the question? If yes – Explore why.
- How did you find the answer options at this question? How easy or difficult would you find it to select one from the three listed?
- What did 'man' mean to you in this question?
- What did 'woman' mean to you in this question?
- (for younger participants, i.e. aged 16-25) How do these answer options work for you? Are these terms that you would use to describe your gender or would you use something else? *Explore what else*
- (For older participants i.e. 26 +) Explore if the term woman and man are age determined.
- When you answered this question, were you thinking about sex, gender, neither, both or are you not able to say? Why?
- INTERVIEWER EXPLORE THE : _____ - (remind R of the space to write in an answer and ask) Was it clear to you why this line came after the third option? Why? Would it be better if it said **please specify**?
- How do you think 'in another way' could be used in this question?
- How did you feel about answering this question? Do you prefer this question or the previous one, and why?

Q3. (Original 3.3) Have you ever thought about moving, are you currently moving or have you already moved from your birth sex to the gender you identify with?

(This could include changing your name, wearing different clothes, taking hormones or having gender reassignment surgery).

Yes → Please go to Q4 (the question below)

No → END

Q4 (Original 3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about going through, or have already been through, to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Question testing aims Q3 (Version 1) (Original 3.3)

- To explore how this question works and is understood by (both trans and) non-trans participants
- To explore the use of the term 'moving' and whether this feels like the right way to describe transitioning
- To assess whether people feel comfortable being asked about 'moving' from birth sex to (current) gender
- To explore how the examples used work - are they inclusive? Are they appropriately worded? Are there too many?
- To gather evidence around whether 'the gender you identify with' makes a difference to how they answer

Question testing aims Q4 (Version 1) (Original 3.4)

- To explore how this question works with (both trans and) non-trans participants
- To explore the necessity of including it within this battery of questions
- To check that only trans people are answering it and whether they think it covers the different stages one might go through/have been through
- To explore how 'transitioned' works in this question
- To explore the use of the term 'moving' and whether this feels like the right way to describe transitioning
- To assess comfort levels in being asked this question

Probes:

Q3 Version 1 (Original 3.3)

- How did you go about answering this question?
- Can you tell me what you think this question is getting at?
- This question refers to '*moving, are you currently moving or have you already moved*' - what went through your mind when you read this and is it clear what it means?
- This question refers to 'birth sex' - what went through your mind when you read this and is it clear what it means?
- What were your thoughts about being asked it? How did it make you feel? Is it clear what it means?
- The question refers to 'the gender you identify with' – what went through your mind when you read this and answered? Is it clear what it means?
- Did you read the examples? *If yes: What are your thoughts on these?*
- How do you feel about the use of the term gender reassignment surgery at this question? How did you understand this, in the question?
- Can you think of anything missing from the examples we have used?

INTERVIEWERS: NON trans PARTICIPANTS SHOULDN'T BE ROUTED TO Q4 or Q5 – IF THEY DO EXPLORE WHY AND HOW THEY REACTED/ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS

Q4 (Original 3.4) Thinking about the stages you may have thought about going through, or have already been through, to move from your birth sex to the gender you identify with, which of the following options best applies to you?

Probes:

Q4 Version 1 (Original 3.4)

- How did you go about answering this question?
- Can you tell me what you think this question is getting at?
- Is the instruction clear and easy to understand?
- How easy or difficult did you find it to choose from the answer options listed?
- This question refers to 'transitioned', how do you think this term works in the context of this question? How did you understand this, in the context of this question?
- What are your thoughts on the answer options? Do they cover the ways in which different people would want to answer or are we missing anything?
- How do you feel about answering it?

VERSION 2 Q3

Q.3 (NEW 2.3) Have you gone through any part of a process (including thoughts or actions) to change from the sex you were described as at birth, or do you intend to?

(For example how you present yourself, taking hormones, changing your name or having surgery?)

1. Yes – Please go to Q4

2. No – Go to Q5

VERSION 2 Q4

Q4 (New 2.4) Which of the following options best applies to you?

Question testing aims Q3 (Version 2) (New 2.3)

- To explore how this question works and is understood by (both trans and) non-trans participants
- To assess whether people feel comfortable being asked about a 'process to change from the sex they were described as at birth'
- To explore how the examples used work - are they inclusive? Are they appropriately worded? Are there too many?

Question testing aims Q4 (Version 2) (New 2.4)

- To explore how this question works and is understood by trans participants
- To explore the use of the description a 'process'
- To gather evidence around whether this question works better than it's alternative and if so why?
- To explore how the examples used work - are they inclusive? Are they appropriately worded? Are there too many?
- To explore whether there is a need for a 'None of the above' option

Probes:

Q3 Version 2 (New 2.3)

- What are your thoughts about this question?
- Is this question easier or harder to understand or to answer than the previous question? Why? Explore reasons for ease and difficulty in understanding and answering
INTERVIEWER FULLY EXPLORE REASONS
- This question refers to going through 'any part of a process' - what went through your mind when you read this? And is it clear what it means?
- The question refers to 'change from the sex you were described as at birth' – what went through your mind when you read this? Is the question clear to understand? Why is this?
- Did you read the examples? *If yes:* What are your thoughts on these?
- What did you understand by 'how you present yourself' in that example?
- Can you think of anything missing from the examples we have used?
- If you had to choose one question to answer would it be the previous question, or this one? **WHY?** INTERVIEWER ESTABLISH WHETHER R PREFERS X OR Y

INTERVIEWERS: NON trans PARTICIPANTS SHOULDN'T BE ROUTED TO Q4 or Q5 – IF THEY DO EXPLORE WHY AND HOW THEY REACTED/ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS

Q4 (New 2.4) Which of the following options best applies to you?

Probes:

Q4 Version 2 (New 2.4)

- What are your thoughts about this question?
- Is this question easier or harder to understand than the previous question? Why? Explore reasons for ease and difficulty in understanding INTERVIEWER FULLY EXPLORE REASONS (including the instruction and whether the answer options are appropriate)
- How easy or difficult was it for you to choose an answer option? Why?
- Is this question easier or harder to answer than the previous question? Why? understanding INTERVIEWER FULLY EXPLORE REASONS
- In the previous question, one of the answer options refers to 'transitioned back' and at this question there is an answer option which refers to 'changed back', *which phrasing do you prefer? Why?*
- Here we have a 'none of the above' option, can you think why someone might want to choose this? Is it necessary? Why?
- Do you think it is important to have the option to write in an answer? Why?
- The question refers to 'a process' – what went through your mind when you read this?

Q5 (New 2.5) Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

Question testing aims

- To explore how this question works and whether it is acceptable to ask it
- To explore how 'transitioned' works in this question
- To explore the answer options used
- To explore whether all of the answer options are necessary or whether some could be combined/dropped; To assess comfort levels in being asked this question

Probes:

Q5 (New 2.5)

- How did you go about answering this question?
- How easy or difficult did you find it to choose from the answer options listed? Why?
- Can you tell me what you see as the differences between the answer options, but also whether you think any are actually the same
- Do you think Trans man and Trans woman separately are needed? Does the term 'Trans' work?
- What did you understand by the option 'transsexual'? Should this option be on this list?
- Should cross-dresser and transvestite be separate?
- What do you think of the answers that say 'person'? Is it better to use it, or can it be removed?
- What are your thoughts on the answer options? Do they cover the ways in which different people would want to answer?
- Where there any options, that you don't think should be included at this question? Why?
- INTERVIEWER EXPLORE the : _____ at code 7 'In another way' - (*remind R of the space to write in an answer and ask*) Was it clear to you why this line came after this option? Why? Is it useful to be able to write in the answer, if you choose?

Stage five: Consideration of mode and the context of delivery and other comments (if time allows)

Ask R if they have any other comments/feedback on the questions.

Explore R's

- Experiences of filling in similar questions in the past, if any?
- Description of experiences and contexts
- Acceptability of asking the question for them

- Comfort answering the different questions if:
 - Self completed online
 - Interviewer administered – hearing the Qs out aloud/ at home/ presence of others
 - By telephone
 - Compared to the mode that we are currently testing the questions in i.e. self completed on paper
- F2F/telephone – given a showcard and then stating the number or letter of the answer would this be easier/more comfortable/still sensitive

- Other comments on the Qs AND OR the mode

End of interview:

THANK YOUR PARTICIPANT

ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THEY MAY HAVE AND

REASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY.

Remember to give the £10 High Street Voucher and thank you letter

Endnotes

ⁱ NatCen's Questionnaire Design and Testing (QDT) Hub) consists of a group of researchers who carry out extensive question design and evaluation work and provide advice and support to researchers across the rest of the organisation. The QDT Hub has expertise in a range of design and evaluation methods including: desk based questionnaire evaluation, expert panels, cognitive interviewing, qualitative development work, behaviour coding, participant debriefing and split panel experiments.

ⁱⁱ Named contacts were emailed directly or telephoned if no email address was provided. Once the researcher had established contact with a person, efforts were made to explore the most appropriate and felt to be most efficient means for getting the information out to people.

ⁱⁱⁱ This was gauged through asking whether people had heard of the terms 'gender identity', and 'transsexual or transgender' and also whether they knew anyone who was transsexual or transgender.

^{iv} The Gender Recognition Act (2004) makes it illegal for a person who collects information about a person holding a Gender Recognition Certificate in their 'official capacity' to disclose information about their change of birth registration to any other people except in very specific circumstances (e.g. medical purposes, credit reference agencies, etc.). This suggests that best practice in the collection of data should involve: providing details of named individuals who will have access to the data; how the data will be stored securely; how it is intended it will be used; that data will not be shared with others without the express consent of the individual; that personal identifiable details and details about gender reassignment will be kept separate.

Contacts

England

Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline

FREEPOST RRLG-GHUX-CTR

Arndale House, The Arndale Centre, Manchester M4 3AQ

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Wales

Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline

FREEPOST RRLR-UEYB-UYZL

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Helpline opening times:

Monday to Friday 8am–6pm.

Calls from BT landlines are charged at local rates, but calls from mobiles and other providers may vary.

Calls may be monitored for training and quality purposes.

Interpreting service available through Language Line, when you call our helplines.

If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language please contact the relevant helpline to discuss your needs. All publications are also available to download and order in a variety of formats from our website.

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