



Guidance on the Reissuing of Qualification Certificates for Trans People

UK Trans Info has been made aware of a number of trans people having difficulties obtaining revised qualification or degree certificates after changing their name. We understand that in most circumstances exam boards, universities and other organisations do not make retrospective changes to these documents after a name change, however when a trans person changes their name as part of their gender transition it is legally required that organisations issue new certificates in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Gender Recognition Act 2004. This does not require a Gender Recognition Certificate.

Some organisations are currently requesting a new birth certificate before they will issue a replacement certificate, but under the requirements of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 this will not be available for at least two years and many trans people will never be able to get one. However even without a new birth certificate, by changing their name trans people automatically have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment under the Equality Act 2010. As a result the approach of requesting a new birth certificate is discriminatory and new certificates must be issued free of charge upon receiving proof of name change.

Usually every person who gains a qualification or degree is issued free of charge with a certificate that they can use. In the majority of cases where a person changes their name and needs to demonstrate that the certificate belongs to them, they are simply able to provide proof of name change to accompany the certificate. However in the case of a trans person who has changed their name for the purposes of gender reassignment, they are unable to do this without putting themselves at risk of discrimination and violence. A recent study* showed that 35% of trans people suspected that they had been turned down for a job because of their trans identity, 38% had experienced sexual harassment because of their trans identity and 19% had been subjected to physical attacks because of their trans identity.

Therefore a trans person who has changed their name for the purposes of gender reassignment has never been issued with a free certificate that they can use, and refusing to retrospectively change their details and issue a new certificate free of charge is indirect discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

A trans person who changes their name for the purposes of gender reassignment should make a written request for their certificates to be reissued in their new name, and provide proof of ID and proof of name change. Some organisations may also require the return of the original certificates. They may also wish to include a copy of this information sheet to ensure that the organisation has a good understanding of their legal obligations. The organisation cannot request any other evidence or any payment.

UK Trans Info is a voluntary organisation focused on improving the lives of binary trans people and non-binary people in the UK. We aim to ensure everyone has access to the information and resources they need regarding gender identity issues in the UK; Give binary trans people and non-binary people in the UK a voice by campaigning for their rights; Work with and educate individuals and organisations to ensure that the needs of binary trans people and non-binary people are taken into account; and bring together resources from around the UK in order to effectively signpost those in need of support or advice.