



Level: Intermediate
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UK Government Abandons Self-Identification Plan for Trans People



1) *Discuss these questions with a partner.*

- What do you think (gender) “self-identification” means?
- What are the issues facing trans people in your country?

2) *Read the article. Now fill in the correct words in the sentences below. There is one word that does not fit in any of the sentences.*

self-identification medical diagnosis self-identifies intrusive
notoriously reform got cold feet restrict

- The teachers have to _____ the number of students per class to 10.
- The weather in Seattle is _____ rainy.
- Jerry _____ as non-binary.
- She _____ about the wedding and cancelled last minute.
- Who will _____ Britain’s unfair electoral system?
- The doctor asked her a number of _____ questions about things that she would rather keep private.
- The doctor’s _____ for the patient was depression.

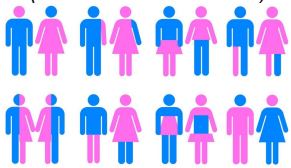
3) *Are these statements **true** or **false**?*

- In the original government plans, it was proposed that people should be allowed to self-identify without having to get a diagnosis from a medical professional.
- Ministers changed their minds because they said the new plans did not support trans people enough.
- At the moment, trans people have to seek medical approval before they can legally self-identify.

- d) Campaigners said the decision made by the government is much worse than when Margaret Thatcher banned councils and schools from “promoting homosexuality” in 1988.
- e) According to Liz Truss, trans people are more concerned about the right to self-identify than NHS waiting lists.
- f) The proposed changes to the Gender Recognition Act came close to coming into force.
- g) The Holyrood elections are being led by Theresa May.

4) *Create your own vocabulary cards.*

- *Cut out the cards below.*
- *On the backs of the cards, draw a picture which best describes the word on the other side.*
- *If this is too difficult, you can also create a sentence using that word, with the new word blanked out.*
- *It is also okay to write down any synonyms of this word that you can think of (in English!).*
- *It is important that you do not write anything in your native language! Remember, we are learning to **think in English**, not to translate from your native language.*
- *The first one has been done for you.*
- *Create three more cards using words that you want to learn from the article.*

<p>self-identify</p> <p><i>(on the back of the card:)</i></p>  <p>I think it is important for people to be able to _____ however they like, whether that is as male, female or other.</p>	<p>medical diagnosis</p>	<p>get cold feet</p>
<p>intrusive</p>	<p>reform</p>	<p>notoriously</p>
<p>restrict</p>	<p>tangled up</p>	<p>demeaning</p>

UK Government Abandons Self-Identification Plan for Trans People

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Trans people say the current process (which requires a medical diagnosis) is intrusive and demeaning

Plans to allow people to self-identify in the UK as a different gender without a medical diagnosis have been abandoned, two years after the government signalled the change.

Ministers have decided there is already enough support in the system for people who want to change their legal sex.

Theresa May's UK government looked at making the current process simpler. Many trans people believe the current process is intrusive, demeaning and bureaucratic.

They must apply to a panel for a gender recognition certificate and supply two reports from a doctor or psychologist stating they have suffered from gender dysphoria.

Campaigners had warned that failing to change the law would be a 'Section 28 moment'; that is, the moment when Margaret Thatcher notoriously banned councils and schools from "promoting homosexuality" in 1988.

But Liz Truss, the equalities minister, argued that reform of gender recognition was "not the top priority for transgender people".

"Perhaps their most important concern is the state of trans healthcare", she said.

"Trans people tell us that waiting lists at NHS gender clinics are too long. I agree, and I am deeply concerned at the distress it can cause".

She added that the government was therefore "opening at least three new gender clinics this year, which should mean waiting lists are cut by around 1,600 patients by 2022".

The proposals to rewrite the 2004 Gender Recognition Act, to allow self-identification, were sent out for consultation in 2018, after senior ministers supported the change.

But it seems Boris Johnson has gotten cold feet, as the issue has become tangled up in the separate debate about women-only bathrooms and other spaces.

The transgender rights charity Stonewall described the expected climbdown as a great disappointment for trans people.

It pointed out that reform had received support in the past week both from the Trade Union Congress and the British Medical Association.

The Scottish government is expected to press ahead with the reform, although work on a bill has been delayed until after next May's Holyrood elections, due to the pandemic.

In her statement, Ms Truss said: "The Equality Act 2010 clearly protects transgender people from discrimination.

"The same act allows service providers to restrict access to single sex spaces on the basis of biological sex if there is a clear justification.

"We want every individual, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity to have the confidence and the freedom to be themselves".

Adapted from The Independent: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/trans-self-id-gender-recognition-act-lgbt-rights-b528630.html>

Answers:

2. a) restrict. b) notoriously. c) self-identifies. d) got cold feet. e) reform. f) intrusive. g) medical diagnosis. (self-identification does not fit)

3. a) True. b) False (they changed their minds because they believe trans people already receive enough support in the system). c) True. d) False (campaigners said the decision could become a Section 28 moment – if the law wasn't changed – which would make it as bad as, but not worse). e) False (the opposite is true). f) True. g) False (The Holyrood elections in Scotland are being held in May 2021).