

**Written evidence submitted by Ms Katherine Johnston (GRA0057)**

My name is Katherine Johnston. I am a 43 year old transwoman, writing in partial response to questions posed in the Gender Recognition Act call for evidence.

*Will the Government's proposed changes meet its aim of making the process "kinder and more straight forward"?*

To an extent. Moving online is certainly a step in the right direction. To truly qualify as kind I think the government would need to demonstrate, in contrast to recent events, that it was genuinely sympathetic to transpeople.

*Should a fee for obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate be removed or retained? Are there other financial burdens on applicants that could be removed or retained?*

A nominal fee to cover the cost of processing seems reasonable – possibly with exemptions for those in receipt of benefits.

*Should the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be removed?*

I have no personal objection to being transgender being considered through a medical lens, but I know some people do, so I'd just say it's not a trivial issue.

*Should there be changes to the requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years?*

Again, difficult. As things stand it is practically mandated that all transpeople must suffer a lengthy period of discrimination during which they are expected to demonstrate transition while not actually being recognised as fully able to do so! Furthermore this leads to a degree of prescriptivism with respect to gender roles.

*What impact will these proposed changes have on those people applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate, and on trans people more generally?*

Cautiously positive, I hope. I'm more confident to apply for a certificate now, at least.

Why is the number of people applying for GRCs so low compared to the number of people identifying as transgender?

*It's been Byzantine.*

What issues do trans people have in accessing support services, including health and social care services, domestic violence and sexual violence services?

I was sexually assaulted, a long time ago. The thought that people could be denied access to or referred to inappropriate support services is deeply upsetting.

*Are legal reforms needed to better support the rights of gender-fluid and non-binary people? If so, how?*

Not of direct personal concern but a legal acknowledgement of the existence of gender-fluid and non-binary identities in official documentation would be helpful, I should think, if only in the form of a general "non binary, Other" response field to questions.

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