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AWAN  
MOLE

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 05 February 2018 10:30  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Cross gov research project on gender question  
**Attachments:** Name and Gender Changes technical guide (V0 2) Highlighted GY-1.doc

Hi [REDACTED]

Hope all is well your end and you had a nice weekend.

We've recently encountered sex as a question, that was up until recently phrased 'what is your gender?'

This was our response to the team doing the form- so forgive me its a bit simplistic.

We haven't yet come across a service where we require both sex and gender- but its not to say we won't in the future.

I've also enclosed our technical guidenace on gender (for the pensions project- which is very legally worded)- it is currently in review by Government Legal Department at the Department of Health and Social Care.

#### **Current best practice**

The current best practice within the service design community is to not ask for the 'sex' of a customer unless absolutley necessary.

It is sometimes necessary within current government services to ask for this, because of older legislation that impacted the sexes differently. eg. calculation of state retirement age, and pensionable contributions.

'Gender' is very rarely needed at all, other than maybe services dealing directly with this issue e.g GP practices.

Legally registered sex is a minefield if a service is not UK only specific- simply because the UK does not legally regognise a third sex- 'intersex'; where as Germany, USA, Austraila, India and China (and several other countries) do.

So if you have users from any of those countries they may have a third gender on their birth certificate- and not fit into the binary 'male' and 'female' categories the UK currently legally holds.

If 'sex' is needed in a service because it impacts the service user differently (as with pensions) It is best practice to explain why it is needed in plain English, with the possibility of linking out to further guidance.

Example:

**"What is your legally recognised sex?**

We need to know this to calculate your pension, as your sex can have an affect on how much pension you can get."

<link to further help/info>

#### **Further Information**

Here's a nice blog from [REDACTED] the Head of Design for Government, about talking about gender. It's specific to events, but has lot of things that can be taken away in the wider design context.

Hopefully this brain dump is okay, but i'd be really interested in the work you're doing.



7/1/18 3/21/18 2/1/18  
I'm hoping to firm up a design/ research guide addressing issues like this across the whole of the BSA, as we have a lot of service specific guidance rather than one uniform direction.

Thanks again  
[redacted]

From: [redacted]  
Sent: 30 January 2018 13:22  
To: [redacted]  
Subject: Cross gov research project on gender question

Dear [redacted]

Here's some background to what we are doing. We'd really love NHS to get involved from the health aspect and they may well be the only organisation who need to ask both the sex and gender question but that will come out in the sense-making. I'm around from 3.30pm to 4.15pm or we could chat Friday.

[redacted]

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Disclosure Scotland has been conducting user research to improve how we design forms and, as part of that, have been looking at how we ask about sex and/ or gender. The research to date has shown existing design patterns across government services do not fully meet the needs of trans and non-binary people and there's a lot of bias about how to improve question patterns.

From this work, it has become clear that in order to get consistency across government services in the UK in how to ask about sex and /or gender, Scottish Government and Disclosure Scotland have set up a cross-government working group which will include GDS, Office for National Statistics (ONS), Scottish Census, NHS and trans and non-binary support groups. They have agreed to take part in a sense-making workshop to look at all of the evidence, conduct joint analysis and make recommendations on how to best ask the question when it is needed. Sense-making removes the bias from analysis.

I am therefore writing to ask if you would like to be involved in the work either directly by attending a sense-making workshop on 20 March 2017 or by providing input remotely.

Thanks,

[redacted]  
Lead User Researcher  
Disclosure Scotland  
Tel: [redacted]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 09 February 2018 13:36  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Invite to join cross gov working group - topic: sex and/or gender

[REDACTED]

Thanks. A location in Scotland would definitely be most convenient from our perspective.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 08 February 2018 15:02  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Invite to join cross gov working group - topic: sex and/or gender

Fab it may well be Edinburgh I'll let you know.

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 08 February 2018 14:37  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Invite to join cross gov working group - topic: sex and/or gender

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] or myself would like to attend. We are willing to travel but a location with direct flights/rail connections from Edinburgh would be preferred.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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