| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-1268Responded to: 21 May 2025 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**What types of criminal investigations are recorded on the Holmes IT system by Police Scotland?**

There are no set criteria in terms of the criminal investigations which are recorded on the HOLMES IT System.

HOLMES is a computer system that is used to manage large scale serious and complex crime investigations.

**How is sex and gender of individuals recorded on the Holmes IT system by Police Scotland**

**Is there a sex category on the Holmes IT system for recording specific individuals data and which has three options; male, female, unknown?**

HOLMES is a national (UK) application and therefore the data schema is not managed by Police Scotland.  Static lists within the HOLMES application align with the data standard within other national applications such as PNC for consistency and compatibility.

**When recording information on the Holmes IT system, do Police Scotland mark the 'sex' category where it pertains to a specific individual as their biological sex or the individual's preferred gender identity?**

**If a DNA sample from a specific individual is obtained by Police Scotland, and the individual's self-identified gender is the opposite sex to that DNA sample, do Police Scotland record the 'sex' category in accordance with the DNA sample or in accordance with the individual's preferred gender identity on the Holmes IT system?**

**If a DNA sample from a specific individual is obtained by Police Scotland, and the individual's self-identified gender is the opposite sex to that DNA sample, do Police Scotland record the 'sex' category in accordance with the DNA sample or in accordance with the individual's preferred gender identity on any other Police Scotland database which is not the Holmes IT system?**

There is no set policy on the gender and pronouns used by Police Scotland when a suspect/criminal is transgender.

There are also no set policies to answer the questions listed above, therefore the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act applies.

Police Scotland recognises that gender self-identification is a sensitive area of public policy.

Police Scotland’s procedures on the identification and recording of sex and gender is evidence-led, aligns to legislative and operational requirements and is in keeping with our values of policing with integrity, fairness and respect, and upholding human rights.

The purpose of policing in Scotland is to improve safety and wellbeing, Police Scotland take a victim centred approach to investigating crime. Improving the experiences of victims is at the heart of everything we do.

At this time Police Scotland deals with each incident on a case-by-case basis.

We are conducting a full review of Police Scotland’s use of sex and gender to consider any improvements to the terminology, recording practices and use of data, ensuring they are current, comply with relevant legislation and provide clear guidance to aid operational practice. This important review work will now also consider the recent Supreme Court judgment on the subject.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by email or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by email or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.