

Guidance to Support Trans Staff and Students

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1. Introduction

The University's [Trans Equality Policy Statement](#) is guided by our [University Values](#), and applies to all our prospective applicants for employment and study, employees and students, contractors, visitors and partners.

This document has been developed to provide practical guidance, particularly in respect of staff and students, to support the implementation of the Trans Equality Policy Statement.

Key aspects that this guidance covers include:

- Underlying principles to provide a welcoming, supportive and inclusive environment;
- Practical guidance to support staff and students on matters such as a change of identity;
- Supporting staff and students through transition, recognising that individual circumstances will vary.

Where this guidance document refers to 'trans staff and students', or 'trans people', it has in mind everyone whose gender identity is not expressed in ways that are typically associated with their sex assigned at birth. This includes those who have non-binary, non-gender, agendered or gender-fluid identities.

2. Key guiding principles

The University celebrates and values the diversity of our staff and students and believes that the inclusion of trans people enriches our University environment and community. The University will treat all trans employees and students with respect and strive to provide a positive working and learning environment free from bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation, to enable the best outcomes for all.

Challenge. If you witness transphobic bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation, you should challenge it if you feel safe and able to do so and/or report it. See [The Staff and Student Policies and Procedures on Preventing and Addressing Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#) for further information.

Confidentiality. Do not disclose a person's trans identity or trans history unless they have given you explicit permission to do so. 'Outing' a person as trans may be classed as harassment and, in some contexts could amount to a criminal offence.

Support. Provide positive support to meet the individual needs of our staff and students.

3. Practical guidance for staff and students

3.1 How do I change my identity at the University?

Staff can update some aspects of their identity on their staff record through [Employee Self Service](#) using the [Equality Data tab on their Personal Profile](#). Similarly, students can update some of their information during [Registration](#) which takes place at the start of a course and annually thereafter. To request a change to any other area of your identity, you can

complete an online Identity Change Request form ([Staff Form](#), [Student Form](#)) detailing the changes you wish to be made. In some instances, you will be assigned a dedicated person to support you through this process. Further information is available on our [Identity Management page](#).

Additional student considerations are included on the [student registration help pages](#). Note that, on the completion of their degree, students will be contacted prior to award ceremonies to confirm the name on their certificate.

If you have graduated from the University and later wish to update your details on the Alumni database, you can request changes through an [online form](#). If you are a former staff member, you can request changes to your name and title on University systems by contacting the [Central HR Team](#).

3.2 Staff recruitment

If you are applying for a role at the University and have any questions or concerns about the recruitment process that you would like to discuss, for example, concerns about references or the documentation you may be asked to provide, you can contact the [People and Culture Operations Manager](#) who will be able to support you.

3.3. Student applications

If you are applying for a place at the University and you would like support regarding disclosure or non-disclosure of your trans identity for a programme of study, you can contact the [Admissions Enquiries Team](#) who will be able to support you through the application and admissions process.

If you have any needs or concerns relating to student accommodation you can speak with the [University Accommodation Team](#) directly.

3.4 Use of pronouns/nouns

Using the names, titles and pronouns which make people feel comfortable is a way in which to show support and respect for trans staff and students. Examples of pronouns include he/him, she/her, they/them. It is respectful to the individual to use the pronouns and names they request. If you are unsure which pronouns someone uses, you can use gender neutral terms such as colleague, person, student or partner.

3.5 Occupational requirements

In rare circumstances, being a particular sex can be a 'genuine occupational requirement'. For example, where a particular sex is required for reasons of privacy and decency. Equality law makes clear an employer must be reasonable in claiming an occupational requirement and this must be identified at the beginning of the recruitment process.

This may also apply to student placements. Students are advised to contact their Placement Tutor or Employability Team for support, if needed.

3.6 Overseas travel and field trips

Travel can sometimes come with additional challenges for trans people. There are different social attitudes and legal protections in place for trans people across the world. Consideration should be given to this when planning for staff and student travel, alongside any requirements for documentation to travel. The [International Team](#) are able to provide advice and guidance for staff and the [Study Abroad team](#) can provide advice for student placements and study. Academic staff of the University have produced guidance for the sector: [PRIDE Fieldwork Guidelines: Pointers for Research that is Inclusive, Diverse and Equitable for LGBTQ+ fieldworkers](#)

4. Supporting staff and students going through transition

If a student or member of staff is considering or undergoing transition, socially and/or medically, they should speak with their personal tutor or line manager, respectively. The [Student Education Service](#), [Equality and Inclusion Unit](#), or [People and Culture](#) teams can also be contacted for support and advice. The individual should be asked how they wish to proceed and signposted to relevant guidance and support, where needed.

With agreement from the individual, a meeting should be arranged to discuss next steps in confidence and agree ongoing support. It may be helpful to discuss what challenges may arise and what support can be offered. A significant part of the process may be if the individual wishes to start presenting in their affirmed gender and/or name publicly. This must be managed and communicated appropriately, particularly to those who have a working or study relationship with the individual. The decision around communication of the transition must be led by the individual.

It can be helpful to prepare a confidential plan for the period of transition and thereafter. The implementation of the plan should be reviewed regularly and reassessed at each significant part of the process.

4.1 Managing absence

Staff and students undergoing medical and surgical processes related to gender reassignment will be appropriately supported to enable them to attend their appointments whilst meeting their workload commitments and priorities, or programme and study requirements, respectively. Early discussions should take place with the relevant line and/or HR manager or the student personal tutor, to facilitate absence from work or study with minimal impact.

The University's [Policy on leave for medical and dental appointments](#) may be helpful, and consideration could also be given to other documents such as the [Flexible Working policy](#) and [mitigating circumstances](#) page for extension of study period. As with all cases, managers and tutors or student support staff should be as flexible as possible to meet requests for leave or changes to working patterns and study, being mindful to operational needs and study commitments including the submission of assignments and completion of examinations.

5. Reporting transphobia and other inappropriate behaviour

The [Policies and Procedures on Preventing and Addressing Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#) detail the processes for identifying and reporting unacceptable behaviour, whether you are experiencing or witnessing the behaviour.

If an incident poses an immediate danger, threat or serious risk, you should call emergency services (telephone: 999) and then University Security Services (telephone: 0113 343 2222).