



**Maynooth
University**
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

Gender Identity and Expression Guidelines

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Supporting documents

Protection of staff against Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Maynooth University Equality and Diversity Policy

Gender Identity and Expression Policy

Introduction

Maynooth University recognises the core human right to freedom of gender identity and authentic self expression of one's gender. Therefore, the University is committed to a building a community where each individual is free to achieve their full potential without limitations based on gender expression and/or identity.

It is generally recognised that transgender and gender diverse persons are at greater risk of experiencing bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination throughout their professional careers and academic experiences. Maynooth University makes a clear statement of support for all, regardless of gender identity or expression and that mistreatment will not be tolerated within our community.

The Gender Identity and Expression Policy supports the University's wider commitment to Equality and Diversity (policy can be found [here](#)*).

The University has developed these guidelines to provide practical advice on creating a gender inclusive culture. This document builds on the commitment outlined in the Gender Identity and Expression Policy.

These guidelines will address:

- Building a gender inclusive culture
- Understanding gender identifying language
- Facilities
- Supports for students and staff
- Processes for staff
- Processes for students, graduates and alumni
- Resources for facilitation transitioning in the university community

Key Terminology and Definitions

Please refer to the Gender Identity and Expression Policy for a non-exhaustive list of the key terms and definitions pertaining to this guide. For the purpose of this guide, usage of the term 'trans*' and trans inclusive' incorporates the breadth of gender identity including those who identify away from a gender binary.

Building a Gender Inclusive Culture

Maynooth University is committed to ensuring that every individual is provided an environment where they can thrive and feel confident to be their authentic self. Individuals who have identified dissonance in their gender identity or are considering coming out as gender diverse or transgender, may look for 'clues' that indicate that their environment is safe and that they will be accepted. It is important that everyone understands their own role in building an inclusive culture and in taking action if there are signs that may suggest any negative attitudes to gender diversity.

Ways you can promote a gender inclusive culture:

- Be aware of the language used in the environment, particularly behaviours that might suggest transphobic attitudes. Demonstrate a good example and where appropriate, challenge negative attitudes that may be incorrect or uninformed.
- Gender diverse and transgender persons may closely monitor the information they share about themselves. Therefore, while it is important to be an ally, do not pressure individuals to share personal information beyond what is offered.
- Understand University policies pertaining to equality, inclusion and diversity. Undertake available training and become a champion for inclusion in your work team.

- Be aware of any networks or supports within the University that might be available. For example, if there is an LGBTI Network, ensure that promotional information is made available.
- If you are managing a gender diverse or transgender person in your work team or if you are supporting trans* students, you are required to uphold the highest level of confidentiality.

Understanding Gender Identifying Language

In understanding the importance of gender identifying language, you can demonstrate respect and support for transgender and gender diverse colleagues and students. No one should ever be 'outed' as transgender without expressed written consent, therefore by using considered language particularly when referring to names and pronouns, not only are you demonstrated a safe and respectful environment, you can avoid unnecessary hurt and discomfort.

Considered use of respectful language is critical for the following reasons:

- The individual may not be 'out' as a gender diverse or transgender person, therefore by using incorrect gender identifying language, you may actually breach their confidentiality.
- Consistency in using preferred language will reinforce your respect and support for the individual.
- Demonstrating your understanding of diversity in gender expression and gender identities indicates that you are an 'ally' and that you will provide a safe and inclusive space.

Preferred/True Names and Name Changes

An individual may not introduce themselves with the same name that exists on official records. Always refer to their self-identified name when engaging in conversation or unofficial correspondence. An individual may go through processes to update any official name change, however, unless legally required, you should always refer to the name they have introduced themselves with.

To intentionally address a transgender person by their 'deadname' is extremely hurtful and disrespectful. Respect and dignity is at the core of the University's Policies on Bullying and Harassment and Equality and Diversity and it is suggested that all staff familiarise themselves with these policies.

Pronouns

An individual may introduce themselves with their preferred/true pronoun (he/she/they) and every effort should be made to ensure that you use the identified preferred pronoun. If you are unsure about which pronoun is correct, it may be acceptable to ask, however you can also use a gender neutral pronoun (they/their).

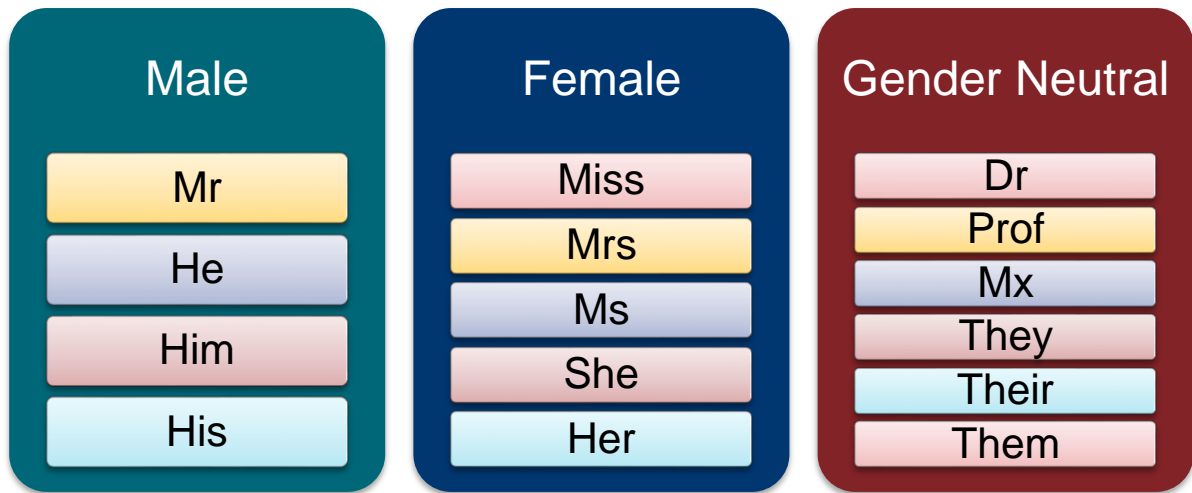
There may be instances where you accidentally use the wrong pronoun, particularly when a person is currently, or has recently transitioned. It is important to be aware of your language and to respect the individual's experience. If you accidentally use the wrong pronoun, apologise and swiftly adjust your language.

Gender Identifying Language

Consider the following everyday pronouns and how they can create a gendered language in our daily interactions.

Example

You notice that one of your research students has recently changed their email sign-off to include (they/them) after their name. Until now, you have always referred to them using masculine pronouns (he/his). While the student hasn't actually said something to you in person, you decide that this is obviously important to the student and make a conscious effort to use the correct pronouns in all future interactions with or about the student.



Personal Supports for Students and Staff

Maynooth University commits to providing a supportive and inclusive culture for all and there are a number of personal supports available to staff and students to meet specific needs.

Staff

Staff have access to personal supports through the Inspire EAP service. This is a confidential service provided by an external service funded by the university. To find out more information, you can visit the HR Website.

For advice within the workplace, staff members are able to contact the HR Equality Officer who is able to advise on policy and processes pertaining gender expression and identity in the workplace, transitioning at work, bullying harassment and sexual harassment and discrimination. The HR Equality Officer will be able to refer to other people within the University community if required/ appropriate

Policies

You can find more information about key policies related to Equality and Diversity, Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment and other key HR Policies on the HR Website.

Students

Current Maynooth Students have access to personal supports through a range of professional, confidential Services provided by the University:

Student Support Officer
Student Services Centre
01 474 7627

Health Centre
Student Services Centre
01 708 3878

Counselling Service
Student Services Centre
01 708 3554

Chaplain
Student Services Centre
01 708 3469

The Maynooth Students' Union provides a number of supports, advice, social programs and advocacy for all registered students. The VP Welfare and Equality can be contacted on welfare@nuimsu.ie or you can visit the website here.

Students are also encouraged to speak to the Student Records Office in Registry regarding any questions they may have about their student records. Contact details are records.office@mu.ie or 01 708 3813.

External Supports

The Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) provides invaluable supports and advice for transgender and gender diverse individuals, including resources on accessing Gender Recognition processes, workplace supports and advice on building trans inclusive workplaces.

The Gender Recognition Act outlines the processes of have your true gender recognised and receiving a gender recognition certificate. More information about the act can be found [here](#) and information about the application process is found [here](#)

Gender Diversity at Work (Staff)

It is recognised that people who transition at work or who identify as a gender diverse person in a professional environment may face unique challenges. Transgender and gender diverse staff will be supported and protected against discrimination, workplace bullying, harassment and sexual harassment through policies and practices designed to provide a fully inclusive environment. The purpose of this guide is to provide some guidance on processes available to Head of Departments in managing staff and for transgender and gender diverse staff to understand processes available to them.

Staff Members

Employees seeking guidance on transitioning in the workplace are, in the first instance, encouraged to contact their Head of Department. Alternatively, they can contact a HR representative or the HR Equality Officer. This person will then be able to guide with any processes and will link in with appropriate policies and supports.

Gender expression can be varied and is unique to each individual, therefore, there is no prescribed way to transition. It is important that staff members are empowered to manage the process with support from the Head of Department. The staff member should be able to control communication around when people are told and in what forum.

If you have any specific questions, the HR Equality Officer will be able to provide confidential support on any necessary processes and policies of which you might need to be aware. HR may also be able to support your Head of Department and your work team if you feel that any change in gender expression and/or identity may not be well received.



Key Information for Staff

You are unable to update your gender or name through the CoreHR Employee Self Service portal (ESS) therefore, any formal Gender Recognition Certificates will need to be provided to HR to ensure that all staff records (including pension records) are kept up to date. This will also apply to any name changes. All staff records are confidential and are kept according to data protection guidelines.

Details of all leave policies are available on the HR Website

Head of Department/ Managers

In managing transgender and gender diverse staff, you should be aware of the following:

Culture

- Are you actively managing a gender inclusive environment (refer to the above section)?
- Have you actively familiarised both yourself and your team with the gender identity and expression policy and other relevant HR policies?
- Could you run Gender Identity and Expression Training for your team?

Confidentiality

- It is imperative that you do not breach the confidentiality of any employee. As previously noted, if you are managing a transgender or gender diverse employee, it is important to allow them the space to determine when and where they 'come out' or to start presenting in their true/identified gender.
- If an employee seeks support from you to 'come out' to the work team, you may be required to lead conversations within the department.

Human Resources

- As a Head of Department, you may need to encourage your employee to contact Human Resources to ensure that all appropriate staff records are updated to reflect their true gender. This might include name changes, changes to email addresses and other staff files.
- HR will be able to provide support to you as Head of Department, however it is important to understand that you are required to lead a culture of inclusivity in your work team to set a positive example for your staff.

Example

Kate recently came out and intends to start presenting as a woman at work. She spoke to Tom, her Head of Department who agreed that this would be discussed at the next department meeting. Tom has some concerns about possible negativity in the team, however understands that he can only support Kate and try to set an example for the department. After speaking with Kate, they have agreed that she will inform her broader network outside the department, however she will keep Tom updated if she encounters any issues. Tom advised that he will check in with her regularly to make sure she is ok and feels supported.

Transitioning in the Workplace

It is recommended that staff members who transition in the workplace engage with their HoD. Together, you should start to consider communication plans, timelines and how best to engage with colleagues, students, external stakeholders and other key professional relationships. The staff member may prefer to communicate their own transition to stakeholders, however it is recommended that the HoD or other leadership position lead on communication within the professional team.

Processes for Students, Graduates and Alumni

Key Information for Students

For any correspondent, a non-binary title can be recorded (Mx or empty).

Students are not able to record a 'preferred' or 'true' name on the Student Records system unless it is similarly recorded on official documentation such as a passport or birth certificate. Therefore, transgender and gender diverse students who wish to update their student details on Moodle and other student IT systems will need to officially update their student records accordingly. An example of this, includes a student who socially transitions but who does not officially update their name on the Student Records system; their student ID will continue to reflect their official, recorded name.

Some internal department student details may not be updated following a name change on the Student Records system. An example of this could be tutorial lists held on department spreadsheets.

It is recognised that an important factor to success is authentic gender expression and the University is committed to recognised gender diversity within its student cohort. Gender diverse and transgender students will be supported throughout their academic career with Maynooth University at every stage, from enquiry and application through to graduation and alumni.

Not every gender diverse or transgender student will seek to undertake formal processes to change their gender and/or name, however if required, the University will make available processes to reflect official changes in the student records. Any official changes should be requested to the Registry Policy officer. In order to change the recorded gender on the student file, a Gender Recognition Certificate (or other acceptable documentation such as a passport) should be provided to the Registry Policy Office.

Students are able to update their gender status on their student record. Students are currently able to self-identify as:

- Male
- Female
- Gender non-binary
- Prefer not to say (Un-disclosed)

The Student Records Office in Registry manages all student records and is able to provide advice for future and current students, graduates and alumni.

Staff working with students

It is expected that staff working with gender diverse and transgender students will actively promote a trans* inclusive environment and will respect the differences of each student regardless of their gender expression and/or identity.

For staff (both academic and professional) who are working with transgender and gender diverse students, it is important that you familiarise yourself with the supports available as well as the policies and practices in place. If you are unsure about how to support students who identify to you as gender diverse or transgender, you can contact the HR Equality Officer, the Registry Policy Officer or Student Services. The Maynooth Students' Union also provides significant supports for all students.

Again, it is imperative that you demonstrate the highest level of confidentiality. Be aware of potential issues that could 'out' a student – for example referring to the wrong name in a public setting, aware of your written communications (both electronic and hard copy) and discussing students with your colleagues.

Facilities

All individuals are able to use facilities provided for their identified gender without question or challenge.

In its ongoing commitment to inclusivity, Maynooth University will be increasing the use of gender inclusive facilities and where possible, toilets should be single celled and non-gendered. Any new development or redevelopment should include ungendered, single-cell facilities except in cases of high footfall areas, where mandatory ratios may exist.

Any inquiries or questions about facilities can be directed to the Director of Campus & Commercial Services.

Important Information for Managers and Staff

Pensions

For the purpose of pensions, life cover and disability cover, staff will be regarded as their legally recorded sex as indicated on official identification.

Employment References

When providing a reference for staff or students who are affiliated with Maynooth University, you must not make reference to their transgender status (included previous names, pronouns or titles) without clear instruction from the person who you are provided a reference for.

If Human Resources receives a professional reference for someone who has previously transitioned with reference to a previous name, pronoun or title, this information will be treated with strict confidence and will not be made publically available to any selection panel.

Dress Codes

Example

At the start of the semester, Sam discloses to you that they were gender neutral and identifies with gender neutral language and pronouns. You can see that this is not reflected in official student lists, and suggest they might update their student records. Sam isn't sure how to do this (and neither are you) so ask Sam if it's ok if you ask someone without breaching their confidentiality and come back to them.

Sam is able to update their student records themselves, however changing the gender on their official transcript requires proof of ID. Therefore, unless Sam received a Gender Recognition Certificate, this will remain in the gender marker provided on their official ID through their application to study.

Maynooth does not have an official dress code policy that could restrict gender identity or expression. All staff and students are welcome to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity and expression while still representing Maynooth University in a positive light.

Policy Development, Process Creation and University Forms

It is recommended that any new policy development or process creation is gender neutral in language. Exceptions to this may include gender-specific policies (maternity leave). Refer to the above section on Gender Identifying Language.

When collecting information through University forms, it is important to include options beyond male/female. Preferred practice is to include the following options (as recommended by HEA and Advance HE):

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer to not disclose

Key Contacts

Staff

Human Resources

Equality Officer
Riverstown Lodge, South Campus
01 708 3866
equality@mu.ie

Students

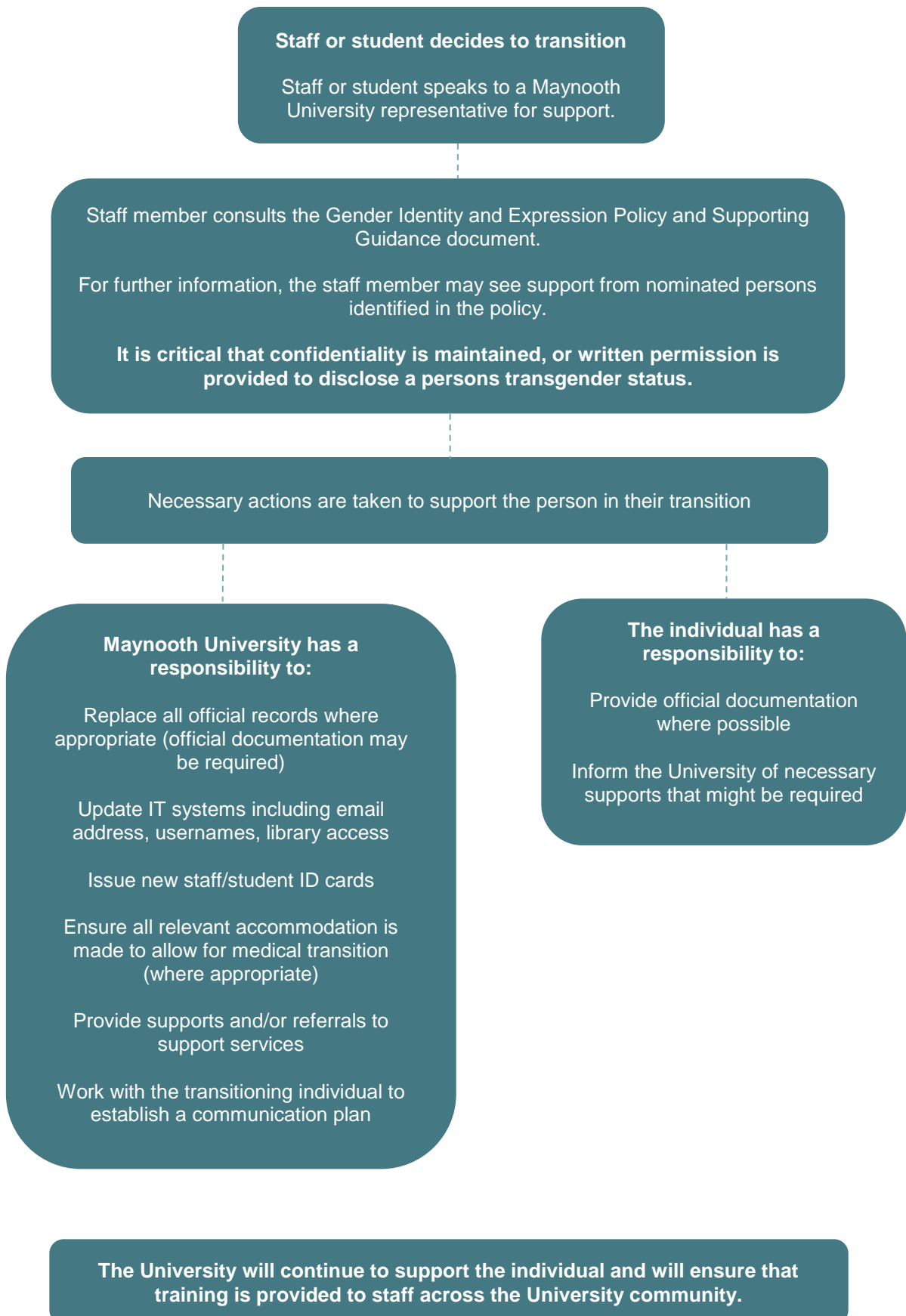
Registrar's Office

Humanity House, South Campus
01 7083579
registrar@mu.ie

Vice President for Welfare and Equality Maynooth Students' Union

MSU Building, North Campus
01 708 6808
welfare@msu.ie

Appendix 1 Transitioning Checklists and Flowcharts



Appendix 2 Promoting an Inclusive Environment for Transgender and Gender Diverse staff and students

Respect everyone's right to gender expression and identity.

- **Do not impose your own identity and expectations onto others** and recognise behaviours that might be considered gender stereotyping.

Do not ask intrusive questions.

- Recognise that there is a difference between getting to know someone in a respectful manner and asking questions to satisfy your own curiosity about transgender and gender diverse people. Before asking something, consider if it is necessary? Could it offend? Or are you asking this question for your own benefit?
- Some questions you might be inclined to ask can be deeply personal and could pertain to information no-one should ever be expected share. Never ask about personal, private, medical or legal matters.

Treat people with the confidentiality they deserve.

- If you are trusted with information or have access to personal records, you should never breach this confidence or disclose information.

Understand gender inclusive language and acknowledge if you make a mistake.

- Many people have never had to consider gender identifying language in everyday conversation and it often takes practice to talk or write with gender neutral language. If you make a mistake and mis-gender someone by using the wrong pronoun or title, acknowledge the mistake, make necessary corrections and understand that this may have a negative impact on someone.

Create a positive environment in your team.

- Stand up to disrespectful language and where possible be an ally for transgender and gender diverse staff and students.