

Gender dysphoria policy

In creating an inclusive community, the University recognises the importance of each person as an individual. This includes recognition of an individual's self-identity as a male or female as they present themselves to the University. The University through this policy is committed to ensuring that no member of staff or student, or prospective member of staff or students, will be treated less favourably on the grounds of the gender in which they present themselves to the University. Gender dysphoria and transsexuality will be included in equality training, in monitoring complaints and surveys where that is appropriate.

It is expected that everyone within the University community will adhere to this policy and behave in ways that are sensitive to and respectful to others and not doing so may result in disciplinary action.

The policy should be read as part of the wider set of policies, including equality and diversity, within the University that includes:

- Equal Opportunities policy
- Harassment policy and procedures
- Grievance procedures for staff
- Regulations governing student complaints
- Academic appeals procedure
- Learning and teaching strategy
- Strategy for widening participation
- Recruitment and selection procedure
- Promotion review procedures

The University will take reasonable steps to investigate and act if there appears on campus propaganda, such as graffiti, written materials or songs, etc., that contravene this policy. Individuals discovered supplying or acting on such propaganda might be subject to disciplinary action.

1 Definition of Gender Dysphoria and Transsexuality

Gender dysphoria is an umbrella term that covers feelings of unhappiness and incongruity concerning an individual's physical sex and/ or gender role.

A transsexual person is someone who experiences a deep and long lasting conflict between their physical sex and their mental gender. The individual may wish to change their physical sex through hormonal and/ or surgical reconstruction or to live in the gender role that conforms to their gender identity.

It should be noted that with the definitions above sex refers to a person's anatomical or physical sex. Gender is less clearly defined but concerns gender identity, a person's internal perception and experience of gender and gender role, the way in which a person lives in a community and interacts with others based on their gender identity.

2 Recognition of Gender Identity

The University will recognise the gender in which the individual lives in their everyday. In completing applications forms for admission to the University as a student or for employment, a person can indicate their sex or gender as that in which they live even where this differs from the sex recorded on their birth certificate. It is also acceptable to produce a passport as proof of identity rather than a birth certificate.

Candidates who are invited to interview for employment are required to complete a questionnaire based on their medical history and requested to place this in a sealed envelope. The completed questionnaire will only be forwarded to Occupational Health for medical clearance when the selection process has been completed and a successful candidate chosen. Occupational Health treats all medical questionnaires with extreme confidentiality and does not pass any information to Human Resources or the employing School or Service. A person who has reassigned their gender can feel confident to be open on their questionnaire in the knowledge that any information will be kept within Occupational Health.

3 The Transition Process

The University recognises that it can take many years for an individual to make the decision to live in a gender that is not the sex recorded on their birth certificate. Similarly there is acknowledgement that the decision to reassign gender may occur whilst a person is studying or working at the University. Assistance and support will be available to individuals during this transition phase and for the people that they work and study with as and when appropriate.

Individuals who have taken the decision to reassign their gender should either contact their personal tutor or the Human Resources Service in the first instance to access the support mechanisms available.

The University will be guided by the wishes of the individual in terms of the speed at which the transition will progress and agreement reached on matters such as when:

- the individual will first present in a different gender
- name changes and official records will be altered
- colleagues will be informed of the change and how
- the individual will use facilities relating the gender which they are assigning to, for example toilets.

Individuals will be able to take time off for medical and/ or surgical treatment in line with the sickness absence and attendance procedures in operation at the University. For other treatments, such as voice training or electrolysis, requests for time off will be treated sympathetically and for staff, flexible-working patterns may be considered as might unpaid leave. Students will be expected to catch up on missed learning opportunities with the support of their personal tutors.

Advice and support is available from the Diversity Manager.