

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University is committed to ensuring that all students and potential students have the right to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect. These guidelines along with the transgender policy aim to assist the staff in supporting trans students and applicants and also outline what trans people can expect from the University.
- 1.2 This guidance should be read in conjunction with the University's Transgender policy document and its glossary of terms.

### 2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSTITUTION

- 2.1 Clear information and guidance should be made available to students informing them of the institution's approach to, and support for, transgender students. Such information should clearly convey a message of affirmation and support, alongside recognition of the distinctive contribution that trans students and staff make to the academic community.

### 3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

- 3.1 If transitioning students wish for the assistance of the university to meet their learning and support needs, it is essential that the institution is informed as soon as possible. The university aims to provide first class support for trans students and the early provision of information from those about to commence the process will allow appropriate support processes to be put in place in a timely fashion. Failure to notify the university in good time may unintentionally result in lesser provision and support.

### 4.0 STUDENT REGISTRATION

- 4.1 New students in the process of gender transition are asked to inform the university prior to registration if they wish the university to be notified. A letter should be sent to the Student Record office.
- 4.2 Staff registering new students will need to pay particular attention to the needs of students who are transitioning from one gender to another. Essential documentation required, including evidence of identity, and any discussion surrounding this might require a private and confidential environment.
- 4.3 Although the current registration requires students to choose whether they are male or female, the University acknowledges that some students may identify themselves neither male or female and prefer to choose 'Other' or 'Prefer not to say'. The University will update the system if there is any change of registration process at Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

### 5.0 PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT TRANSITIONING STUDENTS

- 5.1 The university recognises that transitioning students may use a variety of routes to declare their intention to the institution. The student can talk to Student Advisor or directly with their tutor or course director. It is important that faculties and central services identify appropriate staff to manage these procedures and offer direct support.

- 5.2 Once the student has formally informed the institution of their intention to transition in writing to the Head of Department, the initial institutional nominee will seek the consent of the student to discuss the situation in outline with other key staff. With the permission of the student, senior Faculty, Student Services and Registry colleagues are to be notified so that appropriate learning and record-keeping arrangements can be considered.
- 5.3 Following notification, a Faculty representative and Student Service Department (SSD) representative shall be appointed in consultation with a student in order to meet with the transitioning student to discuss learning and personal support needs.
- 5.4 The key purpose of this meeting is to establish a dialogue with the transitioning student about their needs, what support they would value, how the university can help and any specific issues to be addressed. It will also be important to establish with the student a faculty based mentor who can continue to offer regular support meetings. Such appointments will address any learning-related needs as they arise (or preferably in advance) and draw in other relevant members of staff as necessary. A meeting has to take place in a safe and comfortable environment where students can express their concerns.
- 5.5 During the meeting it will be necessary to agree an action plan which takes into account the student's transition process and what the university will do to support this. Whilst the plan will be confidential, it will be necessary to agree with the student who should receive an individual copy and who is permitted access to it.
- 5.6 The action plan should identify the time-line for any particular stages in the transition as well as the issues and support needs arising, including leading time to put action plan in practice. Whilst every trans person's journey is unique, it will be helpful to discuss:
- 5.6.1 The date when the person intends to live in their acquired gender (i.e. commencing real life experience.) During the early stages of transition a student may choose not to permanently present in their acquired or preferred gender. Trans students may or may not engage in a variety of hormonal and surgical interventions and their transition may not be complete for several years.
- 5.6.2 The date when the student intends to change their name and personal details. How would the student like the University and others to refer to them – name and title?
- 5.6.3 Does the student wish to continue with their programme of study at this moment in time or consider alternative arrangements (part-time study, temporary withdrawal, or another arrangement?)
- 5.6.4 Are there particular university services that could support the transitioning student? Whilst specialist medical services are available, confidential support (counselling, wellbeing) should be offered by the university. Whilst these services do not specialise in trans issues, they do offer excellent emotional support alongside an appreciation of the impact of the HE context.
- 5.6.5 Dates (and duration) of times away from the university for medical consultations/treatment programmes (the precise details of actual procedures may not be relevant for the purposes of the institution and inappropriate intrusion into personal matters is to be avoided) There may be impacts arising

from absence, on a student's study or assessment. If this is the case, reasonable adjustment can be considered.

- 5.6.6 Are there any possible side-effects of medication that the student wishes to discuss? Some treatments may adversely affect performance and this should be taken into consideration when reviewing their learning support needs.
  - 5.6.7 If the student is on a professional programme of study are there any particular professional issues that need addressing?
  - 5.6.8 How does the student wish other students to be informed about their transition? For example, some students prefer a letter to be sent from the university to key seminar and tutorial group participants whereas others prefer to tell peers informally and on a one-to-one basis.
  - 5.6.9 How does the student wish relevant academic and administrative staff to be informed – and is it clear who needs to know? Are there any other people to consider informing (Finance colleagues, committee chairs, club and society chairs?)
  - 5.6.10 Has the student been consulted regarding amendments to records and associated systems? (Please see section below for further details)
  - 5.6.11 Consideration should also be given to the suitability of current accommodation arrangements, especially if the student is in UWE or UWE managed provision. Is there a need to liaise with Accommodation Services re. current arrangements and/or a change in provision?
  - 5.6.12 Trans students should be provided with an opportunity to discuss whether there are any other university facilities that cause concern. In particular, toilet arrangements can pose particular challenges. Students in the process of transition often express concern about the use of appropriate toilet facilities. Best practice in this area includes provision of "gender neutral" toilet facilities but these may not be readily available. It is recommended that trans students are invited to use the facilities of their preferred gender. However, this is a complex issue and the decision of a trans student regarding use of gender-labelled toilet facilities is likely to vary at different times during the transition process. Trans students will value the sensitivity and support of relevant staff.
- 5.7 Trans students may have been already experiencing negative treatment from other students or staff or may experience this after transition. Students need to be informed on where they can raise these issues and how to report these incidences. Extra support in dealing with these situations may need to be provided if necessary.
  - 5.8 Consideration should also be given to the extent to which established institutional policies cover the needs of the transitioning student and if not how these will need to be amended. All relevant procedures need to address transphobia. (e.g. Complaints Procedure, Dignity at Work, guidance on Harassment.)
  - 5.9 Further thought should also be given to the training of relevant staff – particularly those involved in day-to-day student communication and contact. Training on diversity and equality matters should include awareness-raising of transgender issues.

## **6.0 RESPONDING TO REQUESTS TO AMEND RECORDS FROM TRANSGENDER STUDENTS**

- 6.1 Students should notify the University of their intention to transition to the gender of their choice in writing to the Head of Department.
- 6.2 The University can change the following information on the student record at the appropriate time without requiring any documentation except the official notification letter from the student. The following records should not be changed without the expressed permission of the student:
  - 6.2.1 Pronoun (Ms, Mrs, Mr, etc)
  - 6.2.2 Name
  - 6.2.3 Gender/sex marker (Male, Female)
- 6.3 For international students, advice needs to be sought from their Student Advisor as any record change needs to be in line with the regulation of the UK Border Agency.
- 6.4 The University will look into offering students the option of having a temporary explanatory note added to the student record system, so that staff are aware that the student is transitioning and are less likely to query the student if there is a perceived mismatch between the student record and how the student presents themselves.
- 6.5 The University should issue a letter from the Head of Department to the student advising them of the changes that have been made, the effective date of those changes and the name of the person who should be contacted if the student experiences any difficulties in the course of their contact with the University arising from their change of gender.
- 6.6 Information about the changes should not be shared with anyone who does not need to know, but can be shared with the specific individuals with the express consent of the student.
- 6.7 From that point forward, the student must be referred to using the appropriate name and gender pronoun.
- 6.8 As a legal document, existing and new degree certificates can only be issued in a new name when the student provides the student number and one of the following:
  - 6.8.1 A statutory declaration of name change
  - 6.8.2 A new birth certificate
  - 6.8.3 A driving licence
  - 6.8.4 Passport
- 6.9 If a student transitions after graduation and requires a degree certificate in a new name and gender, this can be provided, providing they present one of the documents listed in point 6.8 above.
- 6.10 If a student transitions after graduation and requires a reference in a new name and gender, this can be provided, providing they present one of the documents listed in

point 6.8 above. The student needs to contact the staff in the faculty who is responsible for student records to inform the change and request for the reference.

6.11 The following is a list of appropriate changes that will need to be arranged, in consultation with the student. No records should be changed without the explicit consent of the student:

6.11.1 Student ID card – new photograph and names and title

6.11.2 ISIS/other student record systems, to include removal of old and uploading of new photo

6.11.3 Course/student personal manual files

6.11.4 NUS card

6.11.5 New email account

6.11.6 Programme/class registers

6.11.7 Accommodation records

6.11.8 Timetabling/exam timetabling systems

6.11.9 Any UWE club/society lists or cards

6.12 Consideration may also need to be given to:

6.12.1 Online records, e-portfolio/record of achievements (eventually the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) will result from the ISIS record)

6.12.2 Application /registration forms, finance records

6.12.3 Personal tutor records.

6.12.4 Welfare/disability/counselling records

6.12.5 Volunteering and mentoring records

6.12.6 Course representative posters and contact details

6.12.7 Committee minutes and records, for example, programme committees, Student Union committees

6.13 No change will be required to the student number.

6.13 The student will need to contact funding bodies (eg Student Finance England), to ensure all Bodies have the same information.

## **7.0 LEARNING SUPPORT CONSIDERATIONS FOR TRANS STUDENTS**

7.1 Feeling comfortable and included in the learning environment is important to ensure each student has an equal opportunity to learn and achieve. All students should feel able to participate in all programme learning activities on campus and beyond without anxiety.

## 7.2 CLASSROOM CLIMATE AND CURRICULUM

7.2.1 All student facing staff should adhere to the following principles to ensure all trans students receive a positive experience of the curriculum and class room culture:

7.2.1.1 Students need to feel confident that they will be free from discrimination or harassment. It is important that students feel able to make complaints and that their concerns will be acknowledged seriously; hate crimes against people perceived as gender variant are not uncommon.

7.2.1.2 Decisions about who should be informed and how they should be informed about a student's intention to transition should be discussed with, and approved by, the student.

7.2.1.3 It is important that correct names and pronouns are used by teaching staff and peers, so this needs to be emphasised.

7.2.1.4 All staff should ensure stereotypes about trans people are excluded from any course materials and, where relevant to the curriculum, include positive examples of trans people's contributions to the field.

7.2.1.5 All staff should ensure language that is discriminatory is challenged and not tolerated in the learning environment.

7.2.1.6 All staff should use trans inclusive language on forms, materials and websites; not everyone identifies as 'she' or 'he'.

7.2.1.7 If there is an issue for trans students during or after transition, they can discuss this with an identified faculty representative to get the necessary faculty support

## 7.3 ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE

7.3.1 Staff need to be aware that students may require time off for medical appointments and/or procedures, sometimes at short notice, and flexibility and support should be provided in these circumstances

7.3.2 When trans students apply for extenuating circumstances, there should be good understanding on trans issues in considering the case

## 7.4 ASSESSMENT

7.4.1 Consider the impact of required absence for required appointments and procedures on students' assessment scheme

7.4.2 Reassure students by providing information about application process and regulations for extenuating circumstances

## 7.5 FIELD TRIPS

7.5.1 Consider trans students' needs for accommodation and bathroom facilities when away from the campus.

7.5.1 Ensure trans students are included in activities and not treated negatively by others as sharing accommodation and being somewhere new will make some trans students more vulnerable than studying in a classroom setting

## 7.6 PLACEMENTS

7.6.1 Some student groups are more likely to encounter barriers when negotiating work based placements, and trans students might be more likely to encounter these. Ensure students feel supported by university staff in finding and negotiating supportive placement conditions

## 8.0 **HARRASSMENT**

8.1 Any incidents of misconduct, harassment, bullying or victimisation will not be tolerated by the University and will be dealt with as quickly as possible. All voyeuristic, intrusive and personal questions or discussions are unacceptable and unlawful.

8.2 The University is currently drafting a specific bullying and harassment policy. In the meantime, such matters are dealt with through the university's disciplinary procedure. Further information on UWE's disciplinary procedures can be found at:  
<http://acreg.uwe.ac.uk/default.asp>

## 9.0 **Further information**

9.1 A list of useful contacts and information including glossary of terms can be found in the transgender policy statement.

9.2 For trans students, advice and guidance from their Student Adviser can be sought to discuss specific situations or where further clarification of the guidelines is necessary. For the staff supporting trans students, advice and guidance can be sought from the Equality and Diversity Unit.

## Appendix 1

### Flow Chart outlining the transitioning process

It is important to note that trans students have different approaches to their transition. Some want to change the entire record and obtain the GRC, yet others may not wish to do so and the University will respect and support individual's choices and wishes. If someone does not wish to change their record, some of the actions below may not apply. This flowchart is only a guideline and all cases will be treated individually.

