

# Trans and Gender-Diverse Equality Policy Statement

## Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for how the University will support trans and gender-diverse staff and students. As a University which is built on social impact, we value the social and cultural diversity that everyone brings to our community. We continuously strive to enrich our community by tackling inequalities, promoting fairness and challenging prejudice, aligned with our commitment to social justice. York St John University has a rich history advocating for trans and gender-diverse rights, this is evident in us receiving a bronze award for Athena Swan (Gender Charter) and being in the top 10 employers for trans people (Stonewall). The policy and associated guidance give more detail on how the University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy applies to trans and gender diverse people. Where this policy refers to 'trans people' and 'gender diverse people', it has in mind a broad range of people whose gender identity is not expressed in ways that are typically associated with the gender assigned at their birth. This includes those who have non-binary, agender or gender-fluid identities. These terminologies are evolving and highly personal and this list is not exhaustive.

## Scope

This framework applies to all members of the University community, including staff, students applicants, visitors, contractors, freelance workers

This policy and the trans and gender diverse Inclusive framework are available on our website: <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/policies-and-documents/trans-inclusive-framework/#trans-guide>

## Legislation

This policy also supports members of the University in meeting the requirements of relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010, which lists gender reassignment, which covers anyone who is undergoing, has undergone or is planning to undergo any process associated with transition, as one of the nine 'protected characteristics' on the grounds of which people are protected against unlawful discrimination, and the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

## Policy

1. York St John University is committed to removing any form of unlawful discrimination against people on the grounds of their gender identity, gender expression or gender presentation.

2. The University celebrates and values having a diverse workforce that includes trans and gender diverse people, and intends to recognise role models for students and staff who identify as trans and/or gender diverse.

3. The University will treat all trans and gender diverse employees and students with equal respect, and seeks to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation, see Equality Act, 2010 updated Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy along with its [glossary](#)<sup>[OBJ]</sup>

4. The University recognises that trans and gender diverse people can experience different and intersecting types of discrimination and aims to create a trans and gender diverse friendly culture, workplace and learning environment. The commitment to freedom of speech ([Freedom of speech | York St John University](#)) does not condone any form of abuse, bullying, discrimination, harassment, hatred, intimidation, violence, or any unlawful behaviour.

5. The University commits to undertaking the following:

a. No one will be denied access to courses, progression to other courses, or fair and equal treatment as a student because of their gender identity, gender presentation or because they propose to or have transitioned socially or medically. York St John University is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for trans and gender-diverse staff and students

b. Staff and students' requests to change their name, title and gender on records will be handled sensitively, promptly and individually, and individuals will be made aware of any implications of the changes.

c. To respect the confidentiality of all trans and gender diverse staff and students and not reveal information without the prior written agreement of the individual.

d. Staff will not be excluded from employment or promotion or redeployment opportunities because of their gender identity.

e. Transphobic abuse, harassment or bullying (e.g. name-calling/derogatory jokes, misgendering, deadnaming unacceptable or unwanted behaviour, intrusive questions) is hate crime and will be dealt with under the relevant procedure.

f. To strongly encourage reporting of transphobic incidents via our report and support platform (<https://reportandsupport.yorks.ac.uk/>). The victim and/or the person reporting the incident should not be assumed to identify as a trans or gender-diverse person.

g. To provide a supportive environment for staff and students who wish their trans or gender-diverse status to be known. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to be open about their gender identity, trans status or trans history. To 'out' someone, whether staff or student, without their permission is a form of harassment and in certain contexts may amount to a criminal offence.

- h. To continually develop and include gender identity issues in equality and diversity resources and training.
- i. To include the provision of appropriate facilities such as toilets and changing rooms into estates development where not restricted by plumbing and pipework or any overriding regulations.
- j. To recognise the value of peer support and networks.
- k. To include gender identity in internal surveys and when monitoring complaints of harassment, respecting and maintaining confidentiality, data corresponding to (insert number) will be omitted..
- l. In providing accommodation for students, any concerns or issues raised by trans students will be handled by the accommodation team and will be treated fairly and in line with the University's obligations under equality law.
- m. Staff and students undergoing medical and surgical procedures related to gender reassignment will receive positive support to meet their particular needs during this period.
- n. To recognise that trans staff and students come from diverse backgrounds, and strive to ensure they do not face discrimination on the grounds of their gender identity or in relation to other aspects of their identity, for example, their race, age, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation. In addition, assumptions will not be made about the gender of partners of trans staff or students.
- o. To ensure that its environment, in terms of its pictures, images, publicity materials and literature, reflects the diversity of its staff and students.

This policy wording is based on the Joint agreement on guidelines for transgender equality in employment in further education colleges (Association of Colleges et al, 2005).

Agreed by the Executive Board on 30 January 2025. Contact: Jake Furby, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Adviser, at [equalities@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:equalities@yorks.ac.uk)

## Glossary from website

The language used in relation to transgender issues evolves continuously, and reflects the changing position and perspectives of trans people in society.

Its use can be highly individualised. It is important to be mindful of these changes as some trans people may use terms that others perceive as inappropriate. Just because someone uses a term to describe themselves, does not mean that you should necessarily use it to describe them or others. This glossary covers terms that we use in our policies and guidance, and the definitions we use.

Most definitions have been taken from the Stonewall Glossary of terms. The definition of the term 'Passing' has been taken from Trans Student Educational Resources. The definitions of the terms 'Gender', 'Gender variance', 'Intersex', 'Non-binary', 'Transitioning' and 'Transphobia' have been taken from the Equality Challenge Unit's guidance 'Trans staff and students in HE and colleges: improving experiences'. The rest have been taken from Gendered Intelligence Glossary.

**AFAB:** Assigned Female At Birth.

**Agender:** a person who does not identify with any gender identity

**AMAB:** Assigned Male At Birth.

**Aromantic (aro):** An umbrella term used specifically to describe a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of romantic attraction.

**ASAB:** Assigned Sex At Birth.

**Asexual (ace):** An umbrella term used specifically to describe a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of sexual attraction.

**Biological sex:** A term often used to describe people's physical sex characteristics. Biological sex is made up of hormones (primarily but not exclusively testosterone and estrogen), chromosomes, primary sex characteristics (i.e. those apparent at birth, divided into internal sex organs [e.g. prostate, womb] and external sex organs [e.g. genitals]) and secondary sex characteristics (those brought about during puberty, e.g. breasts, public hair, changing vocal pitch).

**Bisexual (bi):** Bisexual is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.

**Bottom surgery:** Gender affirming surgery on the genitals.

**Cisgender or Cis:** Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

**Coming Out:** When a person first tells someone/others about identifying with the LGBTQ+ Community. Sometimes stated as "coming out of the closet".

**Conversion therapy:** A range of practices, often subjecting people to significant physical and psychological harm, with the intention of "curing" a person's sexuality or gender identity. These practices are often considered to amount to torture.

**Deadnaming:** Calling someone by their birth name or a previous chosen name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition. This can constitute transphobic behaviour if it happens repeatedly and/or deliberately.

**Deedpoll:** A deed poll is a legal document that proves a change of name. You can change any part of your name, add or remove names and hyphens, or change spelling. (gov.uk)

**Gender critical:** Gender-critical is a term used to describe a belief system that prioritises biological sex over gender identity, it is a protected belief under the Equality Act, 2010.

**Gender dysphoria:** Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress due to a incongruence between a person's perception of self and their perceived gender identity. This is also the current clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth. (Stonewall)

**Gender euphoria:** Used to capture feelings of joy and contentment between a person and their gender identity. This is often brought about through authentic gender expression and recognition of someone's gender. This can be experienced by anyone regardless of whether they are trans or cis.

**Gender expression/presentation:** How a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, typically within the context of societal expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.

**Gender identity:** A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether man, woman or a gender identity outside of the binary, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

**Gender ideology:** The theory that gender is more expansive than the gender binary or assigned sex and trans people should be supported by society. Often used in a transphobic framing by 'gender criticals'

**Gender non-conformity:** See 'gender variance'

**Gender reassignment:** Another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo gender reassignment usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender. Gender reassignment is a Protected Characteristic Equality Act 2010, and it is further interpreted in the Equality Act 2010 approved code of practice. It is a term of much contention and is one that Stonewall's Trans Advisory Group feels should be reviewed.

**Gender recognition certificate (GRC):** This enables trans people to be legally recognised in their affirmed gender and to be issued with a new birth certificate. Not all trans people will apply for a GRC and you currently have to be over 18 to apply. You do not need a GRC to change your gender markers at work or to legally change your gender on other documents such as your passport. The only things someone will need a GRC for are to be recorded on UK birth, marriage, and death certificates and with HMRC as the correct gender.

**Gender variance:** Gender variance, also referred to as gender non-conformity, or gender expression that does not match socially constructed gender norms for men and women. E.g. someone who identifies as a man who dresses in a feminine manner

**Gender:** Gender refers to the cultural and social distinctions between people. It consists of three related aspects: a society's constructed gender roles, norms and behaviours which are typically aligns with the sex assigned at birth; gender identity, which is a person's internal perception of their identity; gender expression, which is the way a person lives in society and interacts with others. Gender does not necessarily represent a binary : some people have a gender identity that cannot be defined simply by the use of the terms woman or man.

**Genderfluid:** a person who fluctuates between or outside of the gender binary and is not a fixed gender. It can change over time or from day to day

**GIC (Gender Identity Clinic):** The specialist service where trans people 18 and over go to receive or be referred for gender affirming care.

**GIDS (Gender Identity Development Services):** The specialist service where trans people up to the age of 17 go to receive or be referred for gender affirming care.

**Gillick Competence:** A term used in medical law to decide whether a child (under 16 years of age) is able to consent to their own medical treatment, without the need for parental permission or knowledge. (Stonewall)

**GRA (Gender Recognition Act 2004):** The Gender Recognition Act (GRA) is the law which sets out how trans people in the UK may legally change their sex and obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). (TransActual)

**GRC (Gender Recognition Certificate):** A legal document that changes the gender listed on your birth, marriage and civil partnership certificates, with effects on your pension, prison and marriage rights. (TransActual)

**HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy):** Treatment used when one's body is unable to produce a sufficient amount of hormones itself to maintain normal function. This is commonly used to treat cisgender women during the menopause, cisgender men after testes have been removed and transgender people to induce puberty changes in line with their gender identity, among other uses.

**Intersex:** An umbrella term used for people who are born with variation of sex characteristics, who do not always fit society's perception of male or female bodies. Intersex is not the same as gender identity or sexual orientation. Intersex people may identify as as any gender, and are not inherently transgender.

**Legal sex:** The gender that somebody is legally documented as, e.g. M or F on birth certificates and passports. Everyone has to be recorded with a legal sex, which is usually determined by people's genitals at birth, regardless of how their other sex

characteristics may differ. Some countries now allow non-binary legal sex recognition, e.g. X on birth certificates and passports.

**Misgendering:** Referring to a person by the incorrect pronouns or gendered terms. Like deadnaming, this can constitute transphobic behaviour if it happens repeatedly and/or deliberately.

**Non-binary:** An umbrella term for a person who has a gender identity that exists outside of the gender binary', fluctuates between the gender binary, or who has no gender, either permanently or some of the time. A person who identifies as non-binary may or may not identify as transgender. Non-binary people may

**Outing:** when a person's gender, sexual or romantic identity is shared without their consent to someone who was previously unaware. This constitutes as a hate crime and can put people in very unsafe positions.

**Pansexual:** Refers to a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender

**Passing:** Being perceived by others as a particular identity/gender or cisgender regardless how the individual in question identifies, for example, passing as straight, passing as a cis woman, passing as a youth. This term has become controversial as 'passing' can imply that one is not genuinely what they are passing as.

**Pronoun:** Most people use pronouns, but some people do not. Pronouns are words we use to refer to people in place of their name, which may or may not make reference to their gender - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they/them and ze/zir. People may wish to include pronouns in email signatures or when introducing themselves so that people know how to refer to them and to demonstrate a welcoming environment for transgender people.

**Queer:** Queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism etc.). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late eighties by the queer community who have embraced it. Queer may also be used as an umbrella term for the LGBT+ community. Queer can also mean someone whose LGBT+ identity is part of their political identity, who actively involves themselves in LGBT+ politics. Queer is a slur when used in a derogatory manner. There is a difference between saying 'Queer community' (positive) and 'A Queer' (negative)

**Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria (ROGD):** A proposed condition often used by gender criticals to dismiss the reality of gender dysphoria in adolescents, suggesting that it comes about as a result of exposure to trans people in the media and at school (a similar line of thought to 'social contagion'). It has largely been discredited by social and medical scientists.

**Sex:** A social category assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions.

**Statutory declaration:** A formal statement declaring that information given is to the best knowledge of the person giving it. These are required by trans people wishing to apply for a GRC.

**Top surgery:** Gender affirming surgery entailing the removal or resizing of a person's chest

**Trans:** An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, non-binary and genderqueer. Transgender man is a term used to describe someone who was assigned female at birth but identifies as a man. This may be shortened to trans man. Transgender woman is a term used to describe someone who was assigned male at birth but identifies as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman.

**Transfeminine:** often shortened to transfemme, a person who identifies with feminine gender expression or identity but was assigned male at birth

**Transitioning:** Transitioning is a term used to describe the process and steps an individual takes in order to live in the gender they identify as. Transitioning is a unique process for each individual and may include any number of changes to a person's life. It can be social and/or medical, and it can take several years. People do not need to transition in order to be trans.

**Transmasculine:** often shortened to transmasc, a person who identifies with masculine gender expression or identity but was assigned female at birth.

**Transphobia:** A term relating to prejudice used to describe the fear, anger, intolerance, resentment and discomfort that some people may have as a result of another person being trans. This can result in discrimination, harassment, victimisation and hate crime.