

Gender Affirmation/Transition Guidelines for staff at The University of Newcastle (UON)

Staff Support: Advice for Individual Staff Members, Supervisors/Managers, and Colleagues

The University recognises that within the LGBTIQ+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer, asexual, agender, aromantic, + -other diverse sexual orientations and gender identities), transgender and gender diverse people can face unique and complex challenges, and that a supportive work environment is integral to maintaining a staff member's health and wellbeing.

Change and uncertainty can increase levels of stress and create anxiety. As with all change, it can effect multiple people. In this situation for example; the individual affirming/transitioning their gender, supervisors/managers, colleagues, students and other people may be affected.

In collaboration with LGBTIQ+ staff and the University community, the University has developed these guidelines to address needs and issues that may arise when a person affirms or transitions their gender identity. These guidelines should be referred to in conjunction with [Pride in Diversity's Let's Talk Gender toolkit](#) which is an excellent resource and guidance material for anyone involved with an affirmation/transition journey, and has been used as a reference in producing these guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR TRANSITIONING/AFFIRMING INDIVIDUALS

- Having the right support network in place can assist in your gender affirming/transition journey in the workplace. Involving your supervisor and supportive colleagues can help ensure the gender affirmation/transition process is a positive experience for you and all involved and should be the first step in the process. The University of Newcastle [ALLY Network](#) is an additional avenue of support.
- With the help of your support team, develop a gender affirmation/transition plan that is appropriate for you. The creation of a gender affirmation/transition plan will assist a smooth process occurring, to reduce uncertainties and provide everyone involved with a common road map from which to work.
- Below is a suggested list of things to consider and discuss with your support team and supervisor/manager as part of your affirmation/transition plan. It is not exhaustive, but may be used as a guide to help reduce the likelihood of unexpected roadblocks. These changes need to happen over an agreed timeline, and as part of a gender affirmation/transition plan.

Developing a gender affirmation/transition plan

Key considerations:

- Talk to your supervisor/manager and let them know that you plan to affirm your gender identity. They will be able to support you through the process.
- Contact the Manager, Equity and Diversity and/or Health & Safety Officer who will be able to assist you and your supervisor/manager understand the planning involved and related processes.
- Draw up a list of UON staff you may need to work with or contact during your gender affirmation/transition.
- Identify when they need to be engaged, and how?
- Are there any specific issues that need to be addressed sooner rather than later?
- Will you need workspace changes to be made during the affirmation/transition?
- When is the affirmation/transition likely to occur? Map out the important dates during affirmation/transition, such as your legal name change, medical appointments (if relevant) and other milestones.
- Think about how you would like your work colleagues and other relevant persons to be advised regarding your affirmation/transition - e.g. via an email, face-to-face group meeting, individual discussions and / or have your supervisor/ manager inform and explain. Any key information such as preferred pronouns to be used in relation to your gender identity should be included to assist others supporting you in the workplace.
- Ascertain how long certain Human Resource Services (HRS) and other administrative functions may take to process (e.g. legal name changes in data bases, UON directories/ mailing lists, photo id, etc.)
- Will you need to organise any changes to professional licenses, qualifications or accreditations? If so when will these need to be processed?
- Do any external or other parties need to be informed?
- Brainstorm potential roadblocks and adjust your plan accordingly.
For example: Do a search for your current name on the intranet for references. How many of these pages will need to be altered or removed?

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGER/ SUPPORT TEAM

Provide assurance:

- Let the person know that you will support them through their affirmation/transition journey and assist them to develop their gender affirmation/transition plan.
- Assure the person that your conversation will be held in confidence. Begin a discussion regarding what information will be communicated to others (define this group), at what point in time, and how this will occur.
- Remind the person they are covered by existing University policies, including UON's Promoting a Respectful and Collaborative University: Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy as well as state [Anti-Discrimination Legislation](#) and [Federal Legislation](#),. Including [The Australian Government Guidelines Recognition of Sex and Gender](#)

Inform yourself:

- Consult the Equity Diversity and Inclusion team (details below) and/or Health & Safety Officer (Sarah.Williamson@newcastle.edu.au; ph 49217720) regarding planning for affirmation/transition and the related processes.
- Familiarise yourself with LGBTIQ+ terminology.
- Complete [ALLY training](#).

Offer assistance:

- Ask for suggestions on what you can do to support them during their gender affirmation/transition.
- Ask if they wish to inform their supervisor/manager and work colleagues themselves, or prefer that this be done for them.
- Find out if the person is considering a name change and what you can do to assist.
- Set expectations, talk about possible scenarios, such as mis-gendering, people making mistakes etc.

Educating fellow staff, students and clients:

- Knowledge and awareness are key to reducing the likelihood of misunderstanding and tension in the workplace, especially when individuals are transitioning or affirming their gender identity.
- Staff (and students) can complete ALLY training, a free program which UON runs to educate participants about a range of LGBTIQ+ matters including the issues and needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual, agender, aromantic, (LGBTIQ+) people, concepts such as transphobia, homophobia and heterosexism, and the role and expectations of being a UON ALLY.
- Regardless of our personal views, we need to be respectful and inclusive of all colleagues in the workplace. Supporting transgender staff and being inclusive of people with diverse gender identities is no exception. The UON's Code of Conduct sets out the University's expectations of all members of the University community with respect to their professional and personal conduct.

UON will not tolerate discrimination, bullying or harassment on any grounds. Appropriate action, will be taken against staff who engage in such misconduct.

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED IN RELATION TO GENDER AFFIRMATION/TRANSITION

The following table lists administrative actions to be undertaken at UON once you have arranged your external supporting documentation (see details below table) and should be considered within your overall plan and in relation to other timings therein.

Task description	What to do / who to contact
Updating your <i>preferred name</i> in your human resources (HR) record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a Change to Personal Details Request Form to HRS via hrsupport@newcastle.edu.au ph. (02) 4033 9999.
Changing your <i>primary name</i> (legal name) in your HR record	In order to change your primary name in your HR record, you must first change your legal name with the Registry of Births, Deaths, and Marriages of the State in which you were born. Then submit a Change to Personal Details Request Form to HRS via hrsupport@newcastle.edu.au ph. (02) 4033 9999
Changing your gender marker in your HR record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may wish to request this when changing your primary name using the same form as above. Currently, the three gender markers in UON HR records are Male / Female / X (indeterminate/intersex/unspecified – as per Australian Government regulations). You will need to provide supporting documentation (see below this table).
Updating Online Profile and Staff Directory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be updated automatically once change of preferred and primary name processed by HRS.
Changing your email address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can be done by going to UON Website Home > Current staff > Working here > IT and computing > Email and calendars – <u>after</u> your HR records have been updated. If an appropriate alternate email address is not automatically generated by the system, contact UON IT on 17000
Email distribution lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact relevant person, if known; otherwise, contact UON IT ext. 17000.
Email to staff requesting that they delete your former contact profiles or update existing one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask your manager / supervisor to email relevant staff in your faculty / division / school / unit and which group you want to receive the email.
Updating your Staff ID card	Infrastructure Facilities Services administers all staff cards and you can update your staff card once your HR record is updated.
Superannuation/Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the University's Superannuation Officer (Ingrid Bonner) to ensure payroll and superannuation records are updated.
Updating Researcher Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Log in to the Nexus system to update your publicly accessible internet profile
Changing your name on desk / office door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Infrastructure Facilities Services 16500 You may need to complete a Maximo Request
New business cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask your supervisor/manager.
Changing logins - computer/systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-service if possible, otherwise contact UON IT 17000
Voicemail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact UON IT on 17000 for support on how to do this
Team phone lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search your inbox to see who last sent you the list.
Organisation charts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search your inbox to see who last sent you the chart.
Mailing lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact relevant person, if known; otherwise, contact UON IT (details above).
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact relevant institution / organisation.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

As per Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender, the following documents are suitable for changing your gender record:

- a) Statement from a Registered Medical Practitioner or a Registered Psychologist which specifies their gender
- b) Valid Australian Government travel document, such as a valid passport, which specifies their gender, or
- c) State or territory birth certificate, which specifies their gender. A document from a state or territory Registrar of Birth Deaths and Marriages recognising a change of sex and/or gender will also be seen as sufficient evidence (recognised details certificate).
- d) Gender recognition certificate issued by the Gender Reassignment Board.

ADDITIONAL POINTS OF IMPORTANCE

People going through the gender transition/affirmation process may want to think about the following points and take action should they be applicable to them:

- Contact your superannuation provider
- Contact your insurance companies e.g. car insurance, medical insurance, life insurance
- Inform your bank and other financial institutions of your name change
- Contact Centrelink if you are in receipt of any allowances or benefits
- Contact Medicare so that your Medicare card can be updated to reflect any changes
- Change your driver's licence
- Change/update your passport

Advice should be obtained to determine if there will be any impact on any insurance and/or superannuation entitlements, and the administrative requirements to record a change of gender. Check list of helpful resources below:

External Resources

Australian Human Rights Commission www.humanrights.gov.au

Pride in Diversity www.prideindiversity.com.au

The Gender Centre www.gendercentre.org.au

Human Rights Campaign www.hrc.org

Diversity Council Australia www.dca.org.au

Gender Education and Advocacy www.gender.org

National LGBTI Health Alliance www.lgbti.health.org.au

Hunter Gender Alliance www.huntergenderalliance.org

QLife www qlife.org.au

NOTE: The University has attempted to consider the requirements you may have during your affirming/transitioning however we may have overlooked a step, if there is something you notice please contact the ALLY Convenor so this can be corrected for future staff needing such information.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Equity Diversity and Inclusion team	
Enquiry Person Contact Details	Tina Crawford, Director EDI Tina.Crawford@newcastle.edu.au Rachel Fowell, Rachel.Fowell@newcastle.edu.au Dylan Mitchell, Dylan.Mitchell@newcastle.edu.au Emma Palmer, Emma.Palmer@newcastle.edu.au
Lasted updated	June 2020