



# Trans Policy (Students)

## Summary

The Trans Policy (Students) outlines the University's approach to supporting students who are transgender or transitioning.

The University is committed to providing a positive, open and inclusive learning environment. We want to support all students to achieve their full potential and bring their full authentic selves to their study. This policy sets out how the University will support trans students and students who are in the process of transitioning. It also provides details of the adjustments, facilities access, changes to name and pronouns in University systems, and accommodation options available to trans students.

## Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy and procedure applies to all students of the University. The [Trans policy \(Staff\)](#) applies to staff.

## Contact

Student Experience  
Services

## Document control

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## Approving authority

University Executive

## Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Dignity & Respect policy; [Trans Hub](#) & Guidance; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion web pages;

## Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email

## Keywords

Trans; transgender; transition; gender identity;



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## 1. Definitions

- 1.1 **Trans** is an umbrella term for a range of gender identities where a person's gender identity differs from the sex registered for them at birth.
- 1.2 **Transition** refers to both social (e.g., name, pronouns, clothing) and/or medical (e.g., hormones, surgeries) transition of an individual to affirm their gender identity (where this is different from their sex registered at birth).
- 1.3 **Gender Identity** is an individual's personal sense of having a particular gender.
- 1.4 **Gender Expression** is how an individual chooses to express their gender identity.

## 2. Principles

- 2.1 Students who are trans will be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. Bullying, harassment, gender based violence or discrimination will be treated seriously and dealt with under the appropriate procedures.
- 2.2 The University will promote an open and inclusive culture and will raise awareness of how trans students can be supported while studying.
- 2.3 Trans students will be able to access support and suitable adjustments will be made where possible.
- 2.4 Every reasonable effort will be made by the University to enable students to attend study and be supported in studying, while transitioning. We recognise that this can be a complex time for an individual and will seek to act in a sensitive and supportive way.
- 2.5 Identifiable personal information relating to a person's trans status will be handled confidentially and respectfully, and with due regard given to the specific legal protections afforded to those who hold a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC).

## 3. Dignity and Respect

- 3.1 The University is committed to providing an environment where all students are treated with dignity and respect. Complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, gender-based violence and/or discrimination relating to a student's trans identity should be raised under the University's Dignity and Respect Policy. <https://human-resources.ed.ac.uk/policies-guidance/a-to-z-of-policies-and-guidance>
- 3.2 Students can disclose situations through speaking with staff and through the online Report + Support platform for the University to follow up with support, where named. <https://reportandsupport.ed.ac.uk/>

## 4. Understanding Transition

- 4.1 **Transition** is the term used to describe a person's journey to affirming their gender identity. Transition will be unique to the individual. Transition can broadly fall into two categories: social and medical.
  - 4.1.1 **Social transition** is when an individual changes how they express their gender identity. For example, this could involve changing their name, pronouns and/or presentation e.g., clothing. Most individuals who are transitioning will seek to do this to some degree and the examples given represent the most common changes seen amongst our students.



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- 4.1.2 **Medical transition** is when an individual takes medical steps to affirm their gender identity. These steps can range from counselling and mental health support, to hormone replacement and gender affirming surgeries and therapies.

## 5. Support from the University

- 5.1 We want to support all students to achieve their full potential and bring their full authentic selves to the University. The University acknowledges that being trans can be challenging and complex. We aim to encourage an environment in which students can be open about their gender identity, should they wish to be, and where all in our University community are expected to be supportive of students, regardless of gender identity or any other (protected) characteristics.
- 5.2 Students are encouraged to contact their Student Adviser and/or Graduate School team in the first instance to discuss support, or if preferred to discuss with a third party prior to disclosing to the University e.g. The Advice Place.
- 5.3 Pre-arrival students should contact The Advice Place for guidance and signposting to the relevant School staff to arrange a pre-arrival meeting if they wish to tell the University their status.
- 5.4 The University recognises that trans students are at risk of challenges such as gender based violence, estrangement from family, difficulty accessing financial support, etc. Students should let a University member of staff know if they are at risk of becoming uncontactable, or report through the University's Report + Support platform. <https://reportandsupport.ed.ac.uk/>
- 5.5 All students can apply for financial support from the University when facing unexpected circumstances. <https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/financial-support/all-students>

## 6. Considering Support and/or Adjustments

- 6.1 We recognise that it can be difficult for students to ask for support, but we ask them to be as open as possible about any issues students are experiencing, or adjustments that they may need. In advance of speaking with a staff member, we ask students to consider what may benefit them. It may not be possible to make all the adjustments students request, but staff will be better able to direct to available support and resources.
- 6.2 Various types of adjustments may be considered and, wherever possible, accommodated including, name changes, pronouns and information within University systems. (See section 10) Students can also use the Exceptional Circumstances policy in certain situations (see section 7).
- 6.3 Depending on the situation, and with the student's consent, the staff member(s) supporting may need to seek further advice from other University services.
- 6.4 Any health-related information disclosed by the student during discussions will be treated sensitively.

## 7. Transitioning at the University: application and arrival

### Application and Pre-arrival

- 7.1 The University is committed to fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices. Please see our [Admissions Policy](#) for further information.



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- 7.2 Undergraduate applicants who wish to change their name should do so via UCAS processes so that the data imports into University systems.  
<https://www.ucas.com/contact-us>

## Studying

- 7.3 If a student wishes to inform the University about their gender identity, the staff member approached will speak with the student about who will be told, by whom and when and how this will happen. The most important consideration is that the student is respected and has control and transparency over what happens regarding their status.
- 7.4 If a student is undergoing a medical transition, this will be treated the same way as any other medical treatment and the student will have options through policies including; extensions, Exceptional Circumstances, Leave of Absence or Authorised Interruption of Study.
- 7.5 In addition to staff in the student's School, University services that are able to provide support to trans students include:
- Chaplaincy;
  - Disability & Learning Support Service - if the student has a Schedule of Adjustments or is in need of one;
  - Residence Life - if the student is in university accommodation;
  - Student Counselling Service
  - Student Wellbeing Service;
  - Student Immigration Service;
  - Sport & Exercise – for information on clubs, games and the Centre for Sport & Exercise;
  - The EUSA Advice Place.

## **8. Facilities Use and Access**

- 8.1 The University is committed to providing appropriate facilities for all students. This includes suitable male, female and gender-neutral toilet and changing facilities across our campuses, new buildings and refurbishments where possible.
- 8.2 All students can use the toilet facilities that align with their gender identity where appropriate facilities are available, including gender neutral or individual spaces. Information on gender neutral toilets is available. <https://estates.ed.ac.uk/buildings-information/gender-neutral-toilets>
- 8.3 Period products are freely available to students across all campuses. Please see the link below for a list of provision.  
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/health-services/period-products>
- 8.4 Use of certain facilities such as changing rooms, showers, saunas or any other space where individual cubicles may not be available, may be governed by reference to local formal policies which should be clearly communicated to users.
- 8.5 Questions regarding access to facilities, should be directed to the relevant service. Concerns about access should be directed to the Students' Association Advice Place. <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/adviceplace>

## **9. Identification**

### Name changes and Pronouns



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- 9.1 The University recognises and respects that a person's name and pronouns are integral to their self-identity. Pronouns may include, but are not limited to, 'he/him', 'she/her', 'they/them', 'he/she/they/ze'.
- 9.1.1 Whether intentional or not, consistently addressing someone by their previous name, and/or repeatedly failing to use the correct pronouns, can negatively impact on a person's sense of identity and belonging and in some instances may amount to a breach of the [University's Dignity and Respect Policy](#).
- 9.2 Pronouns are not recorded on the student record.
- 9.3 Students can change their '*preferred forename*' on their student record at any point ahead of completing their studies via the Student Personal Details channel in MyEd. This name will appear on the student record in EUCLID, when logging into other University Systems such as Learn, and on the Student ID Card when replaced. This is the name by which a student prefers to be known.
- 9.4 Students can change their '*official name*' (wording used in the student record), forename or surname, on their student record at any point ahead of completing their studies by sending an email from their University email account to [studentsystems@ed.ac.uk](mailto:studentsystems@ed.ac.uk). This is the name on legal documentation.
- 9.5 Changes to a student's '*official name*' will require documentation to verify the name change (e.g. statutory declaration, Deed poll, passport etc.) as well as a form of identification with their former name (not a Student ID Card). You will not be asked to have/show a GRC to make (name) changes. The '*official name*' will appear on any official documents from the University, including the degree certificate.
- 9.6 After changing the name on their student record, students are encouraged to update the Student ID Card. This is free to access. <https://information-services.ed.ac.uk/help-consultancy/card/replacement>
- 9.7 If a student notifies [studentsystems@ed.ac.uk](mailto:studentsystems@ed.ac.uk) of an '*official name*' change after they have registered to graduate it may not always be possible for graduation documents to be updated. This should be checked with [infopoint@ed.ac.uk](mailto:infopoint@ed.ac.uk) for more information. If it is not possible for these changes to be made ahead of graduation, graduates can retroactively update their student record and request updated documentation, including degree certificates. See below.
- 9.8 If individuals have transitioned after graduating and wish to update their historic student record - for example, in order to receive a degree certificate in their new name - this can be arranged by emailing [infopoint@ed.ac.uk](mailto:infopoint@ed.ac.uk).

## Recorded Gender or Sex changes

- 9.9 The University aligns its options in the student record for gender identifiers with those that the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) use for sex identifiers. These are female, male and other.
- 9.10 Students can change the recorded gender on their student record at any point ahead of completing their studies by sending an email from their University email account to [studentsystems@ed.ac.uk](mailto:studentsystems@ed.ac.uk)
  - 9.10.1 Students should use their legally recorded sex. Where legal documents hold differing sex classifications, the University will use the information on the most recently issued document. Examples of documents include passport; current driving licence; immigration documents.
- 9.11 The student record holds other information collected for statutory reporting purposes including sexual orientation and transgender status. Prior to completion of studies, students should send an email from their University email account to [studentsystems@ed.ac.uk](mailto:studentsystems@ed.ac.uk) if they want to change any of this information.



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## International Students

- 9.12 For students with a visa, the 'official name', forename and surname, on their student record must match that shown on their passport.
- 9.13 International students may wish to use a 'preferred forename' within the University and its systems which does not change their 'official name' within the systems or on any documentation from the Home Office or home country.
- 9.14 For international students on a Student Visa who want to make a formal and legal change to their name, the Home Office advises that trans people who hold non-British passports should align their passports, and other identity documents, to reflect their new name and/or gender, so that they are using one name for all immigration-related documents.

## **10 University Systems**

- 10.1 After changing the name on their student record, students may wish to update their email address and alias. IS Helpline will amend this if requested: <https://information-services.ed.ac.uk/help-consultancy/it-help/email-and-office365/email-faqs/gender-name-changes>
- 10.2 Most systems will automatically update with the new name and email address. Students may need to check with their School for specialist systems.

## **11 Accommodation**

- 11.1 The University will ensure as much flexibility and discretion as possible when dealing with requests in relation to trans students and accommodation. Housing includes mixed-gender, men's and women's accommodation.
- 11.2 Students can discuss personal requirements in confidence, with relevant staff in Residence Life. Pre-arrival students should contact [accom.allocations@ed.ac.uk](mailto:accom.allocations@ed.ac.uk) and students already on programme can contact through this referral form: <https://student-wellbeing-service.ed.ac.uk/referral-form>
- 11.3 No assumptions are made about the type of accommodation a student would like to be allocated based on personal characteristics.
- 11.4 For students who begin to transition when living in accommodation, contracts are flexible to allow them to move or leave single-sex accommodation when they begin to live in their transitioned gender. For further advice and support contact Residence Life.
- 11.5 If a student identifies as 'estranged' and meets requirements, University accommodation is guaranteed for every year of the student's degree programme. <https://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/access-edinburgh/edinburgh-cares/estranged-students>

## **12 Studying & Working Abroad**

- 12.1 Students who are expected to study, work or undertake a placement or research outside of the UK, must give due consideration to the suitability and safety of the proposed country in relation to their trans status or gender identity and any medical care provision needed. The Study & Work Away (SWAY) service provides resources to support. If the risks cannot be mitigated, all reasonable steps will be taken to



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ensure that opportunities are not impacted, and alternative options will be considered. <https://global.ed.ac.uk/study-work-away/key-things-to-consider>

## 13. Disclosure Scotland

- 13.1 Should a student's study require checks through Disclosure Scotland, there is specific guidance on how trans people should access the service which can be found here. <https://www.mygov.scot/transgender-disclosure-application>

## 14. Interrupting Study

- 14.1 If a student needs to take time off from studies during, or after, transition, they should discuss this with their Student Adviser or Graduate School staff. The University is committed to supporting students who require time away from their studies, where this will assist them in gaining the best possible outcome in their studies. [AIS policy](#)

## 15. Degree certificates

- 15.1 The University provides students who have transitioned whilst studying or after studying with replacement degree certificates in their new names and/or titles. This can be done through Registry Services. <https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/order-documents/replacement-certs>

## 16. Student Finance

- 16.1 Students must update external funding bodies of updates to names and personal information to ensure correct information is received from these agencies by the University. For more information on student finance, please see <https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/student-funding>.

## 17. Sport & Exercise and Edinburgh University Sports Union

- 17.1 The University is committed to fostering an inclusive environment within its Sport & Exercise facilities. We aim to provide accessible and appropriate facilities and activities for all students, including those who are transitioning genders. Our approach ensures that all students can participate fully in sport and exercise activities with respect and dignity.
- 17.2 The University is committed to providing reasonable adjustments wherever possible for transitioning students, such as offering access to private changing or shower facilities upon request. Students should contact Sports staff to discuss specific needs.
- 17.3 University sports clubs and programmes are open to all students, regardless of their gender identity. National sporting governing bodies may restrict participation of trans people in certain national and international competitions, but these do not restrict participation in our own sports clubs and programmes.

## 18. Resources & Support

- 18.1 There are many other internal and external resources available to support students



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<https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/inclusion/lgbt-equality>.

- 18.2 The EUSA Advice Place can help if there is anything related to a student's change of gender or gender identity that is external to the university or that they would like independent impartial advice about. They offer advice on a wide range of topics such as money and funding, housing, academic processes, and safety and crime.  
<https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/adviceplace>.
- 18.3 Further information on trans educational resources are available on the University's Trans Hub