

FAQ's for people undergoing gender transition

I identify as trans and wish to transition, who do I need to contact first for support?

Everyone's approach to this will be slightly different and there is no obligation to tell anyone at the University if you do not feel comfortable with this. However, we recommend that, where comfortable and appropriate, you have an initial discussion with your line manager. Alternatively you can make contact with an People and Organisational Development ([P&OD Partner](#)), a member of the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Team](#) or a member of the LGBT Staff Network Group [ALLOUT](#).

Where can I get confidential advice around transitioning?

The University has guidance and support for staff undergoing gender transition, this can be accessed via P&OD or EDI intranets. You can also seek additional support from either of these teams or ALLOUT members. We can also signpost you to a number of support groups in the region. A full list of these can be found [at the end of this document](#).

Will my colleagues be informed of my transition?

This decision lies with the individual and until they decide to disclose this information, it will remain confidential. As part of your discussions with your line manager or P&OD you may wish to talk about this and put it into a personal action plan. This way you can tell people in a way that feels comfortable to you.

Can I use the facilities, for example changing rooms and toilets, which match my gender identity?

You can use whichever facilities match your gender identity. We have both single gendered, all gender (universal) and all gender accessible (universal accessible) toilets on campus. A full map can be seen here: [Interactive Map](#). Additionally we have single gendered shower and changing facilities in some of our buildings: [Shower Facilities](#)

Where do I go to if I believe I'm being bullied or harassed because of my transition or gender identity?

The University has a zero tolerance stance on any form of bullying harassment and discrimination which includes transphobia. If you feel you are being bullied because of your gender identity or trans status you should challenge this if it is appropriate and safe to do so. If you do not feel safe to do this then you can report this via [Report and Support](#) – either to get advice from a trained [Harassment Support Advisor](#) or to report it anonymously. Full details of our policies, procedures and approach to bullying, harassment and discrimination can be found on the [dedicated pages to BHD](#).

What support will the University offer me if I'm transitioning?

The University will support you throughout the entire process of your transition. We will offer different routes to do this: either through your line manager, HR or another colleague. Our [policy and additional guidance](#) will help you through this by drawing up a suitable action plan that you are comfortable with. We will guide you through changing your name on systems, setting up a new email and providing a new staff card and where appropriate, University Branded apparel. Our well established network group [ALLOUT](#) and [ALLOUT Allies](#) will also be able to link you confidentially with other trans staff who have transitioned whilst at the University and they will be able to support you too.

What if I need time off for medical treatment?

Staff undergoing medical and surgical processes for gender reassignment (or associated treatments) may need to take time off work to attend medical appointments or whilst recovering from surgical procedures. Staff should report these absences in accordance with our [Sickness Absence Policy and procedures](#).

Will my pension be affected?

No. But in order of us to change your pension records we will require you to provide legal recognition of your new gender to the [Pensions Office](#). This could be a new birth certificate or a Gender Recognition Certificate – whichever is the easiest for you to provide. This is the only time we have to ask for such documentation.

An alumni would like to change their degree certificate – what is the process?

In the first instance, you should contact [Student Services](#) – the full process is explained in our guidance.

External Support

[LGBT Foundation](#)

[Sparkle](#)

[The Proud Trust](#)

[Mermaids](#)

[Advance HE](#)

[Press for Change](#)

FAQ's to support colleagues undergoing gender transition

What is gender identity?

Gender identity is how a person perceives their gender. The gender they identify with may not be the same as the gender they were assigned at birth

What is gender reassignment?

Gender reassignment is where individuals change their birth sex to match the sex which they identify with. There are a small number of people in the UK whose gender does not correspond with how they actually identify. This can be referred to as gender dysphoria.

What does it mean if someone is transitioning and what does it involve?

The process for each person is different and individual. For some having gender corrective surgery is an important part of their journey, but some trans people may never choose to have surgery. Access to surgery is a difficult and lengthy process in the UK with many stages involved.

Not all trans people want surgery. Being trans isn't about changing your body parts. Being trans is core to an individual's identity and this will not alter depending on their outward appearance.

What happens after a person has transitioned?

People will present in their chosen gender. They may do this all of the time, or part of the time. However and whenever they choose to present they should be treated as if they were always that gender. Their chosen name should always be used as well as the pronouns they have chosen. They should be able to use the facilities corresponding to how they identify.

Someone has told me they want to transition, what should I do?

The most important thing is to listen, be non-judgemental and be supportive. Telling people they want to transition is an important step for trans people and it will probably have taken them a while to confide in you about their plans to transition. They will not be telling you so you find answers for them, but asking appropriate questions and offering to help support them will be very important. Understanding what support is available to them at the University is also important, so you may wish to signpost them to ALLOUT, the Counselling Service, HR, Occupational Health or any of the organisations listed at the end of this document.

Is there training about transitioning and trans equality issues

Yes – we have a short video about trans inclusion in the workplace which can be accessed by all members of staff via the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion website](#). We also run face to face training. To find out when the next session is running, please contact equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk

What is a pronoun and how do I know which one to use?

A pronoun is a word that can be used to replace a noun in a sentence. The most common pronouns would be he/she/they. Possessive pronouns would be his/her/theirs. We commonly use gendered pronouns he and she. But not everyone feels comfortable identifying with these binary pronouns and will choose 'they' as their pronoun. A pronoun is an individual choice and the best way to know is to ask someone. Displaying our pronouns as part of our email signature or online profile can normalise their usage and it is another step to fully including our non-binary and trans communities into the workplace. More guidance on pronouns can be seen here:

- [Pronouns](#)
- [Inclusive language](#)

When do people who are transitioning start to use facilities such as toilets and changing rooms which match their affirmed gender?

This will be part of their agreed plan with their line manager – when they start presenting in their affirmed gender. At this point people will use the facilities most appropriate to them. All staff are entitled to use whichever facilities they feel most comfortable using.

What does 'non-binary' mean and what is the right way to talk about it?

Non-binary is a term for those who don't identify within the binary roles of male and female, or in some cases, they identify as both. People who identify as non-binary don't always like to use pronouns such as 'he' and 'she', usually they prefer 'they', but they may also prefer a different pronoun altogether.

It can take a while to get used to this, but simple things like including our own pronouns can start the conversation as to why someone has chosen a different one. Displaying pronouns is becoming the norm and we should all embrace this.

What can I do to be an ally to trans colleagues?

We have a great allies programme linked to our [Staff Network Group ALLOUT](#). Full training is given and within this programme there is the opportunity to become a trans ally too.

Dress Codes

This document should be used in conjunction with 'Guidance for Supporting trans staff and students'

The linked guidance looks at dress codes for trans staff at the University, below is a summary of the availability of uniforms in different areas of the University. This document will be updated as additional information becomes available.

Most University uniforms are designed from a safety aspect (e.g. kneeling, carrying, using chemicals etc.) and will be part of an overall approach to risk assessment.

This doesn't preclude any conversation with someone who wishes to discuss a preference. In certain settings there will be more freedom of choice and support of preferences.

The Library

The Library's Branded clothing range is available in unisex, men's and women's fits, to suit all gender preferences. The emphasis is on upper body wear and there are no restrictions on the clothing styles with which staff combine their branded choices.

The range includes:

Men's fit

Polo shirt V-neck

t-shirt Crew-neck

t-shirt Shirt (short/long sleeve)

Lightweight zipped hoodie

Softshell bodywarmer

Softshell jacket

Women's fit

Blouse (short/long sleeve)

Lightweight zipped hoodie

Softshell bodywarmer

Softshell jacket

Unisex

Crew-neck t-shirt

V-neck t-shirt

Sweatshirt

Fleece jacket Hoodie

In terms of Library policy - staff in customer facing roles are expected to wear branded clothing at all times when on site. All staff are expected to wear it at particular times of year / during specific campaigns when a higher level of staff visibility is needed (e.g. start of year, exam time). We prefer not to see it as a "uniform" as it much less formal than that, and it can be worn in so many different ways according to personal choice.

Security

GENDER NEUTRAL

All staff wear black polo shirts and trousers as well as a selection of footwear boots / shoes - All the uniform is designed for comfort and practicality and for the type of role they carry out

Operational Services (House Services, Portering, Landscapes)

CHOICE BETWEEN NEUTRAL or GENDERED

Issue choice of skirts and trousers to whomever requires them.

We have female and male sizes with requests completed by the individual for their preference.

We also state at our induction that anyone can order either they just have to state their requirement.

Catering and Hospitality Services

All uniforms are flexible team members have a selection to choose from dependent on their preference. In catering this is Black trousers or skirts and purple shirts or Tshirts. Conferences is more focused on business attire and colour rather than specific garments

Museum

There is no uniform, but volunteers are provided with a unisex polo shirt.

Whitworth Art Gallery

There is no uniform.

AMBS

Front desk reception staff all wear a suit and shirt/blouse. This is changed every couple of years and the team are in control of picking the style and colour from the approved supplier. There are no restrictions placed on trousers, skirts or dresses, staff being allowed to pick what they want as long as they all select from the same range.

The AV team also have a staff uniform which consists of a black polo shirts with identifying team logo. The polo shirts are unisex and staff can wear whatever they wish on their lower body.

Other areas

Some Uniforms (i.e. PPE / work scrubs) are issued elsewhere, but largely consist of UoM fleeces and a choice of work wear trousers, boots etc. entirely down to the individuals choice (e.g Media Services).