



# **Student Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy**



## Introduction

DCU values all members of the community, irrespective of gender identity, and respects and recognises diverse gender identities and gender expressions. Gender identity and expression is a positive, core part, of being human and experiencing wellbeing and fulfilment. This concept of the fundamental equality for our University community is central to our University's ethos. In tackling the challenges of an era of unprecedented change, we see unprecedented opportunities: not only to transform the lives of those who will pass through our doors, but also, through them and through our innovation, to transform society as a whole.

In this context, this policy is written to ensure that students are provided with a clear and transparent structure within which they can express their desired gender identity.

## Purpose

With the enactment of the [Gender Recognition Act 2015](#), any person over the age of eighteen can now self-declare their gender of preference and be treated legally as that preferred gender. Under that legislation it is also possible that people between the ages of 16 and 18 may have had their preferred gender legally recognised. As such, people can apply for replacement birth certificates, driving licences, passports and other legal documentation that reflects this change. Thus, Ireland is one of the few countries globally where a person can declare their true gender without medical or state intervention. In line with these legal developments, the purpose of this policy is to ensure that members of our community who wish recognition of their gender identity are facilitated to do so in a manner that respects their human rights and dignity.

## Scope

This Policy applies to all students and, where applicable, alumni of the University.

## Policy Statement

The University respects the human rights and dignity of all members of the University community. As a place where all members of the community are welcomed and valued equally, the University is committed to ensuring that all staff and students can participate freely and fully in the life of the University regardless of their gender identity or gender expression.



Consequently, the University:

- Supports an inclusive environment of dignity and respect whereby everyone can develop to their full potential free of discrimination. DCU does not tolerate harassment or bullying or discrimination of any member of the University community on the basis of gender identity and expression. Any such incidents will be dealt with under the procedures outlined in our [Policy to Promote Respect and Dignity by Preventing Harassment or Bullying](#);
- Supports an environment in which all individuals who choose to be open about their gender identity feel respected, safe, welcome and included in our University community;
- Supports and is committed to provide reasonable accommodations for any University community member that is undergoing social or medical transition;
- Facilitates all University community members and alumni that seek to update their personal records to match their gender identity and expression by providing clear and easily accessible guidelines ([see Appendix 1](#)) for all related processes while ensuring confidentiality throughout;
- Encourages and facilitates colleague and student training & awareness to ensure a supportive and accepting environment that will foster a culture of University community diversity and equality; and
- Is committed to removing unnecessary gender distinction within our University.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**The University Management has a responsibility to:**

- Oversee the development and implementation of this policy in relation to gender identity and gender expression in line with best practice;
- Take all reasonable steps to provide appropriate support to ensure that gender identity and gender expression is respected and create an inclusive environment free from discrimination;
- Provide supports for members of our University community in the area of gender identity and gender expression;
- Offer training in relation to gender identity and expression to all members of our University community;
- Promote and raise awareness around gender identity and gender expression within our University community; and
- Ensure that this policy is monitored and reviewed on a periodic basis.



**All members of the University have a responsibility to:**

- Respect the individual's right to confidentiality and privacy;
- Support the implementation of the *Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy*;
- Respect the dignity of all members of the University community including visitors;
- Challenge or report incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment, or victimisation relating to gender identity or gender expression as appropriate to their role in the University;
- Respect the privacy rights of individuals; and
- Comply with relevant legislation.

**All members of the University community have the right to:**

- Be treated with fairness, dignity and respect and to be able to express their gender identity freely;
- Privacy and confidentiality;
- Equal access to employment, education, training and promotional opportunities, services, activities and facilities in the University;
- Reasonable and appropriate arrangements and accommodations; and
- Access to facilities appropriate to their gender identity.

**Any student wishing to avail of university supports in relation to their gender identity has a responsibility to:**

- Inform the **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development** of any support needs as soon as possible to allow appropriate arrangements to be put in place as quickly as possible;
- Work within the existing deferral or postponement of examinations and assessments, and submit relevant documentation, if time off is required for medical needs;
- If records are to be changed, request this as early as possible in the process
- Ensure that appropriate documentation is submitted as required;
- In order to respect confidentiality, be clear as to who is to be informed around their preferred gender identity or gender expression and who is not to be informed; and
- Follow the guidelines to support this policy as referred to in the Related Documentation section below.

## Definitions

For detailed definitions and relevant terms related to this policy please refer to the 'DCU LGBTQ+ Terminology' document in [Appendix 3](#).

## Appendices

- 1) [Role of the Student](#)
- 2) [Role of the University](#)
- 3) [DCU LGBTQ+ Terminology](#)
- 4) [Useful Contacts and Support](#)
- 5) [Checklist for Students and Staff](#)


## Contact Details

Further clarifications of this policy can be obtained from the **Director** or **Deputy Director of [Student Support & Development](#)** or the **Senior Counsellor** (details below).

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at 5 year intervals.

## Version Control

Document Name	Student Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy	 <p>DCU Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Atha Cliath Dublin City University</p>
Version Reference	1.0	
Document Owner	Student Support & Development	
Approved by	DCU Executive	
Date	19th March 2019	

**End.**

## Appendix 1. Role of the Student

### Gender Identity & Gender Expression Policy Guidelines

#### Introduction

These guidelines have been drafted in order to support student members of the DCU community wishing to transition and avail of the supports outlined in this policy.

The following staff members are the central point of contact for students who wish to discuss / seek support on items related to this policy. Please contact the relevant person directly:

Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan: Dr. Claire Bohan – Director of Student Support & Development ([claire.bohan@dcu.ie](mailto:claire.bohan@dcu.ie))

Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan: Ms. Annabella Stover – Deputy Director of Student Support & Development ([Annabella.stover@dcu.ie](mailto:Annabella.stover@dcu.ie))

Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan: Mr. Ruan Kennedy, Senior Counsellor ([ruan.kennedy@dcu.ie](mailto:ruan.kennedy@dcu.ie))

Contact Person for Student Record / Official Documentation Changes: Niamh Mc Mahon, Registry, Students Records Officer ([niamh.mcmahon@dcu.ie](mailto:niamh.mcmahon@dcu.ie))

#### Facilities

A number of single occupancy WC's across the DCU campuses have been designated as universal access, and thus can be used by all students regardless of gender.



#### Sports & Physical Activity

We are working towards more inclusive sporting arrangements. If any student has difficulty accessing physical activity or team sports, please contact the Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development

#### Records

A person's file or record will always reflect their legal name and gender. No records will be changed without the permission of the student concerned. A timeframe should be agreed with the student within which all records are changed.



## Documentation required to formally change Student records (Name/Gender)

If you wish to change your name / gender, you are required to produce **one** of the following to the Student Records Officer in Registry:

- [Deed poll](#) – displaying the name changed (for name change only)
- A gender recognition certificate (name and gender change)
- A new birth certificate (name and gender change)
- Passport (name and gender change)

Where a name and/or gender change is requested and official documentation is provided, all Student records will be updated. Students should contact the **Registry Students Records Officer (contact details above)** to request the changes to their official student record.

When the student record is changed, the **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development (contact details above)** will be advised by the Student Records Officer and will organise for the following records to be updated:

Counselling / Health Records (if relevant)  
Sports Membership details (if relevant)  
Clubs and Societies database (if relevant)  
Alumni database (if relevant)

Any documents that need to be kept relating to a previous gender identity or a transitioning process will be kept confidentially and will only be viewed by people when required, and with the permission of the individual concerned.

## Historical Records and Alumni Records

Should a student wish to have formal documentation such as transcripts retrospectively changed to reflect their legal name or gender, this will be arranged by the **Registry Student Records Officer (details above)**. Documentation, as outlined above, will be required.

A former student or Alumnus who wishes to change their name on formal documentation, e.g. transcripts or parchment, should write in confidence to the **Registry Student Records Officer (details above)** to request the change and provide the following information and documentation:

- Full name in which award was made
- Date of Birth
- Award(s) obtained from the University
- Year in which the award(s) was/were made
- Current Address
- Previous Student Number (if known)



- Official documentation, as outlined above

The *original* transcripts and parchment must be returned to the Registry with the request to change a name.

The Alumni Office will be informed of the change of name and/or gender by the **Registry Student Records Officer** once this is complete. There will be no charge for a new set of transcripts.

## Communication

We encourage students to engage with the University designated contacts and process early to ensure you receive all the support available.

## Beginning the Transition Process

A person beginning the transitioning process can contact the **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development** to discuss their intentions, needs and potential concerns. Transitioning students will be asked to work with the relevant University authorities in order to clearly establish what their needs may be.

## Supporting Transition Processes

Our University recognises that transition for some people may involve movement between different gender presentations at different times.

We understand that one of the most significant moments for a person going through transition is when they decide to start presenting in their true gender publicly. The University is committed to ensuring this is managed and communicated well to those who have a study relationship with you.

## Confidential Transition Plan

The University is aware that there are different elements of transition such as social, legal and medical transition. It can be helpful to draw up a confidential plan for your period of transition and thereafter. The implementation of this plan will be reviewed with you and reassessed at each significant part of the process, as required by you. The plan will include the following, where applicable:

- The expected point or phase of change of name or other personal details
- Who will need to be informed initially, and the level of information to be provided, in order to offer support and arrangements during the transition process (academic staff / placement setting etc.)
- What amendments will be required to records and systems
- What on-going support may be required



- **Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan:** Dr. Claire Bohan – Director of Student Support & Development ([claire.bohan@dcu.ie](mailto:claire.bohan@dcu.ie))
- **Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan:** Ms. Annabella Stover – Deputy Director of Student Support & Development ([Annabella.stover@dcu.ie](mailto:Annabella.stover@dcu.ie))
- **Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan:** Mr. Ruan Kennedy – Senior Counsellor ([ruan.kennedy@dcu.ie](mailto:ruan.kennedy@dcu.ie))
- **Contact Person for Student Record / Official Documentation Changes:** Niamh Mc Mahon, Registry, Students Records Officer ([niamh.mcmahon@dcu.ie](mailto:niamh.mcmahon@dcu.ie))

## Appendix 2. Role of the University

### Gender Identity & Gender Expression Policy Guidelines

#### Introduction

These guidelines have been drafted in order to support members of the DCU community in implementing the *Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy*.

Designated staff members to assist students with items related to this policy:

**Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan:** Dr. Claire Bohan – Director of Student Support & Development ([claire.bohan@dcu.ie](mailto:claire.bohan@dcu.ie))

**Contact Person for Students and Coordination of Transition Plan:** Ms. Annabella Stover – Deputy Director of Student Support & Development ([Annabella.stover@dcu.ie](mailto:Annabella.stover@dcu.ie))

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#### Gender Identity Language Guidance (adapted from TENI's Workplace Guidance)

Community members should always respect the gender identity as which a person presents. Sometimes this may not be easy to ascertain. In order to avoid confusion in these circumstances, it is acceptable to ask politely for clarification. These guidelines aim to ensure that all community members are treated with respect.

#### Designated Name

- If necessary, politely and circumspectly ask for clarification of the way a student wishes to be addressed, if unsure (i.e. their name);

## Pronouns

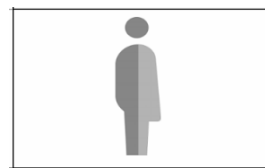
- If you aren't sure what pronouns (he/she/they) to use, listen to see how they refer to themselves;
- If you still cannot find out a person's pronoun, an easy approach is to be gender neutral: use the plural pronouns 'they' and 'their' in the singular sense or the individual's name;
- As community members adjust to a change in name and pronouns, they may make mistakes. Adjusting to a change in gender is not about perfection, but about respect. If you are unsure of how a person would wish to be addressed, it is acceptable to politely ask: "Excuse me, which pronoun do you use?" or "Excuse me, how do you wish to be addressed?"

## Being "Out" or not

- Some people are 'out' – open about their preferred gender identity or expression – and others are not. Always respect the person's choice. Remember that there is no legal requirement for someone to reveal their gender identity at work or university and they may have only provided information to certain individuals within the University;
- When referring to a person in their absence, you should use their designated pronouns as it respects their identity and helps prevent confusion and embarrassment for everyone.
- Do not disclose a person's transgender status without their consent

## Facilities

A number of single occupancy WC's across the DCU campuses have been designated as universal access, and thus can be used by any gender.



## Sports & Physical Activity

We are working towards more inclusive sporting arrangements. If any student has difficulty accessing physical activity or team sports, please contact the Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development.

## Records

Where possible, a student's file or central student record should always reflect their current name and gender. Consideration will be given to changes to records and systems that may be



needed to ensure confidentiality, such as library cards, e-mail address, and web-site references etc. No records should be changed without the permission of the student concerned, and an agreed date should be made in which all records are changed.

## **Documentation required to formally change Student records (Name/Gender)**

The student is required to produce one of the following:

- [Deed poll](#) – displaying the name changed (name change only)
- A gender recognition certificate (name and gender change)
- A new birth certificate (name and gender change)
- Passport (name and gender change)

Where a name and/or gender change is requested from existing students and official documentation is provided, all student records will be updated. Students should contact the **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development** initially to discuss the process. Due consideration will be given to the confidential and sensitive nature of such a change to student records. The change to the official student record will be made by the **Registry Student Records Officer**. The Director / Deputy Director will contact the relevant School/Faculty to request a change in gender as some records may be kept within the School or Faculty.

Any documents that need to be kept relating to a previous gender identity or a transitioning process will be kept confidentially and will only be viewed by people when required, and with the permission of the individual concerned.

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## **Historical Records and Alumni Records**



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A former student or Alumnus who wishes to change their name on formal documentation, e.g. transcripts or parchment, should write in confidence to the **Registry Student Records Officer** to request the change and provide the following information and documentation:

- Full name in which award was made
- Date of Birth
- Award(s) obtained from the University
- Year in which the award(s) was/were made
- Current Address
- Previous Student Number (if known)
- Official documentation, as outlined above

The *original* transcripts and parchment must be returned to the Registry with the request to change a name.

The Alumni Office will be informed of the change of name and/or gender by the **Registry Student Records Officer** once this is complete. There will be no charge for a new set of transcripts.

## Communication

We should be aware of attitudes concerning diverse genders or behaviour and create a supportive, welcoming, non-judgmental environment allowing open conversations. The following are some guidelines to guide conversations.

- Do not assume that a person's gender identity is problematic, or that it is the root of other issues.
- When talking to or about an individual, use language that they have deemed appropriate, and use the name and pronouns that are appropriate to their gender presentation and identity. If unsure, ask the person.
- Be very cognisant of privacy and seek permission to disclose gender identity and expression as some people may be more out than others.
- Respect a person's privacy. Accept the name that a person uses to introduce themselves – Never ask about names that someone may have been assigned or used in the past.
- Do not ask what stage they are at in their transition. Do not tell others (without permission) of an individual's gender status, to do so is a violation of the dignity, identity, and privacy of the individual.
- Do not make assumptions about their sexual orientation, desire for medical treatment or other aspects of their identity and/or transition.



- When talking to individuals, use open ended questions, and be aware of non-verbal cues which hinder communication (e.g. body language). Be aware of gender diversity, and use inclusive language (e.g. partner rather than boyfriend/girlfriend) when discussing relationships. Equally, be careful not to appear patronizing or condescending.

## **Training and Awareness Raising**

The University will provide education for our community in order to ensure the university-wide implementation of this policy. Awareness will also be incorporated in relevant training programmes such as diversity awareness training, equality and human rights training and dignity & respect training, and will also include online and printed literature as appropriate. This will be offered to all students and, by request, specifically to the student's immediate class group.

## **Supporting People Who 'Come Out'**

Because societies tend to assume that people have set and fixed gender identities, those with diverse gender identities and expressions often have to, or choose to, 'come out'. Deciding whether and to whom to be 'out' is entirely a personal matter for each individual. If someone 'comes out' to you, please be aware that you have been placed in a position of trust. You should never assume that a person who comes out to you has consented to any information being disclosed to third parties. Depending on your role, you may wish to ask the person's explicit consent to disclose information to other people where it is necessary for a specific purpose.

For some members of our community, the coming out process may involve aligning their gender expression with their gender identity. The University is committed to the principles of self-identification and at all times invites people to name their own identity; never assuming or assigning an identity without prior consultation and consent. For the majority of our community, who have no exposure to the complexities of gender, it can be difficult to grasp the wide range of gender identity labels. If you are not sure what a particular term means, it is fine to politely ask the person to explain it to you. For example, people who identify as genderfluid may present on some occasions as 'male' and on others as 'female'.

## **Supporting Transition Processes**

'Transition' usually refers to a process that entails living in one's actual gender identity rather than in the sex one was assigned at birth. The process generally occurs over a lengthy period of time and can include some or many of the following steps: telling one's family, friends, and colleagues; using a different name and different pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery.

Our University recognises that transition for some people may involve movement between different gender presentations at different times. For others, transition is a permanent and



usually irreversible process. There are two distinct phases of the permanent transition process:

- Social Transition
- Medical Transition

It is important to understand that one of the most significant moments will be when a person going through transition decides to start presenting in their true gender publicly. It is crucial that this is managed and communicated well to those who have a working or study relationship with the individual. It is also important to note that different individuals will have different needs, and that there is no set, standard model of transition.

## Confidential Transition Plan

The **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development** will work with the student to develop a transition plan, if this is appropriate.

This plan will take into consideration that there is a distinction between social transition and medical transition and that there can be a significant time gap between the two processes. The implementation of the plan will be reviewed regularly and reassessed at each significant part of the process. The plan should include the following issues, where applicable:

- The expected point or phase of change of name or other personal details
- Who will need to be informed initially, and the level of information to be provided, in order to offer support and arrangements during the transition process,
- Whether the individual wishes to inform lecturers/fellow students / placement settings (if required) themselves, or would prefer this to be done for them,
- What amendments will be required to records and systems,
- Whether training or briefing of other students or staff members would be welcomed, at what point and by whom this will be carried out.

The University is aware that there are different elements of transition such as social, legal and medical transition. All, some or none of these elements may be applicable to transgender people.

## Beginning the Transition Process

A student beginning the transitioning process should contact the **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development (details above)**, and discuss their intentions, needs and potential concerns.

If the initial contact is made with Student Support & Development, it is important at some point that the student's School becomes part of their support team. This will be discussed in the first meeting with the student.

## Preparatory Meeting(s)



An initial meeting will be arranged with the **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development** to discuss how best to manage the transition process. They should also:

- Assure the trans person that they are covered by the existing Policy to Promote Respect and Dignity by Preventing Harassment or Bullying;
- Make it clear to the trans person that their conversation will be held in confidence;
- Inform the trans person that they want to discuss how both they and the University can assist the person during their coming out or transition; &
- Ask the trans person for their suggestions on what can be done to help.

It should be agreed at this meeting who the University's main point of contact will be to manage the transition. The Director / Deputy Director should ask the trans person if they wish to inform their lecturers / peers themselves, or prefer that this to be done for them.

The Director / Deputy Director will consult with the Registry Student Records Officer to agree timing of changes to the student record.

### **Developing a Transition Plan**

The expected outcome of the preparatory meetings is to develop a Transition Plan. This should be developed jointly by the trans person and the Director / Deputy Director. It will address issues such as:

- The date of the transition, i.e., the first day of the change of gender presentation, pronoun usage and name. The date of the transition will be driven primarily by the trans person's situation and concerns.
- How the trans person's School and/or peers will be informed of the change. Whether there will be an educational workshop on gender transition offered to staff and students in the School.
- What changes will be made to records and systems, and when.
- How the current policies against discrimination, harassment and benefits will protect the trans person.
- The expected plan for use of gender-specific facilities, such as restrooms.
- Any time off required for medical treatment, if known.
- An on-going support plan.

Make advance arrangements for name changes to be effective on the day of transition, so that student cards, etc. will be available on the first day.

### **The Day of the Announcement**

If the trans student wishes to make an announcement to their class group, this can be facilitated by the Director of Student Support & Development. It may be appropriate to



distribute a hand-out at the meeting. The trans person should choose whether to be present at this meeting, depending on personal comfort levels.

The Director of Student Support & Development or an agreed nominee should make the announcement. S/he should:

- Make it clear that the transitioning student has the University's full support in making the transition.
- Highlight the University's Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy and the University's Policy to Promote Respect and Protect Dignity
- Stress that on the transition day the student will present themselves consistently with their gender identity and should be treated as such; for example, they should be called by the new name and new pronouns.
- Lead by example. Use the new name and pronouns in all official and unofficial communication.
- Answer people's questions.
- If a gender transition workshop is part of the transition plan, let the class group know that this will be available to them if they are interested.

### **Appendix 3. DCU LGBTQ+ Terminology**

#### **Allies**

Allies are persons that seek to advance the social and legal equality of those with differing identities, sexualities and experiences.

#### **Asexual**

Asexual is an umbrella term for those that tend to not have any innate desire or interest in entering into sexual relationships with other people. Sometimes referred to as 'Ace', this identity solely concerns an individual's sexual identity (as on the scale of asexual-sexual) and is separate and typically unrelated to romantic relationships.

#### **Pansexual**

Someone attracted to more than one gender. Refers to those" that form sexual and romantic relationships on bases of personality rather than gender identity. Pansexual, with "pan" deriving from the Greek for "all", refers to those who do not adhere to binary gender in terms of their sexual and romantic relationships.

#### **Bisexual**





Bisexual, linguistically, implies recognition of binary gender, and therefore can mean an individual who is attracted to men and women, but those who identify as bisexual are not necessarily only attracted to traditional gender expression.

### **Cis**

Cisgender (or cis) refers to those that identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. Gender assignment describes the process by which physicians and individuals prescribe one particular gender to a person based on the appearance of their genitals and/or genetic markers.

### **Coming Out**

This is the process of revealing your sexual orientation and/or gender identity to individuals in your life; often incorrectly thought to be a one-time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process.

### **Crossdressers and Transvestites**

A transvestite or crossdressing person is someone who at times wears clothing, jewellery and/or make-up not traditionally or stereotypically associated with their assigned sex. There is generally no intention or desire to change their gender identity or assigned sex, and has no relation to sexual orientation. Crossdressing is not necessarily synonymous with drag, of which is more concerned with performance and entertainment. There are also negative connotations with the use of transvestites and can be met with distaste when used.

### **Gay**

This term refers to someone who is attracted to people of the same gender. It is mainly used to describe men but can also be used to describe women.

### **Gender**

This term refers to expectations and stereotypes about behaviours, actions and roles linked to being a “man” or “woman.” Social norms related to gender vary across cultures and can shift over time.

### **Gender/Sex Affirmation Surgery**

Also called gender confirmation surgery or gender reassignment surgery, refers to surgical interventions undertaken by some people as part of the transitioning process. It is a process that is undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reaffirmation of a person’s sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex. Surgical interventions are not a necessity for the transition process.

### **Gender Binary**

This term refers to the predominant social system whereby people are thought to be one of two genders: male or female. This system is restrictive for many people who feel that their natal sex (sex they were labelled with at birth) does not match up with their gender or that their gender is fluid and not fixed. Gender binaries are thought to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive.



### **Gender Expression**

This term refers to how a person represents or expresses their gender identity to others, such as through behaviour, clothing, hairstyles, voice or body characteristics.

### **Gender Identity**

Gender identity refers to a person's self-descriptor that they believe to capture their gender. Gender identities include male, female, non-binary, transman, transwoman and so on. Gender identity is distinct from a person's sexual orientation.

### **Gender Norms**

Gender norms define what society considers male and female behaviour, and it leads to the formation of gender roles, which are the roles males and females are often expected to take in society.

### **Gender Recognition Certificate**

A certificate issued under the Gender Recognition Act 2015 which enables trans people's preferred gender to be legally recognised from age sixteen.

### **Heteronormativity**

Refers to heterosexual identities being considered the norm and the exclusion of any other sexual orientation or gender identity.

### **Heterosexual (Straight)**

Someone who is attracted to people of the opposite gender.

### **Homophobia / Transphobia & Biphobia**

Homophobia encompasses a range of negative attitudes and feelings toward homosexuality or people who are identified or perceived as being lesbian and/or gay. Biphobia describes negative attitudes towards bisexual people. Transphobia relates to prejudice directed specifically at those who don't adhere to gender norms and people who are trans.

### **Intersex**

Intersex refers to a number of different variations in a person's sex characteristics that do not match strict medical definitions of male or female. These characteristics may be chromosomal, hormonal and/or anatomical and may be present to differing degrees. Some intersex people identify with their assigned sex, while others do not. Some choose to identify as intersex. Intersex people, like the general population, may or may not identify as trans. Trans people undergoing transition are not considered to have an intersex condition as a result of their transition.

### **Lesbian**

A woman who is attracted to other women.

### **Non Binary**

Non-binary is an umbrella term for gender identities that fall outside the gender binary of male or female. This includes individuals whose gender identity is neither exclusively male nor female, a combination of male and female or between or beyond genders. Similar to the usage of transgender, people under the non-binary umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms e.g. gender fluid, bigender and gender neutral. The



term is not a synonym for trans and should only be used if someone self-identifies as non-binary and/or genderqueer.

### **Outing**

When someone reveals another person's sexual orientation or gender identity to an individual or group, often without the person's consent or approval.

### **Queer**

Queer is an umbrella term used to encompass all variants of gender/sexuality beyond heteronormative and cisgender norms. It is a self-defining term that should not be prescribed to an individual. Queer has historically negative connotations and can be met with controversy within the LGBTQ+ community. It should only ever be used as an adjective, not a noun. e.g., Dean is a queer person, not Dean is a queer.

### **Sexual Orientation**

The attraction felt between people.

### **Transgender (Trans)**

Transgender is an umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary or genderqueer. Trans is shorthand for 'transgender', however, 'transgender' should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. For instance, 'transgender people' is appropriate but 'transgenders' or 'Mary is a transgender' could be viewed as disrespectful.

### **Transition**

Transitioning is a process through which some trans people begin to live as the gender with which they identify, rather than the one assigned at birth. Transitioning might include social, physical or legal changes such as coming out to family, friends, co-workers and others; changing one's appearance; changing one's name, pronoun and sex designation on legal documents (e.g. driving licence or passport); and medical intervention (e.g. through hormones or surgery).

A medical transition may include hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery and/or other components and is generally conducted under medical supervision based on a set of standards developed by medical professionals.

## **Derogatory or offensive language**

The following terms are generally considered to be offensive to trans people:

- Sex change
- Sex swap
- Tranny
- Transgenders
- Pre-op
- Post-op



- Shemale
- HeShe
- Transsexual (when used as a noun e.g. 'a transsexual')
- Transgender (when used as a noun e.g. 'a transgender')
- Gender-bender (specifically when used in relation to a transitioning person as opposed to an individual who plays with their gender presentation)
- Hermaphrodite (this term is widely held to be offensive – the term now in use is 'intersex people')
- Lady Boy

#### **Inaccurate usage**

- Transgendered – not a synonym for transgender (similar to 'woman-ed' or 'Catholic-ed')
- Transsexuality – the correct medical term, where appropriate, is 'transsexualism'
- Gender identity confusion
- Born a man
- Born a woman
- Trapped in the wrong body (some trans people find this phrase apt, many others feel it over-simplifies a more nuanced experience).

## **Appendix 4. Useful Resources**

### **TENI – Transgender Equality Network Ireland**

Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) seeks to improve conditions and advance the rights and equality of trans people and their families.

[www.teni.ie](http://www.teni.ie) / 01 873 3575

### **LGBT Helpline**

LGBT Ireland provides access to a network of trained volunteers who provide a non-judgemental, confidential, listening support and information service for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people as well as their family and friends.

[www.lgbt.ie](http://www.lgbt.ie) / 1890 929 539

### **Counselling & Personal Development, DCU**

This service provides confidential counselling to all students registered with DCU and can help refer to external services, if required.

[counselling@dcu.ie](mailto:counselling@dcu.ie)

Tel: (700) 5165

### **Student Health Centre, DCU**

This service provides a confidential service to all students registered with DCU and can help refer to external services, if required

Tel: (700) 5143



### Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is Ireland’s national human rights and Equality institution. IHREC are an independent public body that accounts directly to the Oireachtas.

[www.ihrec.ie](http://www.ihrec.ie) / 01 90 245545

### Citizen’s Information

The Citizens Information Board is the statutory body which supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services.

[www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie) / 0761 07 4000

### Free Legal Advice Centre

FLAC is an independent human rights organisation dedicated to the realisation of equal access to justice for all.

[www.flac.ie](http://www.flac.ie)

## Appendix 5. Checklist for Students and Staff

Once a student has decided to transition and wishes to seek support from the University, the student should contact the **Director or Deputy Director of Student Support & Development** to discuss the following:

### Timescale & Planning:

What is the timescale for the transition?	
Will studies have to be suspended / accommodations provided?	
Who will need to be informed initially and who will make this contact?	

### Student Records: Which records will need to be updated?

Student Name on SIS	
Student Gender on SIS	
Student ID Card	
Email Address (triggered by Registry)	
School / Faculty Records	
Clubs and Societies Database	
Counselling Records	
Health Centre Records	
Previous Transcripts	



What documentation is required to facilitate the change of records?	
Other	

**Supports during Transition:**

What support will be needed during the transition phase?	
Who will be involved in this support?	
Who is the 'named' person that will support the student?	
What important dates need to be noted?	

**Training:**

Does the student wish to inform the Chairperson / Lecturers / Fellow Students themselves, or would they prefer this to be done for them?	
Who needs to be informed?	
Is training required for staff / students?	
Who will arrange this training?	
Does the student wish to be involved in the training session?	

**End.**