

Trans and Non-Binary Equality Policy Statement¹

The University of Sussex recognises that there can be differences between physical sex and gender identity/expression. We will at no time discriminate against people on the grounds of their gender identity or gender expression. Where this policy refers to 'trans people', it has in mind a broad range of people whose gender identity is not expressed in ways that are typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. This includes those who have non-binary, non-gender or genderfluid identities.

We celebrate and value the diversity of our workforce, and believe that we will benefit from employing trans people at all levels of responsibility, thus hoping to provide role models for students who identify as trans. We will treat all employees and students with respect, and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation. In doing this we undertake the following.

- = Students will not be denied access to courses, progression to other courses, or fair and equal treatment while on courses because of their gender identity or gender expression.
- = Requests to change name and gender on records will be handled promptly and staff and students will be made aware of any implications of the changes.
- = The curriculum shall not rely on or seek to reinforce stereotypical assumptions about trans people.
- = We will respect the confidentiality of all trans staff and students and will not reveal information without the prior agreement of the individual.
- = Staff will not be excluded from employment or promotion because of their gender identity or gender expression.
- = Transphobic abuse, harassment or bullying¹ (e.g. name-calling/ derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behaviour, intrusive questions) are serious disciplinary offences for staff and students and will be dealt with under the appropriate University procedures. Any abusive, bullying, or harassing material (e.g. written materials, graffiti or recordings) will be removed from University premises.
- = We will provide a supportive environment for staff and students who wish their trans status to be known. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to be open about their gender identity, gender expression, trans status or trans history. To 'out' someone, whether staff or student, without their permission is a form of harassment and, in a number of contexts may amount to a criminal offence.
- = We will include gender identity and gender expression issues in equality training.
- = We welcome, and will provide appropriate facilities for, trans student and staff groups.
- = In providing accommodation for students, any concerns or issues raised by trans students will be handled by the accommodation office and will be treated fairly and in line with our obligations under equality law.

¹This policy statement wording is based on the Joint agreement on guidelines for transgender equality in employment in further education colleges (Association of Colleges et al, 2005).

¹ We use the term "transphobic abuse, harassment or bullying" to mean unwanted behaviours and communications that could reasonably be expected to cause distress or fear among trans people.

- = Staff and students undergoing medical and surgical procedures related to gender reassignment will receive positive support from the University to meet their particular needs during this period.
- = We recognise that trans staff and students come from diverse backgrounds, and will strive to ensure they do not face discrimination on the grounds of their gender identity or gender expression 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 identity or gender expression of partners of trans staff or students.
- = We will ensure that our environment, in terms of our pictures, images, publicity materials and literature, reflects the diversity of our staff and students.

This Policy Statement is intended to promote the fair and equal treatment of trans people. That is compatible with the University's obligation to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the establishment and for visiting speakers (as required by section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986), and the requirement to have regard to the need to ensure that academic staff have freedom within the law to (a) question and test received wisdom and (b) put forward new ideas including controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges at the University (as required by section 202 of the Education Reform Act 1988). For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Policy Statement should be taken to justify sanctioning academic staff for questioning or testing received wisdom or putting forward new ideas including controversial or unpopular opinions within the law, nor should this Policy Statement be taken to justify disproportionate restrictions on freedom of speech. Any person concerned that their rights of academic freedom or freedom of speech have been unjustifiably restricted may lodge a complaint².

Approved by the University Executive Group

November 2018

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Last Amended: January 2023

² Staff may raise concerns with their immediate managers or may lodge a grievance under the [Regulation 30 Grievance Procedure](#). Students may lodge a complaint under the [University's Complaints Procedure](#). Members of the public may lodge a complaint under the University's [Public Complaints Procedure](#). Any complaints relating to the refusal to grant permission for an event with an external speaker should be raised through the [External Speakers' Procedure](#).