

UQ Guide to Supporting Gender Transition/Affirmation in the Workplace



Overview

The University values the diversity of its staff, and recognises the strength that a diverse and inclusive workplace brings to the organisation. The University is committed to supporting staff to affirm their gender in the workplace in a safe, positive, and inclusive way.

Gender is part of a person's social and personal identity and refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual sense of self. A person may choose to express their gender in their appearance, mannerisms or other characteristics in a variety of diverse ways. A person's sex and gender may not necessarily be the same. For instance, an individual's gender may or may not correspond with their sex assigned at birth. Some people may choose to transition from the gender they were assigned at birth to affirm their gender to one that reflects their true self. This is referred to as gender transition or gender affirmation. In this guide, these phrases may be used interchangeably. More information about gender can be found in the [Student Help on Campus Understanding Gender factsheet](#).

Every person's gender affirmation will be unique and so it is important that the person who is affirming their gender guides and informs the process. It is important that this process is well informed to ensure that all staff feel safe, supported, valued and included in the workplace. This Guide is designed to be flexible in recognition of the individual nature of each person's gender affirmation. The staff member affirming their gender, their supervisor and their colleagues all play important roles in the person's gender affirmation process. This Guide provides information specific to each of these important groups and the role they play in supporting someone's gender affirmation process.

For more information, or if you have any questions about gender, bodily and sexuality diversity, please [contact the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion team](#).

1. Have a conversation

When someone decides to affirm their gender in the workplace they may have a conversation with their supervisor, or other appropriate person, to discuss their gender affirmation process and work together to develop a UQ Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan. Ideally, this would be a face-to-face conversation.

A template of a UQ Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan is found in Appendix 1 of this Guide. In general, your Plan may include:

- communication processes to inform colleagues;
- processes to change personal details on Aurion, UQ systems, website and any other relevant sources;
- timeline of affirmation processes; and
- supports available.

1.1 Person who is affirming their gender

When you have decided that you would like to affirm your gender in the workplace, you may have a conversation with your supervisor, or another appropriate person, about the support and process that you need to achieve this. If you feel uncomfortable speaking to your supervisor, you may like to talk to your [local Human Resources staff](#) or the [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion team](#). You are welcome to bring a support person to any of these conversations. This conversation may be the first of many, so you don't have to make any decisions during this conversation if you don't wish to.

1.2 Supervisors

When a staff member shares their intent to affirm their gender with you, it is important that you appropriately support them and the team during the transition. To do this, you should express your support and work with the staff member to develop a workplace gender affirmation plan. A template for a UQ Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan is found in Appendix 1 of this Guide.

2. Develop a UQ Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan

2.1 Communication

Communicating someone's gender affirmation may be an important part of the transition. As part of the development of the Workplace Gender Affirmation Guide the staff member and their supervisor can discuss how they would like to communicate their gender affirmation to their colleagues.

It is essential that the supervisor is guided by the staff member affirming their gender as to how they would like to communicate their transition. It is very important that all staff respect the importance, privacy and sensitivity of the information being communicated.

The communication process may be ongoing and may change over time. The staff member and their supervisor can keep talking about this over time to ensure that the whole affirmation process is properly supported in the workplace.

2.1.1 Person who is affirming their gender

When considering the communication processes you would like used for your gender affirmation, you might like to consider and discuss with your supervisor:

- who you would like to be informed about your gender affirmation;
- what information you would like shared and with whom. This may be different information for the different people you would like to be informed. You might also like to consider what information, and to who, the people you share the information with can pass on. For example, if someone in your team who is informed about your gender affirmation is speaking to another colleague who unintentionally misgenders you because they are unaware of your transition, would you like them to correct the person?;
- how you would like the information to be shared, such as face-to-face in a meeting, a luncheon, an email and/or any other method you would like to use; and
- when you would like information shared with different people.

2.1.2 Supervisors

You should maintain honest, open and respectful communication between the staff member and yourself. The UQ Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan may include a plan for you and the staff member to regularly catch up to ensure that they are receiving the appropriate support throughout the transition process.

In this conversation, it is important that you identify with **whom, what information, and when** the person would like their gender affirmation communicated. It is important that you then only communicate to these people the information that person would like to share. It may be, for example, that the staff member is not yet comfortable communicating their transition to the broader University community and only want members of the team to know.

It is also important that in this conversation you discuss with the staff member about **how** they would like to communicate their gender affirmation with the team. Some people may like to have a morning tea when they affirm their gender, others may prefer an informal team meeting, or have an email sent to the team. It is important that you are guided by the staff member as to how they would like to communicate their transition and support them to do this.

When the staff member's gender affirmation is shared with the people that they would like this shared with, it is important that these people are provided with the information that the staff member would like shared with them (e.g. pronoun and name changes), and that they are informed of who knows this information. Staff should be informed of the sensitivity and private nature of this information and provided with guidance about who they may share this information and in what way. Supervisors may also discuss with the staff member who is affirming their gender how they would like information shared about them in a range of realistic scenarios, such as if a colleague witnesses another colleague outside of the team use their wrong name, and communicate this appropriately to the team.

Supervisors may also need to review any websites, posters and other information/resources that include information about the staff member that will need to have their details updated including their name, title, contact details and photo. This should be done in consultation with the staff member affirming their gender.

2.2 Pronouns

When someone affirms their gender, they may choose to change their name and/or pronouns to reflect their gender. Pronouns are often used in our everyday language to assign someone's gender when we talk about them. A summary of pronouns is outlined in the table below.

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Masculine pronouns | He, him, his |
| Feminine pronouns | She, her, hers |
| Gender neutral pronouns | They, them, their |

A person may use pronouns that align with their gender. However, pronouns do not define someone's gender. For example, someone may use female pronouns but their gender may be fluid and not align as either male or female. Please refer to the [Student Help on Campus Understanding Gender factsheet](#) for more information.

2.2.1 For colleagues and supervisors

It is important that you don't assume someone's pronouns or gender based on their appearance or name. You should always respectfully ask the person, and then use their pronouns appropriately.

It is important to note, that you might make mistakes when you are learning someone's new pronouns and name. This is ok! It is important that you acknowledge your mistake respectfully and sincerely apologise to the person, correct yourself, and earnestly do your best not to make the same mistake again. Try to avoid making a big deal about your mistake as this might embarrass the person.

2.2.2 For supervisors

It is important that you talk to the staff member about any changes to their pronouns and name. You should then use these pronouns and name in all future communication you have with the person and about the person when you are communicating to your team about the person's gender affirmation. Even when referring to someone in the past it is important that you use their pronouns and name as they are today. It is also important that you discuss with the staff member how they would like to communicate any

changes to their pronouns and name with the team, who they would like to communicate this to and when they may like to do this. More information about communication is found in the Communication section of this Guide.

2.3 Updating personal details

Staff can amend your preferred name on MyAurion. If they don't have access to MyAurion please contact your local Human Resources staff and they will be able to assist staff to change your preferred name. No formal evidence is required to make this change.

To change a staff member's name on the UQ Staff Directory and the contacts webpage staff need to complete the online [Voice Ops Contacts Update form](#). To change a UQ Username and staff email address staff can [contact ITS](#) and they will be able to assist staff with this. No formal evidence are required to make these changes.

To change a formal name and title on Aurion staff should complete the [UQ Personal Details Form](#). This Form must then be submitted to your local Human Resources staff. No evidence is required to change a staff member's title unless it is for an academic honorific. Evidence, such as passport, birth certificate or valid driver's license may be required to change staff's formal name. This is because the formal name is used for tax, pay, and superannuation purposes. For more information please contact your local Human Resources staff.

To amend gender on Aurion please complete the [UQ Personal Details Form](#). This Form must then be submitted to your local Human Resources staff. No evidence is required for this process.

More information about this can be found in Appendix 1 of the Guide.

2.4 Leave entitlements

A staff member who is transitioning may be provided with leave in accordance with the [Leave Entitlement Policy](#) and relevant procedures. Leave may be requested for many reasons, which may include illness from hormone therapy, medical appointments and non-medical reasons. Supervisors should discuss with the staff member any leave requests, and options that may be available, to determine the most appropriate way to provide support.

2.5 Use of facilities

University staff are welcome to use the bathroom facilities that reflect their gender. There are also a number of gender neutral bathrooms available across UQ locations. To find the closest bathroom that you feel most comfortable using during your affirmation process, please use the [UQNav App](#). All bathrooms, including male, female, gender neutral, and accessible facilities can be found on this mobile phone application.

2.6 Appearance and dress

The University supports staff to dress in a way that reflects their gender, as appropriate with due regard to uniform and safety standards. Supervisors should support staff to dress in a way that aligns with their gender and reflects the organisational unit standards. Uniforms should not be gender specific and, therefore, should be inclusive of all staff.

2.7 Addressing concerns and education

It is important that the Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan considers how to properly address concerns and any additional education that may be needed to support the implementation of the Plan. When addressing any concerns that may arise during a staff member's gender transition, it is important that staff act in accordance with the relevant [UQ Policies and Procedures](#), including the [Code of Conduct](#).

2.7.1 For supervisors

It is important that you have a plan to address any concerns that may be raised during the transition process.

To minimise the risk of concerns being raised, you should clearly communicate, raise awareness and educate your team on gender diversity and the value and strength of diversity and inclusion. It is recommended that all members of your team, and broader organisational unit, including yourself, complete the [UQ Ally Workshop](#). The Ally Workshop provides participants with an understanding of gender, sexuality, and bodily diversity, and provides them with skills to develop and maintain an inclusive and supportive environment. You can also seek guidance and information from [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion](#).

2.7.2 For colleagues

Feeling uncomfortable generally arises when we experience something new, about which we may have limited knowledge, control, or information. This is something that is experienced by all people about many different aspects of life. It is important that you approach any feelings of discomfort you may experience about someone's gender affirmation in an appropriate way.

The [Employee Assistance Program](#) 1300 360 364 is available to all UQ staff. The University provides up to six sessions of free, confidential counselling, coaching and support for employees and their family members for a broad range of work and life issues through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

It is also recommended that you complete the [UQ Ally Workshop](#). The Ally Workshop provides participants with an understanding of gender, sexuality and bodily diversity and developing and maintaining an inclusive and supportive environment.

Should you feel uncomfortable you could discreetly discuss this with your supervisor. They will provide you with information about the different UQ policies, procedures, and support services available. You may also like to speak to the [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion team](#), who will be able to provide further information about gender, sexuality, and bodily diversity inclusion.

The University of Queensland is committed to developing and maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment and bullying, and which promotes respect for persons, integrity, equitable treatment, and natural justice. Discrimination, harassment including sexual harassment, and bullying will not be tolerated at the University of Queensland under any circumstances.

2.8 Timeline

The UQ Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan may include a timeline of the implementation of the plan. This will assist by providing some structure to the person's transition and assist supervisors in planning for any leave they may need to take during their affirmation process.

3. Sensitivity and privacy

Gender is considered personal information and so should be treated with confidentiality and sensitivity in accordance with the [UQ Privacy Management Policy](#).

4. Reporting instances of discrimination, harassment and bullying

The University of Queensland is committed to developing and maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment and bullying and that promotes respect for persons, integrity, equitable

treatment, and natural justice. Discrimination, harassment including sexual harassment, and bullying will not be tolerated at the University of Queensland under any circumstances.

If you feel that you have experienced behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying you may wish to:

- seek guidance from the relevant [University Policies, Procedures and Guidelines](#);
- report the incident to your supervisor, if appropriate. Your supervisor will be able to provide information about the processes and support services available;
- seek support from the [Employee Assistance Program](#);
- seek information from a [Discrimination and Harassment Contact Officer](#) (DHCO), particularly one of our DHCOs who are also a member of the UQ Ally Network. These are able to be identified on the website; and
- seek advice from [Human Resources](#).

5. UQ Ally Network

The UQ Ally Network is an award winning program that provides a visible network of well-informed staff who create a safe, welcoming and inclusive space for gender, sexuality, and bodily diverse people at UQ and the broader community. To find a UQ Ally, or learn more about the Network, please see the [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion website](#). If you are interested in joining the Ally Network, please [register for the next Ally Workshop on the Staff Development website](#).

6. Support

The following services and programs are available for support:

- [Employee Assistance Program](#) 1300 360 364;
- [members of the UQ Ally Network](#);
- [Staff Support Services](#); and
- [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion unit](#).

You may also like to seek support from external organisations such as [Lifeline](#), [Beyond Blue and the Brisbane Gender Clinic Support and Social Group](#). A list of [South-East Queensland community organisations is found on the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion website](#).

7. Further information

For further information, please see the following resources and support services:

- [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion](#);
- [Ally Network](#);
- [Human Resources](#);
- [Employee Assist program](#);
- [Manager Assist](#);
- [Student Help on Campus Understanding Gender and Sexuality resources](#);

- [Let's Talk Gender resource](#); and
- [Pride in Diversity](#). UQ is a member of Pride in Diversity, which is a not-for-profit organisation that provides information and support to develop inclusive workplaces for sexuality, gender and bodily diverse staff.

Appendix 1: UQ workplace gender affirmation plan template

The UQ Workplace Gender Affirmation Plan Template is designed to provide staff and supervisors with some guidance when developing a Gender Affirmation Plan. Each person's gender affirmation is unique and will require different support. Supervisors should work with the staff member who is affirming their gender to develop a Plan to support staff member who is transitioning, and ensure the workplace is appropriately supported and informed. Not all aspects of this Plan template may need to be completed, and the Plan should be developed to reflect the needs of the staff member and the organisational unit. Please feel free to contact the [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion unit](#) if you have any questions, or would like more information and support.

Name:

Pronouns:

Date Plan will commence:

Date this Plan will aim to be completed:

| Action | Who is responsible? | Timeframe | How are we going to do this? |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| UPDATING NAME AND GENDER IN SYSTEMS | | | |
| Change of preferred name in Aurion. | | | <i>Log-in to MyAurion to make the change. If you don't have access to MyAurion please contact your local Human Resources staff.</i> |
| Change of formal name in Aurion. | | | <i>complete the UQ Personal Details Form</i> |
| Change of gender in Aurion. | | | <i>complete the UQ Personal Details Form</i> |

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| Change of UQ username, which will update the way your name appears on staff directory and other platforms. | | | Contact ITS to request the change |
| Change of preferred name in UQ Staff Directory. | | | complete the Voice Ops Contact Update form |
| Change of email address. | | | contact ITS to request the change |
| Updating any personal details on websites, including internal and external websites as appropriate. | | | contact the website owner to request the change |
| Updating ID card with name and image. | | | Complete a staff ID card form and take this to P&F to get a new card. |
| Update your details in other UQ systems, including ProMaster, Serko etc | | | Most of these systems draw on the name attached to your UQ username account. Once you have updated this by contacting ITS, please check these other systems. If your name and salutation is incorrect please contact the relevant area who manages the system to update. This may be ITS or Finance depending on the system. |
| Updating nameplate at workstation or office door. | | | Speak to your supervisor about best way to update this |
| Updating name on business cards. | | | Speak to your supervisor about best way to update this |
| Updating contact details of email distribution lists and networks. | | | Speak to your supervisor about best way to update this |
| Updating name on voicemail. | | | Staff member should be able to do this themselves but can contact Information Technology Services if they need assistance with this |

| | | | |
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| Updating name on organisational charts. | | | <i>Speak to your supervisor about best way to update this</i> |
| Updating insurance/superannuation details. | | | <i>contact your Superannuation fund to request the change</i> |
| Updating qualifications and publications as appropriate. | | | <i>contact the providers of these qualifications and publications to request the change</i> |
| Removal of images on the UQ Image Database. | | | <i>contact Office of Marketing and Communication to request the change</i> |
| Updating any team promotional resources. | | | <i>Speak to your supervisor about best way to update this</i> |
| Updating any other team phone lists/directories/communications. | | | <i>Speak to your supervisor about best way to update this</i> |
| If you are also a student, update gender and name in Si-Net | | | Follow process for updating your details on Si-Net |
| LEAVE | | | |
| Consideration and application for leave, in accordance with UQ Policies and Procedures . | | | |
| Develop a work plan to support any extended leave. | | | |
| Develop a return to work plan from any periods of extended leave. | | | |
| COMMUNICATING TO THE TEAM | | | |

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| <p>How will the staff member's gender affirmation be communicated with the team? Considerations may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who in the team needs to know; • timing of communications throughout the process; • method of communication (e.g. morning tea when affirmation process concludes, email, meetings etc); • education provided to the team, e.g. attending UQ Ally Workshop; • how any concerns or issues will be managed; and • what will be included in the communications e.g. name, pronouns, timeline, use of facilities, educational resources, relevant policies and procedures, support services? | | | |
| COMMUNICATING MORE WIDELY | | | |
| <p>How will the staff member's gender affirmation be communicated with other colleagues, outside of the team? Considerations may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who needs to know; • how this information may be shared among staff, and how this might be prevented or encouraged; • timing of communications throughout the process; | | | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • method of communication (e.g. morning tea when affirmation process concludes, email, meetings etc); • what will be included in the communications e.g. name, pronouns, timeline, use of facilities, educational resources, relevant policies and procedures, support services? | | | |
| OTHER CONSIDERATIONS | | | |
| Use of facilities. | | | |
| Dress and appearance. | | | |
| <p>UQ Policies and Procedures, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity and Diversity Policy; • Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment Policy; • Staff Grievance Resolution Policy; and • Leave Policy. | | | |
| <p>Access to the support services available, including internal and external services. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Assistance Program 1300 360 364; • members of the Ally Network; • Workplace Diversity and Inclusion unit; • Lifeline; • Beyond Blue; • Brisbane Gender Clinic Support and Social Group; and • Other community organisations | | | |

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| The frequency of conversations and meetings between staff member and supervisor. | | | |
| Identification of a point of contact for ongoing support and information for the staff member. | | | |
| Consideration of support plan for staff member if they feel there are any issues in the workplace. | | | |
| Other support needed. | | | |



Contact details

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