Gender Identity and Expression – Guidelines

1.0 Introduction

To support our community's Gender Identity and Expression Policy a range of guidance has been created to enable us in delivering on our commitments and to achieve an environment of equality, diversity and inclusivity.

Our guidance documents provide a roadmap to develop our UCD community's diversity and assist relevant community members in achieving their own aspirations and / or commitments to fellow community members. Our guidance is designed to assist everyone in understanding what gender diversity is all about; how we can work together to support every member of our UCD community; how we can learn from each other to ensure that our whole university is a respectful, empathetic, positive and energetic place to study, live, work and visit.

Our guidance documents provide further information on a range of processes designed to make our university an easier place to navigate when initiating processes that involve personal information. They are also designed to provide information to individuals that have various roles and responsibilities relevant to a range of processes that support the implementation of our policy and a range of supporting policies and initiatives. The guidance is designed to be informative and helpful and not prescriptive while capable of evolving to mirror our own evolving culture and society.

Our aspiration is that these guidance documents can be used to enhance our community to be one where the expression of one's gender is embraced and unifies us rather than divides us.

Students who need support with or advice about any of issues covered by these Guidelines should contact the UCD Student Advisers. Employees may wish to talk to their Head of School, or the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit. Further details about support and advice services are set out in Appendix 1 to this document.

2.0 Gender Identity Language Guidance (adapted from TENI Workplace Guidance)

Individuals must always respect the gender identity our community member / visitor / service user presents in. Sometimes you may not be able to determine immediately the gender identity of a community member, so it is acceptable to ask questions if necessary to avoid confusion but it is also important to do this in a polite manner. The following provides some guidance in ensuring that people of all genders are treated with respect:

- *Designated Name*
  - If necessary politely and circumspectly ask for clarification of the way they wish 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?"
  - If you accidentally use the wrong pronouns, just apologise once and continue with the conversation. Make a concerted effort not to make the same mistake again.
- *Being "Out" or not*
  - Some people are 'out' – open about their 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. It respects their identity and helps prevent confusion and embarrassment for everyone.
  - Do not disclose a person's trans status without their consent

3.0 Facilities

People use the University toilets and changing facilities of the gender which they identify with. To support this principle, appropriate signage will be placed on single stall toilets. All single stall toilets with a symbol or wording which clearly indicates that they are gender neutral. A map will be available identifying the location of these bathrooms. Furthermore, as a pilot exercise, multi stall male and female bathrooms and changing rooms in the UCD Sports Centre have been identified as

gender-neutral facilities. To indicate that these male and female bathrooms and changing facilities are available to all who identify with that gender, this signage will read

"Please choose the facilities that best fit your gender".

[Signs will also be placed internally in these facilities as a reminder that we are an inclusive and diverse University where all members of our Community must be respected.]
A gender-neutral symbol will also be placed beside the male and female symbol on the multi stalls in this pilot exercise. The principle of gender neutral facilities will apply to all new developments.

4.0 Records

A person's file or 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 employee or student concerned, and an agreed date should be made in which all records are changed.

Some records can be changed at the request of the individual without the requirement for legal documentation regarding a name change.

For students, records on SISweb, Blackboard, e-mail addresses, class lists, and student cards can be changed without official proof of a name change. For final award documents such as a transcript and graduation parchment, students will have to sign a form for final award documents at the Student Desk. If students have official proof of a name change such as Gender Recognition Certificate or Passport they should bring the relevant documents to the Student Desk. If students do not yet have official proof of name change they can sign the form and final award documents will be updated.

In terms of a name change for students where official documentation is not required, they will be known by a "social" name of their choosing during their period of study or employment. Name changes will be facilitated by a meeting with a member of the Student Desk team in Administrative Services, UCD Registry or any other member of Administrative Services staff. The changes will be recorded in UniShare and noted in Banner with due consideration given to the confidential and sensitive nature of such a change. The same process will be used when changing the official name in Banner with official documentation of the student witnessed by staff at the Student Desk. (See Appendix 2 for Flowchart).

Where a name change is request from existing employees and official documentation is provided, all HR records will be updated. Employees should contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit in the first instance. The changes will be recorded in Core HR and all records that originate from the Core HR system will be updated. Due consideration will be given to the confidential and sensitive nature of such a change. Where official proof of a name change is unavailable or not required, they will be known by a "social" name of their choosing during their period of employment.

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

Where formal documents are required before commencing employment or student enrolment such as a passport or birth certificate, confidentiality should be emphasised if the person has not yet been issued with new identification, as the birth certificate will clearly show the person was assigned a different name and gender at birth. The same situation can arise with a passport from another country that does not have the same legislative provision as Ireland. Therefore, some flexibility may be required in what is asked for.

5.0 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.

- We must not assume that a person's gender identity is problematic, or that 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 the person should be asked.

- Be very cognisant of privacy and seek permission to disclose gender identity and expression as some people may be more out than others;

- Respect an individual's privacy.
  Accept the name that a person uses to introduce themselves – **<u>Never</u>** 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 that boyfriend/girlfriend) when discussing relationships. Equally, be careful not to appear patronizing or condescending.

6.0 Accommodation

All accommodation in the University is gender neutral. However, the University recognises that there may be specific needs and requirements of transitioning students in the provision of accommodation. If a student chooses to transition during their time at UCD, and this requires a review of their accommodation, advice should be sought from the Student Advisers.

7.0 Training and Awareness Raising

Our University will provide education for employees and students 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 and respect training, and will also include online and printed literature as appropriate. Key areas will be identified for training in the first instance and will incorporate scenario-based training.

Training for colleagues of a person who comes out may be required and must be managed expertly and with sensitivity. How and when this is undertaken will be agreed with the employee. The consent of the employee will be obtained regarding the extent of personal information to be given to colleagues. Training for colleagues will also cover the requirements around confidentiality and disclosure and raise awareness of the boundaries of courtesy with regard to gender identity, for example the use of personal pronouns and acceptable questions to ask. An internal training

network, consisting of fully trained members, will be established to provide Gender Identity and Expression training to various groups across the University.

8.0 Supporting People Who 'Come Out'

Because societies tend to assume that people have set and fixed gender identities, individuals with diverse gender identities and expressions often have to or choose to 'come out'. As noted above, deciding whether and whom to be 'out' to is entirely a 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. Our university is committed to the principles of self-identification and at all times invite 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 the grasp the wide range of gender identity labels. If you're 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'.

9.0 Supporting Transition Processes

As noted in the UCD Gender Identity and Expression Policy, '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.

9.1 Confidential Transition Plan

It can be helpful to draw up a confidential plan for the period of transition and thereafter, taking 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 should 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
- Whether a student wants to continue their course of study, defer for a set amount of time or come to some other arrangement,
- 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 line managers, co-workers/fellow students themselves, or would prefer this to be done for them,
- What amendments will be required to records and systems,
- Whether training or briefing of co-workers, fellow students or service users will be necessary, 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 trans people.

Appendix 3 below provides a useful flowchart that covers some of the issues that need to be considered when an individual is going through social or medical transition. This flowchart is intended as a guide only as it is recognised that there are no set parameters around transitioning**.**

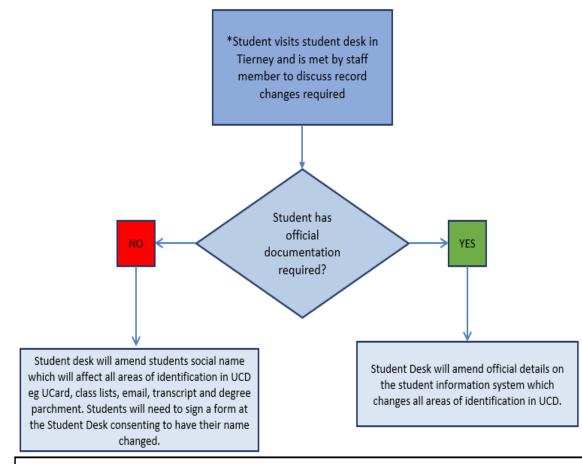## Appendix 1: Resources and Supports

UCD Student Advisers

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit

Transgender Equality Network Ireland

Gender Recognition Act

Citizens Information:
http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/birth_family_relationships/changing_to_your_preferred_gender.html

Dignity and Respect Policy

Employee Assistance Programme

Student Counselling Service

Appendix 2: Student Records Flowchart

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ *Student visits student │
│ desk in Tierney and is  │
│ met by staff member to  │
│ discuss record changes  │
│ required                 │
└─────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
        ◇─────────────◇
       ╱  Student has   ╲
      ╱    official      ╲
◄────┤  documentation     ├────►
 NO   ╲   required?      ╱  YES
       ╲               ╱
        ◇─────────────◇
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NO → Student desk will amend students social name which will affect all areas of identification in UCD eg UCard, class lists, email, transcript and degree parchment. Students will need to sign a form at the Student Desk consenting to have their name changed.

YES → Student Desk will amend official details on the student information system which changes all areas of identification in UCD.

Students aged under 18 are covered by this policy. Such individuals are in a distinct legal position because of their age and should obtain the assistance of a Student Adviser when, for example, seeking to change their student records.

Appendix 3 – Transitioning Process Flowchart

It is important to note that each individual will have a different approach to their transition. Some may want to change their entire record, yet others may not wish to do so, and the University will respect and support individual's choices and wishes. If someone does not wish to change their record, some of the actions below may not apply. This flowchart is only a guideline and all cases will be treated individually.

The individual decides to transition.

The individual approaches a representative in confidence and goes through the transition checklist (See below), using it to develop a transition action plan. Students should approach their Student Advisor in the first and employees should approach either their manager or the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit.

Actions are taken according to the agreed action plan and the University issues a letter to the individual confirming the changes.

University's responsibility:

- if acceptable documentation is provided, replace all official records with the affirmed gender
- Update student / staff records,
- issue new ID card
- inform other staff and students (in agreement with the student)
- provide supports and reasonable arrangements (if necessary)
- identify training needs among staff and peer students - request training if necessary
- liaise with other Services (e.g. Accommodation, Facilities) as necessary

Documents required from individual:
- Confirmation of legal change of name (if applicable)
- Confirmation of legal change of gender (if applicable)

Ongoing support for the Trans individual will be provided as necessary.