

7.4 Learner Gender Identity and Expression Policy

7.4.1 Introduction

Griffith College is committed to providing an inclusive and diverse environment in which all members of our community can achieve their fullest potential. Our community strives to value and encourage all members irrespective of gender identity, and to respect and recognise diverse gender identities and gender expressions.

The Gender Recognition Act 2015 provides a process enabling people to achieve full legal recognition of their gender identity, and allows for the acquisition of a new birth certificate that reflects this change. The Gender Recognition Act allows all individuals over the age of 18 to self-declare their own gender identity. Under the same legislation, it is also possible for people aged 16 and 17 to have their gender identity legally recognised.

All members of Griffith College have the right to:

- a) be treated with fairness, dignity and respect, and to be able to express their gender identity freely;
- b) privacy and confidentiality, and only the disclosure of information with consent;
- c) equal access to employment, education, training and promotional opportunities, services, activities and facilities in the college;
- d) reasonable and appropriate arrangements and accommodations.

Applicants to the college have the option to include a preferred name in their record when they apply.

7.4.2 Objectives

- To outline the procedure which applies for learners if they wish to change their name and/or gender identity and expression on their learner record.
- To outline the responsibilities of Griffith College in relation to recording learner gender identity and expression.
- To outline the responsibilities of learners who wish to change their name and/or gender identity.

7.4.3 Scope

This policy applies to all learners of the college and graduates who wish to change their gender and/or name in the college's learner information system.

The wider Griffith College community has a responsibility to:

- Respect the dignity of all members of the Griffith College community, including our visitors.
- Recognise the gender identity of all persons encompassed by this policy in accordance with law.

Section G: Support for Learners

- Challenge or report incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment, or victimisation, as appropriate to their role in the college.
- Respect the privacy rights of individuals.
- Comply with relevant legislation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- [Fulfilling the Learner Charter: The Role and Obligations of Learners and the College](#) (Document 7.3)
- [Learner Code of Conduct](#) (Document 7.7)
- [Learner Dignity and Respect Policy](#) (Document 7.5)

7.4.3.1.1

In circumstances where a graduate also wishes to have their degree parchment re-issued in their new name and/or gender, they must contact the awarding body, for example, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

7.4.4 Responsibility for Implementation

Academic Administration Officer

- Receives and processes the Change of Identity application using the Learner Record Amendment Form (LRAF).
- Once processed, will contact all relevant departments to implement this change of record (for example, the learner's Faculty staff, IT, Griffith Halls of Residence, Security, International Office).
- Communicates with the learner's faculty to ensure their records are updated and staff are aware of the learner's affirmed name and/or gender.

Learner Engagement and Support Officer / QAE Officer

- Is the first point of contact for any learner needing additional support.

Library Personnel

- Issue new student card

Systems Administrator – IT Services

- Issue new email address

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

- Recommend resources and training for the faculty.

Section G: Support for Learners

7.4.5 Definitions

The words people use to describe themselves and others are very important. Using the incorrect words can (often unwittingly) undermine people's dignity and reinforce exclusion. When in doubt, asking a person how they self-identify is generally the most respectful approach. The following are some definitions used when discussing gender identity and expression.

- 7.4.5.1 **Gender Identity** refers to each person's internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body. Gender identity is different from a person's sexual orientation.
- 7.4.5.2 **Gender Expression** refers to the external manifestation of a person's gender identity. Gender can be expressed through mannerisms, clothes, appearances, physical characteristics, social interactions and speech patterns.
- 7.4.5.3 **Gender non-binary**: 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.
- 7.4.5.4 **Gender Recognition Certificate**: a certificate issued under the Gender Recognition Act 2015 which enables trans people's binary gender to be legally recognised from age sixteen.
- 7.4.5.5 **Sex**: the designation of a person at birth as male or female based on their anatomy (genitalia and reproductive organs) or biology (chromosomes and hormones).
- 7.4.5.6 **Trans**: An umbrella term which can be used without offence for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from that which is usually associated with the sex assigned to them at birth. This term can include diverse identifications such as: transsexual, transgender, non-binary, crossdresser, androgynous, agender, genderqueer, gender variant or differently gendered.
- 7.4.5.7 **Intersex**: An umbrella term used to describe a wide variety of natural bodily characteristics that do not fit neatly into strict medical binary definitions of male and female. Intersex variations can be genital, chromosomal, hormonal, or gonadal and apparent at birth, puberty or not at all. Intersex people may identify as male, female, or non-binary.
- 7.4.5.8 For a comprehensive list of relevant terms and their meaning please see [Helpful Terms and Definitions \(TENI 2021\)](#) and [SOGIESC Full Glossary of Terms \(IOM 2020\)](#).

Section G: Support for Learners

7.4.6 Change of Name and/or Gender Identity Plan

A learner who has decided to transition, and who contacts a College representative to request a formal change of gender identity, is referred to the QAE Learner Engagement Officer. The QAE Learner Engagement Officer discusses in confidence how the learner wishes to deal with their transition and they agree a Gender Identity Action Plan which the learner is comfortable with.

The Gender Identity Action Plan should determine who should be told what, and when, and how this should occur and outline the documentation required. The plan should be reviewed regularly and reassessed at each important part of the process.

Some changes to a learner's records are possible by completing the Learner Record Amendment Form (LRAF) without official documentation. For example, a 'preferred name' may be used for class roll attendance sheets, email addresses, student cards and Moodle without the official change to the Learner Record.

For award certificates/parchments and official transcripts, official documentation showing the learner's legal name/gender will be required to effect a Change of Gender and/or Name. Acceptable documentation may include deed poll (for name change), gender recognition certificate (for gender change), or a valid passport.

A learner requesting a change of name/gender must provide this supporting documentation for at least 3 months before graduation where possible, as the college must supply information to QQI for certification purposes.

7.4.7 Change of Name and/or Gender Identity Process

Once a learner has formally transitioned, they may submit a completed Request of Change of Gender Identity (including, if required, request for Name change) on the Learner Record Amendment Form (LRAF) to the college's Registration Office, along with official documentation to confirm their legal change of name and/or gender (e.g., deed poll (for name change), gender recognition certificate (for gender change) or a valid passport).

On receipt of the documentation from the learner indicating their gender identification, the college will carry out a check to confirm the form is completed, and that necessary documentation has been submitted, and is legitimate.

The Registration Office updates the learner's record on the system. Once the process is completed to the satisfaction of the Registration Office and the Change of Gender Identity (including, if requested, name) is confirmed (affirmed name), other relevant departments are contacted as necessary with the learner's permission (for example, the learner's Faculty staff, IT, Griffith Halls of Residence, Security, International Office).

- a) A new student card will be issued.
- b) IT Services issue a new email address for the learner.
- c) With the learner's permission, the Academic Administration Officer communicates with the learner's faculty to ensure their records are

Section G: Support for Learners

updated and staff are aware of the learner's affirmed name and/or gender.

- d) The learner is informed of supports available to them internally and externally. The QAE Learner Engagement Officer is the first point of contact for any learner needing additional support.
- e) In the application process, and in student records generally, a distinction is made between sex (collected for QQI records) and gender to allow learners to have their preferred pronouns recognised.

7.4.8 Training and Awareness Raising

The college provides education for staff, members of Students' Union, and learners to ensure the implementation of this policy. Awareness is incorporated in relevant training programmes such as equality, diversity and inclusion training and support training for staff, members of Students' Union, and learners. Where appropriate the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group can recommend resources and training for the faculty.

7.4.9 Facilities

All individuals must have access to a bathroom that best corresponds to their gender identity.

The college will ensure that gender-neutral bathrooms are provided across the college.
