

TRANS* SUPPORT

A GUIDE ABOUT GENDER TRANSITION AT CURTIN UNIVERSITY

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1. TERMINOLOGY

Curtin has adopted the following terminology throughout this guide in relation to sexuality and gender identity. It is acknowledged that it is difficult to reach a clear consensus as to the definition of the various terms used. In order to provide terminology that is consistent and most broadly agreed upon, Curtin has borrowed definitions from respected Australian sources, including *Pride in Diversity*, *The Australian Human Rights Commission*, and the *Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender*.

LGBTI

An acronym that refers to a group of people with diverse sexual orientation, sex, or gender identity. It includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people and other sexuality, sex and gender diverse people, regardless of their self-identification. The letters LGBTI may appear in different order (e.g. GLBTI) (*Pride in Diversity*, 2015)

Gender

Gender is part of a person's social and personal identity. It refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual identity and the way a person presents and is recognised within the community. A person's gender refers to outward social markers, including their name, outward appearance, mannerisms and dress. A person's sex and gender may not necessarily be the same. An individual's preferred gender may or may not correspond with the sex or gender assigned at birth and some people may identify as neither male or female (*Australian Govt Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex & Gender*, 2013)

Gender identity

Refers to a person's deeply held internal and individual sense of gender (*Australian Human Rights Commission*, 2011)

Gender expression

Refers to the way in which a person externally expresses their gender or how they are perceived by others (*Australian Human Rights Commission*, 2011)

Safe space

A safe and inclusive environment where a LGBTI person can express themselves without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwanted, or unsafe based on sex, sexual orientation, gender history, gender identity or gender expression. (*Paraphrased from www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/safespace/*)

Sex

Refers to a person's biological characteristics. A person's sex is usually described as being male or female. Some people may not be exclusively male or female. Some people identify as neither male nor female. (*Australian Human Rights Commission*, 2011)

Transition

Describes both a public act and a process. It involves the permanent and public adoption of the style and presentation of the gender different to that of a person's birth-assigned sex. It usually includes a change of name, chosen style of address and pronouns, as well as adopting the dress and style of presentation of a person's innate gender. It may also involve gender reassignment surgery and/or hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Not all who transition undergo medically assisted gender reassignment (*Pride in Diversity*, 2015)

Trans*/Transgender

Transgender (sometimes shortened to “trans”) is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of gender identities that differ from the perceived norms aligned to biological sex. Transgender is a term that may be used to describe someone whose gender identity does not match their birth gender, someone who identifies as both genders, neither gender or a third gender. Common terminology includes Transwomen (M to F) referring to those who were born male but identify as female; although many will identify only as female (not transwomen). Transmen referring to those who were born female but whose gender identity is male (F to M); although many will only identify as male and not transmen. Some transgender people seek surgery or take hormones to bring their body into alignment with their gender identity; many do not. Some transgender people change their gender expression to match their affirmed gender; many do not” (*Pride in Diversity*, 2015)

2. ABOUT INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY AT CURTIN UNIVERSITY

Curtin is committed to creating an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. Curtin leads this commitment through its value of Respect, encouraging behaviours that are demonstrative of valuing diversity and promoting equity and inclusion, as well as requiring that all staff and students act professionally with courtesy and consideration of others.

Through Curtin’s [Ally Program](#) and [Diverse Sexuality and Gender Identity Inclusion Strategy](#), Curtin endeavours to support and provide a safe environment for all staff and students in line with its legislative and policy obligations:

SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT 1984

The *Sex Discrimination Act* makes it illegal to discriminate against an individual based on sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status under federal law.

The Act allows individuals to make complaints of discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status to the Australian Human Rights Commission if they believe they have been the subject of discrimination.

Further information is available at <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints/make-complaint>

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Curtin policies reflect the legislation and promote an organisational culture that values equal opportunity and diversity. Through its policies, Curtin shows its commitment to a work environment that is free from harassment and unlawfully discriminatory employment practices, where diverse groups of students and staff can study and work in harmony. To learn more about Curtin’s Equal Opportunity Policy and Diversity Policy please go to:

- <http://policies.curtin.edu.au/findapolicy/docs/Equal%20Opportunity%20Policy%20-%20Oct%202012.pdf>
- <http://policies.curtin.edu.au/findapolicy/docs/Diversity%20Policy%20-%20Oct%202012.pdf>

COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The University has procedures for the resolution of complaints of discrimination and harassment. Staff in supervisory and academic positions are expected to use the procedures in taking all reasonable and appropriate steps to eliminate discrimination from the University environment.

To better understand the complaints process at Curtin please refer to:

- <http://policies.curtin.edu.au/findapolicy/docs/Complaints%20Procedures%20-%20Dec%202014.pdf>

3. ABOUT GENDER TRANSITION

Not all people are comfortable with their gender that was assigned at birth. Transitioning refers to the period of time where a person commences living and behaving as a member of another gender other than their birth gender. This is also referred to as a person *affirming their gender* because the person is living and behaving as their personally experienced sense of gender (ie. their gender identity). For people transitioning, having their gender identity recognised at work or whilst studying at university is an integral part of living as their affirmed gender.

Transitioning is the process that many, but not all, individuals undergo in order to live more authentically in regards to their gender identity. It is a unique journey for each person. Transitioning may involve 'social transition', such as changing outward appearance, clothing, mannerisms, and name. It may also involve a 'medical transition', to align an individual's body with their gender identity, and this may involve gender reassignment surgery and/or hormone replacement therapy. Many trans people will consider that they have transitioned when they can live publicly in their authentic gender identity, while others may not feel the process is complete until medical transition has occurred. An individual's transition can be a challenging and exciting journey, whilst for others it may be difficult and anxiety-provoking. Curtin recognises that in order to attract and retain the best people it must provide support for all members of its community.

To learn more about gender transition, see [External Resources](#)

4. ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended to help address the needs and issues that arise when a person chooses to transition whilst at Curtin. It provides practical advice in light of:

- the specific needs of the individual who is choosing to transition
- the reasonable needs of the business
- any pastoral care considerations of work colleagues or other students.

It is a starting point to build awareness around a topic that may be new to you or those around you, and is aimed at minimising confusion and uncertainty as an individual undergoes their transition journey.

This guide is for anyone who:

- may be thinking of, or is transitioning, whether socially or medically
- may have supervisory responsibility for a person who is gender transitioning
- may be supporting the well-being of the person who is transitioning as they work or study at Curtin
- works within the student or staff support service areas of the University and who may be asked to provide advice and support in light of an individual's gender transition.

We encourage you to read this guide and discuss its application further with your staff or student, or alternatively, your manager/student coordinator, to fully understand each other's roles and responsibilities during gender transition.

5. GENDER TRANSITIONING WHILE AT CURTIN

5.1. KEY PRINCIPLES

1. A person has the right to live and behave according to their gender identity, gender expression, or intersex status, including being addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to their identity. This means that:
 - Curtin staff and students may request to have their University employment/student record amended to reflect a change in given name, title or gender.
 - Individuals who request a change to their name, title or gender on Curtin's systems will be recognised in the way they are identifying and be treated with the same professional courtesy as shown to others.
 - Unintentional mistakes using the incorrect pronoun or name may be made by others from time to time immediately following the transition, however, the intentional and persistent refusal to respect an individual's gender identity is not in line with Curtin Values. Curtin's [complaint](#) mechanisms may be invoked to address an individual's concerns.
 - Individuals will be able to access campus facilities and participate in gender-based activities according to their gender identity, or intersex status.
2. A person's right to privacy is to be respected throughout the gender-transition process. This means that:
 - Individuals should not be asked to give reason why a requested record change is needed or to disclose private information relating to their gender-transition.
 - Curtin may require proof of identity to verify/confirm the person's change of identity against recorded information, however evidence of gender affirmation surgery or treatment is never a requirement.
 - Information that you have disclosed to your manager/student coordinator will be treated as confidential. With your permission, only information you are comfortable to share with colleagues and peers will be disclosed by your manager/student coordinator. If your disclosed information needs to be given to others on a business needs-to-know basis, you will be informed of these instances beforehand or this can be identified in the transition plan.

5.2. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.2.1. DEVELOPING A TRANSITION PLAN

There are many factors to consider when transitioning at work or in your study environment. As well as the emotional and pastoral care factors, there are practical considerations, such as changing an email account name or your gender on business or student systems. To address these factors, the individual who is transitioning may choose whether to enter into a formal plan for transition.

A transition plan sets out clearly the actions agreed to be taken by both the person who is choosing to transition and their manager/student coordinator as relates to their work or study at Curtin. It also includes any obligations to be met by the manager/student coordinator on behalf of the University

and the individual. In the absence of a gender transition plan, some managers/student coordinators may be unsure as to what assistance the staff member/student is seeking, or the expectations of the staff member/student may not be fully realised, and important administrative process timelines may be missed.

Some [transition planning options](#) available to the individual who is transitioning are available here.

The plan could include:

- the expected date (if known) when transition will occur, as notified by the individual who is choosing to change their gender expression, name, and pronoun.
- the information that will be given to other members in the team/class/study group.
- the Curtin records that will need to be changed and the expected timeframe for this change to be actioned.

The transition plan can also address these other issues that need to be considered during transition:

5.2.2. TAKING A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Some people may not require taking a leave of absence, however for those who do:

- A staff member is entitled to apply for leave in accordance with the provisions of the [enterprise agreement](#) to address their need to be absent from work during the transition period.
- A student is entitled to apply to defer their initial enrolment or take a leave of absence from their studies. For more information, refer <http://students.curtin.edu.au/administration/enrolment/loa.cfm>

5.2.3. USE OF CAMPUS FACILITIES

Staff and students are able to access the facilities that best correspond to their gender identity. This means that people who identify as male must be allowed to use the men's facilities and people who identify as female must be allowed to use the men's facilities. Facilities include any locker rooms (Curtin stadium), toilets, etc. If there is a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of reason, they may be provided access to a single stall toilet when available. Any expectation that staff/students without a disability regularly use disabled toilets is not appropriate. Any expectation that a trans person will use a different facility is also inappropriate.

Curtin continues to upgrade its facilities to include unisex toilets.

5.2.4. DRESS CODE

Trans* and gender non-conforming individuals are expected to comply with Curtin's dress standards (eg. wearing suitable attire for work/classroom/laboratories, formal events, sporting events).

For specific requirements in relation to uniforms and protective wear, please refer to:

- <http://policies.curtin.edu.au/findapolicy/docs/Health%20and%20Safety%20Policy%20-%20May%202012.pdf>
- <http://policies.curtin.edu.au/findapolicy/docs/Health%20and%20Safety%20Responsibilities%20Procedures%20-%20April%202013.pdf>

5.2.5. VERIFICATION OR CHANGE OF UNIVERSITY RECORDS

The University is required to take reasonable steps to ensure personal information in their records is accurate. If a request to change recorded details is made, the change should be verified by evidence to ensure a link between the former identity and the new identity. Where the University needs to verify a person's identity, or match records, the evidence required is noted below:

Preferred Name

A person's preferred name may be their legally given name or a name by which they choose to be known. You can amend your preferred name through Oasis at any time. Verification of identity is not required, nor is any rationale for the change. This change will not result in any change to your given name in the existing University record.

Given Name and Family Name

A request to amend your given name can be made to Human Resources (staff) or Student Services (students) at any time. To be able to amend the existing record, the University will need to link the change of existing record to the new record and you will be asked to provide proof of identity. The system change will only be made after the required evidence has been sighted by Human Resources or Student Services personnel. Any one of the following is sufficient evidence:

- A certificate of marriage issued by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.
- A change of name certificate which authorises the use of your new name issued by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

The same process applies for change to family name.

Title

A request to amend your mode of address (title such as Mr, Mrs, Ms) can be made to Human Resources (staff) or Student Services (students) at any time. If preferred, title fields may be left blank. A title conferred by way of degree/award/honour is only amended by Human Resources or Student Services upon request in accordance with University policy.

Gender

Updating of Curtin University systems is planned to allow you to identify as M (male), F (female) or X (Indeterminate / Intersex / Unspecified) in accordance with the [Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender](#). All system updates will be completed by mid-2016.

A request to amend gender information can be made to Human Resources (staff) or Student Services (student). Amendment to gender information on your University record does not require any evidence.

5.3. IF YOU CHOOSE TO TRANSITION

5.3.1. INFORM YOURSELF OF CURTIN PROCESSES TO SUPPORT YOUR TRANSITION

- Think about the issues and obligations that may impact on your employment or studies at Curtin. Understanding some of these beforehand will enhance any discussion with your

manager/student coordinator. While this guide identifies and addresses some of those issues, there will always be others you can better relate to. Refer the [Checklist](#) to help guide your journey.

- Consider the [transition planning](#) recommended in this guide to see if it meets your needs. Additional matters can be discussed and included in any plan to ensure everyone has a common understanding of what is expected.

5.3.2. SEEK SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Curtin offers staff and students support and guidance as they transition from one gender to another, including non-binary genders. All staff and students at Curtin can expect to receive the levels of support articulated in this guide throughout their gender transition whilst at the University.

1. Your manager/student coordinator can offer primary support through the gender-transition process.

- Staff and students can expect to be supported through the process to a level that they are comfortable with as discussed with their manager/student coordinator.
- Curtin understands this may be a difficult conversation for both or either of you. You can consider bringing a friend or colleague for support or using the [sample email](#) if helpful to initiate a conversation about gender transitioning.
- Your manager/student coordinator may not be experienced or highly knowledgeable in the area of gender transition, and may need some time to get to understand your needs and concerns. They can also seek advice through the [support and professional services](#) available in order to better support and guide you.
- Disclose information which is necessary to ensure you are supported at Curtin during your transition as early as you feel comfortable. This provides an opportunity for the manager/student coordinator to ask questions about how they can best support you in the workplace/classroom.

2. Curtin has professional service areas and others who are charged with assisting in the process of gender-transitioning

- Staff/students can contact relevant [professional and support services](#) for advice and assistance.

5.3.3. ARE OBLIGATIONS TOWARD YOU BEING MET?

Curtin University has obligations toward staff and students who choose to gender-transition whilst working or studying at Curtin. You can read about the [University's obligations](#). The University's guidance on developing a [transition plan](#) can assist in ensuring all of these obligations will be met over the transition period. For example, while a change to given name or gender may flow to other records held at Curtin, noting the required change in a transition plan can help ensure all records are identified and notified to the relevant system owners who can then be requested to update their records.

If developing a transition plan is too formal for you, or not useful, it is still helpful for you to remember:

1. Inform the University of any amendments to employment and study records as an outcome of transition-related changes

- Individuals who gender-transition whilst at Curtin will need to inform their manager/student coordinator of when they wish their gender identity to be recognised and seek to formally amend their University record.
 - To learn more about how records can be changed, refer to [Verification or Change of University Records](#).
- 2. Follow the University processes to deal with any complaint in relation to transition-related changes**
- Managers/student coordinators will work with you to inform your colleagues of your preferred name and pronouns and their obligation to respectfully accommodate this change.
 - Individuals need to note that their colleagues may be unfamiliar with the concept of transition, and may unintentionally make mistakes with incorrect pronoun or name use. However, deliberate and continued mistakes should be brought up with your manager/student coordinator and handled thru the [complaint mechanisms](#) of the University.

5.4. IF YOUR STAFF OR STUDENT IS TRANSITIONING

5.4.1. INFORM YOURSELF OF CURTIN PROCESSES TO SUPPORT TRANSITION

- Not all managers/student coordinators will feel comfortable or certain of how they can assist their staff/student through the transition process. If approached, be honest, open and respectful, remembering that the staff/student is also likely to be feeling vulnerable. Be sensitive to the situation and ask questions that will allow them to explain and discuss their needs.
- It is important that you consider the key issues and obligations that may impact on your staff/student's employment or studies at Curtin.
 - How can you support the person through the process, be it in the workplace/classroom, or whilst on practicums / work experience / secondment?
 - How can you support their colleagues?
 - What arrangements will you need to put in place/approve to support the transition?
 - What are your expectations, the expectations of the person who is transitioning and those of your team/class? How can these expectations be met to facilitate a successful transition?
- Review the suggested [transition plan](#) in preparation of discussion with your staff member/student should they decide they wish to enter into a formal plan.

5.4.2. PROVIDE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Curtin offers staff and students support and guidance as they transition from one gender to another. All staff and students at Curtin can expect to receive the levels of support articulated in this guide throughout their gender transition whilst at the University.

As a manager/student coordinator, you may be asked to provide the required support and guidance.

- You are encouraged to seek further information to educate yourself and your team/class about transitioning. You may want to consider organising an [ALLY](#) training session for your team/class.
- Work with the individual to inform their colleagues of their preferred name and pronouns and remind everyone of their obligation to respectfully accommodate this change. While many people will be supportive of a colleague in transition, others may be uncomfortable by the

concept of transitioning. It is helpful to remind staff and students that diversity in the workplace or classroom offers opportunity to work and learn with others who bring different perspectives.

- All staff/students are required to treat an individual with respect and adhere to Curtin's values; they are not required to believe or accept the other person's beliefs. Referral to the professional or support services may be appropriate for staff/students who are experiencing difficulty with dealing with the concept of gender transitioning.
- Agree to enter into a transition plan with the staff member/student if they are seeking such a plan.
- If a staff/student's transition is impacting their work or studies, you may consider referring them to Student Wellbeing Advisory Service or the Counselling & Disability Services for advice.
- Student coordinators may wish to be proactive and encourage presentation of the topic of inclusion and diversity in introductory lectures, reminding students of Curtin's equity policies and their responsibilities under the student charter.

5.4.3. SEEK YOUR OWN SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

If you are a primary support person to the staff/student choosing to transition, you may also require guidance and support. You can approach your line manager, or consider seeking support and guidance from the professional services or others charged with assisting in the process of gender-transitioning.

- Details of professional and support services are found [here](#).

5.4.4. ARE YOU MEETING YOUR OBLIGATIONS?

As manager/student coordinator of staff/students who choose to undergo gender-transition, there are obligations you must meet on behalf of the University, as set out below.

1. As their manager/student coordinator, you can be expected to provide suitable support and guidance if asked by your staff member/student who has chosen to undergo gender-transition. Arrange a meeting with the staff/student to discuss their needs and to discover how you can best support them during the transition.
2. You can be expected to manage the transition in the workplace/classroom by providing support to the broader group, including dealing with feedback or complaints appropriately.
3. You are responsible for encouraging a safe work environment by:
 - meeting with other staff to announce the transition (if staff/student wants this)
 - emphasising the importance of other staff using preferred name and pronouns
 - supporting other staff through the change
4. You are not to disclose any information about the individual choosing gender-transitioning without their express permission, other than on a business needs-to-know basis, in which case they should be informed beforehand.

- You should ensure that your local records are accurate and consider if certain data capture is needed/relevant. For example, do you necessarily need to capture gender data? If not sure, contact relevant professional services to confirm.

6. SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

The following professional and support areas at Curtin University can be contacted by manager/student coordinators, gender-transitioning staff and students, their colleagues and co-students. Please respect the privacy of others if you are using these networks and professional services for your own support or enquiry, ensuring permission is sought from the staff/student who is transitioning before revealing any identifying information.

6.1. WHO TO CONTACT - ON CAMPUS

Trans Student	
Emotional support and advice for trans students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtin Ally and Student Ally • Counselling and Disability Services (specific contact Davina Morley) • Health Service (specific contact Dr Fiona Coombes) • Guild Queer Department • External agencies (Freedom Centre, WAAC, Living Proud)
Support and advice for student coordinators and teaching or student support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtin Ally • Counselling and Disability Services • Ethics, Equity and Social Justice Unit • Student Services
Trans Staff	
Emotional support and advice for trans staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtin Ally • Counselling and Disability Services (specific contact Davina Morley) • Health Service (specific contact Dr Fiona Coombes) • Pride in Diversity • External agencies (Freedom Centre, WAAC, Living Proud)
Support and advice for managers of trans staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtin Ally • Counselling and Disability Services • Ethics, Equity and Social Justice Unit • Human Resources

ALLY NETWORK

- A Curtin Ally is someone (staff or student) who is informed about, is sensitive toward and understanding of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people and affirms the experience and human rights of LGBTI people.
- **Contact:** Ally Training Coordinator ally@curtin.edu.au
- **Web:** http://odu.curtin.edu.au/curtin_ally.cfm

COUNSELLING AND DISABILITY SERVICES (CDS)

- For access to counselling and interpersonal support for staff and students, either directly with Counselling and Disability Service or through an external Employee Assistance Program.
- All counsellors at CDS have undergone ALLY training and take refresher courses once a year to keep up to date with changes in legislation.
- **Contact:** University Counselling and Disability Service on (08) 9266 7850 or counselling@curtin.edu.au
- **Web:** http://life.curtin.edu.au/health-and-wellbeing/counselling_services.htm

CURTIN HEALTH SERVICES (CHS)

- Curtin currently has a resident doctor who has extensive experience working with trans* and gender questioning people.
- **Contact:** Curtin Health Service on (08) 92667345 or healthservices@curtin.edu.au
- **Web:** http://life.curtin.edu.au/health-and-wellbeing/health_services.htm

CURTIN STUDENT GUILD STUDENT ASSIST

- Helps students navigate the University system. From financial, to academic issues and personal support, Student Assist is your first port of call to get your questions answered. As the welfare department of the Curtin Student Guild, Student Assist is independent of the University and offers a completely confidential service.
- **Contact:** (08) 9266 2900
- **Web:** <http://www.guild.curtin.edu.au/Common/ContentWM.aspx?CID=25>

ETHICS, EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE UNIT (EESJ)

- For advice on policy and legislative obligations
- For support during meetings:
 - between managers and staff
 - between coordinators and students
 - with immediate team
- For high level advice through Pride in Diversity, a not-for-profit workplace program designed specifically to assist Australian employers with the inclusion of LGBTI employees.
- **Contact:** Ethics, Equity and Social Justice on 08 92662772 or eesj@curtin.edu.au
- **Web:** <http://eesj.curtin.edu.au/>

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Advice and assistance with changes to employment records, directories, and staff cards, entitlements under leave provisions in the enterprise agreement, accessing Employee Assistance Program.
- **Contact:** (08) 9266 9090 or hrrservicesdesk@curtin.edu.au
- **Web:** <http://hr.curtin.edu.au/>

QUEER DEPARTMENT

- A safe space on campus for students to hang out and access LGBTI themed resources, books and dvds.
- Located in the Guild's Equity Space (Bldg 106F, entrance via undercover courtyard)
- **Contact:** (08) 9266 3385 or sexuality@guild.curtin.edu.au
- **Web:** <http://www.guild.curtin.edu.au/Clubs/Club.aspx?CID=70>

STUDENT SERVICES

- Advice and assistance with changes to student records and student cards, and rules for deferment and taking a break from studies.
- **Contact:** (08) 9266 3399 or studentservicecentre@curtin.edu.au
- **Web:** <http://students.curtin.edu.au/>

STUDENT WELLBEING ADVISORY SERVICE

- A free and confidential service that can help assist students who may be struggling due to personal or study issues. They provide help if you are unsure of where to start with trying to resolve issues.
- **Contact:** 1800 244 043 or drop into Building 103 on the Bentley campus
- **Web:** http://life.curtin.edu.au/health-and-wellbeing/student_wellbeing_service.htm

6.2. WHO TO CONTACT - OFF CAMPUS

QLIFE (WWW.QLIFE.ORG.AU)

- Telephone counselling, information & referral line available 5.30pm to 10.30pm, 7 days a week
- Free Call 1800 184 527

FREEDOM CENTRE (WWW.FREEDOM.ORG.AU)

- A safe space drop in centre for those under 26 to get peer support and meet other LGBTI young people. Runs regular sessions specifically for people questioning their gender and/or sex assigned at birth.

LIVING PROUD: LGBTI COMMUNITY SERVICES OF WA (WWW.LIVINGPROUD.ORG.AU)

- WA's main LGBTI community service focused on providing essential services such as peer counselling phone line, health and wellbeing initiatives and community capacity building.

6.3. TIPS IN SUPPORTING GENDER TRANSITION¹

Charles Sturt University provides helpful tips in supporting gender-transition:

1. Think of the person as being the gender that they want you to think of them as, and treat them accordingly.
2. Use the name and pronoun that the person requests. If you are not sure, respectfully ask. If you make a mistake correct yourself, apologise and move on – don't make a big deal about it.
3. When writing about a transgender person, do not belittle their identity by putting their preferred name or pronoun in quotes or italics.
4. Treat the person with same level of respect and dignity you would accord any other staff member or student and that you would expect for yourself.
5. Respect boundaries. Do not ask intrusive or intimate personal questions that you wouldn't ask another person or wouldn't want others to ask of you (for example about their body, relationships, sex-life, or any medical intervention). If you feel it is appropriate to ask a personal question, check first if it is okay to do so.
6. Do not assume that the person should automatically be willing to discuss transgender related issues with you, or expect them to be an authority on such topics – do your own research if you want to know more.
7. Respect privacy. Do not tell others about a person's trans status. Generally when a person transitions they describe themselves in terms of their preferred gender (e.g. as a man or as a woman), not as a transgender person. Some people may prefer other gender descriptions.
8. Understand that the person is entitled to use the facilities appropriate to their preferred gender (such as bathrooms and change rooms), both during and after transition.
9. Do not condone or participate in gossip, jokes, flippant remarks, or sexual innuendos about the person or their trans status – be active in confronting or naming comments or behaviours that are transphobic. The University expects staff and students to treat each other with dignity and respect and will not tolerate discrimination or harassment because of gender identity.
10. Do not make assumptions about the person's sexual orientation or personal relationships. Gender transitioning is about a person's core sense of their gender, not their sexual identity. The sexuality of transgender people can cover the full human spectrum – they may identify as heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual, pansexual, asexual, fluid, or they may use another term or choose not to label their sexuality.
11. When a person has transitioned, appreciate that, while their gender may be different, their basic character and personality hasn't changed – in most other respects they are still the same person as before.

6.4. EXTERNAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

1. Australian Human Rights Commission

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/lesbian-gay-bisexual-trans-and-intersex-equality>

¹ Charles Sturt University https://www.csu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/845642/Supporting-gender-transition-at-CSU.pdf

2. Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender
<http://www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Pages/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender.aspx>
3. Advocates for Youth
<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/>
4. National LGBTI Health Alliance
<http://lgbtihealth.org.au/>
5. Pride in Diversity
<http://www.prideindiversity.com.au/>
6. World Professional Association for Transgender Health
<http://www.wpath.org/>

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In developing these guidelines, Curtin has looked to best practice at other organisations, and in addition to the recommended resources above also acknowledges the information made available publicly on the following sites:

1. Charles Sturt University
https://www.csu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/845642/Supporting-gender-transition-at-CSU.pdf
2. Center for Gender Sanity
http://www.gendersanity.com/coming_out_letters.html
3. University of Oxford
http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/equalityanddiversity/documents/transgender/Transgender_guidance_Mar2014.pdf
4. Chevron
http://hrc-assets.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com//files/assets/resources/Chevron_TransitionGuidelines_2008.pdf

APPENDIX A: EXEMPLARS / TEMPLATES / CHECKLISTS

1. Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission publication - Developing a transition plan <http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/our-resources-and-publications/ea-practice-guidelines/item/632-guideline-transgender-people-at-work-complying-with-the-equal-opportunity-act-2010>
2. [Transition Plan template](#)
3. [Checklist : Supporting Staff and Students who are Transitioning](#)
4. [Sample emails](#) – Initiating a Conversation about Gender Transitioning; Informing Colleagues of Gender-Transition

TRANSITION PLAN

This Transition Plan ("the Plan") sets out the actions agreed between _____ ("the Staff/Student") and _____ ("the Manager/Student Coordinator") with regard to the Staff/Student's intention to gender transition.

TIMELINE

The Staff/Student has notified the Manager/Student Coordinator that they will begin living in a different gender role on or about _____ ("the Transition Date"). This date has been discussed between the Staff/Student and the Manager/Student Coordinator prior to the Plan being finalised. The date is identified to inform the timing of any required actions under this Plan.

ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

The Manager/Student Coordinator and the Staff/Student are aware of the support and guidance available in relation to the gender transition. The contact details are set out in *Trans* Support: A Guide about Gender Transition at the University* which is available on Curtin's website as updated from time to time.

The Manager/Student Coordinator will respect the Staff/Student's right to privacy when seeking guidance and support and will inform the Staff/Student of any disclosure of their private information on a business needs-to-know basis.

APPROPRIATE FORMS OF ADDRESS

The Staff/Student will be known by the name of _____ as of _____. The proper pronouns to use will be _____.

CHANGES TO UNIVERSITY RECORDS

The Staff/Student is responsible for requesting any changes of given name, title and gender within University records as follows:

- Employment – contact Human Resources
- Student enrolment – contact Student Services
- Email accounts – contact [CITS](#) (Curtin Information Technology Services)

The Staff/Student will include with their request confirmation of the Transition Date and any evidence required by the University to show changes to given name, title and gender, or provide the evidence upon request.

The Staff/Student will ensure any request for change is received by the University at least 5 working days prior to the Transition Date to allow for processing of the request. The Staff/Student can expect that any request made within the specified 5 working days will be reflected in University records no later than the Transition Date and that they will be notified of the completed change.

In relation to any record change:

- Records of previous name or gender will be maintained where required by law or by Curtin's record keeping policies.

- If the University is unable to make the required change to any record held it will notify the Employee/Student of additional actions required (eg. update of Working With Children Checks).

The Staff/Student will notify their Manager/Student Coordinator of any request they have made for a change to University records and directories.

DRESS STANDARDS

A gender neutral dress code exists at Curtin and individuals are expected to wear appropriate attire on University campus.

It is expected that the Staff/Student in transition will adhere to Curtin's standard of dress regardless of gender, recognising the need to comply with University rules for wearing of uniforms and protective gear.

FACILITIES USAGE

In recognition that an individual is allowed to access the facilities that best correspond to their gender identity, the following arrangements will be put in place as of the Transition Date for usage of campus facilities such as toilets and Curtin Stadium locker rooms (*specify arrangements below*):

- Bathrooms/Toilets/Locker Rooms
- Other Gender-Specific Spaces, if any

MAINTAINING STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The expected standards of conduct are those in line with Curtin's values and signature behaviours and policies and procedures supportive of anti-discrimination laws. While actively communicating the importance of using the correct names and pronouns, the Staff/Student and the Manager/Student Coordinator accept that because most people have not been exposed to gender transition, it is likely that work or study colleagues will make mistakes, such as referring to the Staff/Student in gender transition by the wrong name or pronoun, or asking inappropriate questions. A person who makes a mistake should be gently corrected in the first instances.

If, after a reasonable period of time, the expected standards of behaviour are not being shown toward the Staff/Student, the Manager/Student Coordinator will first address the issue broadly with the team, and failing this measure, will address any further complaint directly in accordance with the University's complaint mechanisms.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH OTHER STAFF, CLIENTS AND STUDENTS

The following outlines the agreed forms of communication with co-workers, clients or other students who are expected to be in regular, direct contact with the Employee:

A Gender Transition meeting will be held on or about _____. An invitation list of co-workers, clients and students who are in direct contact with the Staff/Student will be devised in consultation between the Manager/Student Coordinator and the Staff/Student.

The purpose of the meeting is to inform the attendees of changes expected as an outcome of the Staff/Student's gender transition, to give attendees the opportunity to ask questions to lessen any

unease, and to provide a positive work or study environment for the Staff/Student. Changes to be discussed will include the fact of their gender transition as well as:

- dress and attire
- proper forms of address
- rights and obligations, including expectations of workplace/classroom behaviour in line with Curtin values and anti-discrimination laws
- aspects of the Staff/Student's transition that they feel can be discussed directly with them and which aspects should be discussed with someone from support and professional services
- what resources are available to those who have questions about the Staff/Student's transition?
- (any other matters agreed)

The Staff/Student will not be present at the session. The Staff/Student's right to privacy will be maintained during the meeting and the attendees will be afforded the right to privacy of details of their discussion during the meeting.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Any concerns or complaints made about gender transition, including those of the Staff/Student in transition, may be referred through the University's complaints portal for appropriate dealing with the matter.

PLAN STATUS AND CONTINUANCE

This transition plan will be upheld by the Staff/Student and the Manager/Student Coordinator. Where corrective action is required, the Staff/Student and the Manager/Student Coordinator will meet to discuss the required corrective action and any agreed amendments will be noted in a variation to the plan.

If the Staff/Student is notified that they will be reassigned to another Manager/Student Coordinator or campus location, permanently or temporarily, the Staff/Student and the Manager will meet to discuss the required actions to ensure the continuance of the plan.

AMENDMENT OF PLAN

If the Staff/Student or the Manager/Student Coordinator identifies a need to change the transition plan, they will meet to discuss the requested change and the evidence supporting the need for the change. Agreed amendments will be incorporated into a variation of the plan. The Staff/Student has the right to pursue a complaint where no agreement is reached on requested changes to the plan.

ENDING DATE

This plan will terminate one year from the Transition Date, unless otherwise agreed between the Staff/Student and the Manager/Student Coordinator.

CHECKLIST

This checklist is intended to highlight issues to be considered when an individual chooses to gender-transition:

SUPPORT

- Informed manager/student coordinator (primary support person) of decision to gender-transition?
- Met with line manager/student coordinator to discuss transition needs and any impact on employment/studies?
- Contacted professional and support services for additional guidance and support?

TRANSITION TIMELINE

- Decided on need for formal transition plan?
- Discussed details of transition plan with manager/student coordinator?
- Transition date
 - Timeframe for any hormones/medical treatment/gender reassignment procedures
 - Facilities usage arrangements
 - Change of University records
 - Advice to colleagues/team members
- Identified records needed to be changed?
- HR employment / Student admission record
 - Payroll (and banking details)
 - Personnel files
 - Staff / Student Card
 - University website pages
 - Oasis log in
 - Email
 - Finance system records
 - Research systems records
 - Memberships
 - Other
- Identified evidence required for name, title, gender change?
- Submitted request and supporting evidence for name, title, gender change?

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- Discussed need for any extended absences or work/study adjustments?
- Discussed work/study deadlines or extensions?
- Discussed return to work / return to study arrangements?
- Applied for deferral/leave of absence?

COMMUNICATIONS

- Decided on communication approach?
- Bottom-up or top-down announcement?
Do you mention the transition slowly to a few key people and let the information spread organically, or do you do a full-on announcement to the whole team.
 - What tone to use?
Casual or more formal to reflect an important professional business announcement?
 - Mitigating resistance?
What's the best way to support any adjustment for some of the more conservative team members?
 - Message source?
Who should make the announcement? Staff/Student, Manager/Student Coordinator, Director of Area/Head of School?
 - Message channel?
Make the announcement on the day in person or by email with some adjustment time?
- Informed colleagues/students of decision to gender-transition?
- Informed colleagues/students of preferred name, title, pronoun?

COMPLAINTS

- Raised any concerns / complaints in relation to gender-transition?
- Complaints dealt with to the satisfaction of the University?

SAMPLES EMAILS: INITIATING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT GENDER TRANSITIONING

The timing of sending of any communications to other staff/students is important. Please discuss beforehand with your manager/student coordinator or a member of the professional and support areas.

SAMPLE 1

Dear (Manager/Student Coordinator)

I would like to come and talk with you regarding a decision I have recently made that will require your support and understanding as well as some changes (at work/to my study environment). You may not be aware that I am transgender and intending over the coming period to (outline aspects of decision).

I would like to initiate this discussion so as to arrive at a plan of action to have my gender identity recognised (at work/whilst studying at university). Curtin's *Trans* Support: A Guide about Gender Transition at the University* has been a useful guide for me and I am hoping we can meet to discuss some of the issues raised in the guide that will need to be addressed.

I understand this could be an unfamiliar concept for you and I am open to sharing with you what this journey means to me. I want to assure you that this decision to transition will not affect my (studies/ability to do my job).

I will send through a meeting request shortly / Could you please let me know a suitable time to meet. I would prefer this meeting to be held (outline preference)

Kind regards

SAMPLE 2

Dear

There is some important news that I need to tell you. Your (AREA) colleague (NAME) is undergoing gender transition and is now known as (PREFERRED NAME) with the pronouns (preferred pronouns). Some of you may have already shared in this news with (NAME), and they have now asked that I inform everyone of their decision to transition.

I believe (NAME's) decision to share this journey with us is an important one and I know the supportive collegial environment fostered in (AREA) will continue into the future for all team members.

I understand that this could be an unfamiliar concept for many of you, so please contact me or Counselling Services (08 9266 7850) if you have any questions or would like further information.

Here are some tips from my experience in supporting (NAME) on this journey to date:

- Allow yourself time and space to get used to it

- Don't worry about slipping up with their name or pronouns; it's going to happen at first and they understand
- (NAME) is open to respectful questions about their transition (but do be mindful of time and place)
- Be respectful of their courage and continue to support them as a colleague

I'm also including some links that may further your understanding of gender-transition, and of the highly supportive stance that Curtin University holds towards diversity in the workplace.

(resource links, including link to Curtin's policies and guide)

Kind regards

SAMPLE 3

A more humorous approach - <http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/mum-takes-out-classified-ad-to-show-support-for-son-kai-bogert-who-used-to-be-a-daughter/story-fnn8dlfs-1227142738491>

