

**Kingston
University**
London

Gender Identity and Expression Policy

2026 - 2027

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Introduction

1. Kingston University celebrates and values its diverse community and is committed to building an inclusive and accessible working and learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
2. The University is committed to complying with its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 regarding the Protected Characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
3. The University recognises and celebrates the diversity of gender identities within its community. It supports the rights of individuals to define and express their own gender identity, which may or may not be the same as their sex, as well as the rights of individuals who do not self-identify on the basis of gender. We will balance these rights in a way that upholds dignity, safety and respect for everyone in our community, in line with our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.
4. This policy sets out how the University will provide an inclusive and supportive environment for students and staff who may wish to take, are taking, or have taken steps, to identify as a gender different to their sex.
5. The University recognises its responsibility under the Public Sector Equality Duty to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic, and persons who do not share it, particularly, in the context of this policy, with respect to the protected characteristics of gender reassignment, religion and/or belief, and sex. We are also committed to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law, and to ensure these rights are exercised in a way that is respectful, inclusive and does not unlawfully discriminate against, bully, harass or victimise others.

Terminology

6. This policy uses the terms trans+, non-binary, gender non-conforming and gender critical to reflect a broad range of gender identities and beliefs. It recognises that people whose gender identity is different to their sex may choose to identify in different ways (including, but not limited to, transgender, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, gender-fluid, non-binary, agender, trans man, trans woman). It also recognises that there are those who reject the concept of identity on the basis of gender (gender critical), which is recognised as a protected philosophical belief under the Equality Act 2010.¹

¹ Forstater v CGD Europe (2022) established that the view held by some individuals, that biological sex is immutable, and not to be conflated with gender identity, qualifies for protection as a philosophical belief. The judgement in this case also noted that just because a belief is capable of protection, it does not automatically shield it from liability in relation to manifestation of that belief, e.g. those with gender critical views cannot misgender trans persons with impunity.

7. Although they are often used interchangeably, the terms *sex* and *gender* have distinct definitions and conflating these terms can cause confusion. In its most recent guidance on the collection and monitoring of data, Advance HE², outlines the following interpretation of the term 'gender identity' while noting that this is neither universal or conclusive, and that some people may feel it does not apply to them: *a social construction related to behaviours and attributes...self-determined based on a person's internal perception, identification and experience*. The protected characteristic of sex is referred to in the same guidance as follows: *a man or a woman, where 'man' means a male of any age and 'woman' means a female of any age*.
8. This policy acknowledges that definitions, terminology and thinking in relation to sex and gender identity, may differ and will continue to change and develop, and will be applied in accordance with current legal requirements.

Policy Statement and Commitments

9. The University is committed to ensuring an inclusive environment for trans+, non-binary and gender non-conforming students and staff while recognising the need to comply with legal obligations and balance the rights of others. We want everyone working and studying at Kingston University to have a positive experience where they are accepted as their authentic selves and treated with respect.
10. Information about how to seek support and/or report any form of harassment or discrimination, or failure to adhere to the commitments in this policy, can be found here: [Preventing and addressing bullying and harassment - Equality, diversity and inclusion - Kingston University London](#). The University collects and monitors data on the suspected factors involved in incidents of bullying, harassment, or discrimination, including gender reassignment. The University recognises that differing beliefs are protected in law and expects all interactions to remain respectful and not amount to harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
11. Kingston University will provide a supportive environment for students and staff who wish their trans status to be known and respects the right of individuals to choose whether they wish to be open about their gender identity, trans status, or trans history. The University supports individuals in expressing their gender identity in ways that are personal to them, for example through their choice of dress and use of their affirmed name and pronouns, in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all. We recognise the importance of preferred pronouns in expressing some people's identities and encourage staff to use the 'known as' name and pronouns provided on a student's OSIS profile to help them in their interactions with students. Staff can add their pronouns to their 'Personnel Information' on Unified.

² AdvanceHE, April 2025: [Guidance on the collection of diversity monitoring data | Advance HE \(advance-he.ac.uk\)](#)

12. Kingston University is committed to providing appropriate lavatory facilities for all staff, students, and visitors. This includes the provision of both single-sex and accessible, gender-inclusive toilets and changing facilities on all campuses, which will be managed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, including considerations of privacy, dignity and safety. Most students in halls of residence will be allocated rooms in gender-inclusive accommodation, although single-sex options are also available, with accommodation requests considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the need to balance the rights, privacy, dignity and safety of all residents.
13. Kingston University recognises and respects that a person's name is integral to their self-identity. Students and staff can request to change their legal name on records where appropriate evidence is provided, such as a passport, marriage certificate, deed poll (change of name deed) or other appropriate identification documents. Students and staff can request their personal details (including name and gender marker) to be updated by providing official identification (such as a passport) or other appropriate documentation. The recording of such information is for administrative purposes and does not determine how 'sex' is interpreted under the Equality Act 2010. Individuals can also update their 'known as' name at any time without the need to provide evidence. The 'known as' name is displayed on most University systems and the staff/student ID card, except where legal or regulatory requirements require use of a legal name. It should be noted that not all systems will be updated or use 'known as' names. Changes to official names or sex for students that are effective post the final Programme Assessment Board will not normally be accepted. However, under exceptional circumstances, such as gender re-assignment or witness protection, changes may be permitted subject to agreement by the Academic Registrar.
14. Trans+, non-binary and/or gender non-conforming students and staff will have access to sporting opportunities and facilities at the University. The University and Kingston Students' Union work closely with sporting National Governing Bodies, including British Universities Colleges Sport (BUCS) to offer opportunities for staff and students to participate in recreational, competitive, or high-performance sport, in line with the governing bodies guidance, and applicable legal requirements, including considerations of fairness and safety.
15. Kingston University's [Inclusive Curriculum Framework](#) seeks to ensure that all students see their backgrounds, experiences and identities reflected within the curriculum. The University will strive to ensure its curricula includes representations of all gender identities and beliefs and offer opportunities for discussion and challenge, in a way that is inclusive and respectful and does not discriminate against others, while upholding academic freedom and lawful freedom of expression.
16. Within online reading lists, academics can add notes and guidance regarding potentially challenging material.
17. Kingston University will continually work to ensure that its physical and digital environments, in terms of pictures, images, publicity materials and literature, reflects the diversity of its student and staff communities.
18. Students undergoing gender reassignment are under no obligation to inform the University but may wish to speak with their academic team for advice if any

assessments or their attendance will be impacted, or to access support or adjustments if required.

19. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Support and Resources

- [Supporting our trans students](#)
- Students can contact the Student Inclusion Team for advice and guidance in accessing relevant support: equality@kingston.ac.uk.
- For advice and guidance in accessing relevant support staff can contact their line manager, [Employee Assistance Programme](#) or HR Advice Team via hradvice@kingston.ac.uk