

Trans Staff Policy

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1 Policy statement

Imperial College London celebrates and values the diversity of its workforce. Imperial is fully committed to creating, consistently improving, and maintaining a safe, welcome and inclusive environment for all our trans and non-binary staff, enabling them to work to their full potential and supporting them to have equal access to the services and facilities they need. We value our trans and non-binary staff and recognise the diverse breadth of thought, talent, expertise and contribution they bring to Imperial, thus enabling it to be a world leader in education, research and translation.

2 Scope of policy

Imperial acknowledges that transition can be a personal and stressful experience. This Trans Staff Policy is intended to assist the University to put its commitment to equality of opportunity into practice. The policy will help the organisation and employees, including trans and non-binary employees, to manage any practical issues that may arise. The policy outlines Imperial's position and actions required of all members of staff. Imperial strives to ensure that the work environment is positive and free from discrimination (direct or indirect), [harassment, bullying or victimisation](#), and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The University has therefore committed to developing and publishing this policy to promote this aim.

This policy is designed to support trans employees, including non-binary employees. To this extent the policy covers all staff who identify as trans or non-binary. This policy also protects those individuals who are perceived as trans from discrimination.

3 Definitions

‘Trans’ is used in this document as an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably, with their biological sex (i.e. male or female).

Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, gender-queer (GQ), gender-fluid, non-binary, gender-variant, crossdresser, genderless, agender, non-gender, third gender, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois.

Transitioning refers to the steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person’s transition will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this.

Transitioning also might involve things such as telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.

People who have transitioned may not identify as ‘trans’ but may, for example, describe themselves as a woman with a trans history.

A **transgender/trans man** is someone female at birth, but who identifies and lives as a man.

A **transgender/trans woman** is someone male at birth, but who identifies and lives as a woman.

Non-binary is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with ‘man’ or ‘woman’. Non-binary identities are varied and include people who identify with either no aspects at all or some aspects of the binary male and female identities.

4 Our commitment and the legal obligations

4.1 Commitment

Imperial is committed to investigating any allegations of harm, threats of harm, harassment, bullying or discrimination or any forms of transphobia towards all our trans staff, regardless of their gender identity (being binary or non-binary) and their gender expression. This commitment extends to protect those who are subjected to such behaviour because they are perceived as trans or associated with trans

individuals.

As part of this approach and commitment, Imperial will act in accordance with its [disciplinary procedures and processes](#) towards those who inflict harassment, bullying, discrimination or any other forms of transphobia towards our staff. All reports of such behaviour will be taken seriously and investigated. If it is a criminal matter, the police might be notified.

4.2 Discrimination and harassment

At Imperial, discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated on the grounds of any of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics.

Discrimination and harassment include (but are not limited to):

- Making jokes about trans people or their trans status (whether actual or perceived) in a way that targets them personally.
- Behaving in an inappropriate manner towards a trans person (whether actual or perceived), e.g. excluding them from meetings or other team events.
- Withholding information or training that they need to function and develop in their job role.
- Consistently and deliberately using incorrect pronouns or names, e.g. not using affirmed/preferred names or using the previously known names, after the individual has made their preference clear.
- Mocking, ridiculing or belittling an individual on the basis of sex or gender reassignment with the intention, or effect of, creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This should be distinguished from the expression of lawful views and participation in respectful debate, even where views are strongly contested..
- Cyber bullying,
- Physical violence of any kind. Imperial provides [support for staff experiencing harassment and discrimination](#).

Bullying, like harassment, will be assessed using an objective standard. Imperial will consider whether the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

4.3 The legal right to time off

An employer must not treat a trans staff member less favourably for being absent from work because they have been or are transitioning than they would be treated:

- if they were absent because they were ill.
- if they were absent for any other reason (and it would be unreasonable to treat them less favourably than another person).

This includes not treating the employee less favourably when deciding about what time off they should have. The request does not have to relate to a medical process but could be other matters related to their transition. It could, for example, be to take legal advice or to arrange a name change.

4.4 Good practice related to time off

As part of the acknowledgement that transitioning can be a stressful experience and impact a person's mental health on an ongoing basis, Imperial recognises that good practice is to allow staff requiring leave related to their transition to be granted leave, as the leave pertaining to transition is protected. The leave requests can be treated as a workplace adjustment made for the individual if they have informed the University of any disabilities they may have. See the [disability support](#) pages.

5 Our shared responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Imperial and everyone in its community to create a workplace culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and everyone is clear that this is what they can expect from each other.

Imperial will respect the confidentiality of all trans staff and will not reveal information without the prior agreement of the individual. Imperial will provide a supportive environment for staff who wish their trans status or history to be known. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to be open about their gender identity. To 'out' someone, without their permission is a form of harassment and, possibly, a criminal offence.

A Gender Recognition Certificate will never be asked for by staff members at Imperial when requesting identification. We make it clear that it is illegal to ask for a Gender Recognition Certificate as a form of identity.

Imperial recognises that trans staff come from diverse backgrounds and will strive to ensure they do not face discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender reassignment. Allegations of transphobic abuse, harassment or bullying (name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behaviour, and intrusive questions) will be investigated and dealt with under the appropriate procedure.

Propaganda comprising material that could reasonably be considered to be unlawful speech targeting any protected group, of any form, e.g. written materials, graffiti, music or speeches, will not be tolerated. Imperial will remove any such propaganda that appears on the premises.

Staff undergoing medical and surgical procedures related to their transition will receive positive support from Imperial to meet their related needs during this period. Imperial will be flexible in its approach to time off for treatments pertaining to transition, and absences for this reason will not impact negatively on

opportunities for personal progress within the organisation.

Staff will not be excluded from employment or promotion because of their sex, gender reassignment or the way they express it.

Failure to comply with this policy is regarded as serious and is likely to result in disciplinary action.

6 Support for staff

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre

Members of staff may contact the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre](#), who can provide help and advice.

Human Resources

Members of staff can seek support and advice from Human Resources at any time; please contact the [HR Staff Hub](#).

Trade Unions

Employees may also wish to also discuss their situation with their [trade union](#).

Counselling

Confidential counselling is available to all staff through Imperial's Employee Assistance Provider, [Confidential Care \(CiC\)](#).

Imperial 600

[Imperial 600](#) is the University's network for LGBTQ+ staff, postgraduate students and their allies. Staff may email them for confidential support.

Harassment Support Contacts

Confidential support is available for staff affected by bullying or harassment in the workplace through Imperial's [Harassment Support Contacts](#). These are trained volunteers who can help members of staff by listening and exploring the options available to them through formal and informal University procedures.

Other useful external organisations include:

[GIRES \(Gender Identity Research & Education Society\)](#)

[The Gender Trust](#)

[Press for Change a:gender](#)

[Gendered Intelligence](#)

7 Related policies and guidance

Please refer to the [Trans Staff Policy webpage](#) for further guidance in support of trans staff.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre

Last approved by University Management Board May 2025 (Updated July 2025)

To be reviewed periodically

Other policies:

- [Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy](#)
- [Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy](#)
- [Disciplinary Policy](#)