



Queen Mary
University of London

Being a Trans Ally

[hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/
protected-characteristics/trans](https://hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/protected-characteristics/trans)

Being a Trans Ally

At Queen Mary, we want to create an environment where trans people can be themselves and are treated with kindness, dignity and respect. It's important that we all play our part in supporting trans people and creating a more inclusive culture.

What do we mean by 'trans'?

Gender identity is a person's internal sense of their own gender, which may or may not align with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth.

Trans is an umbrella term which describes people whose gender identity does not align with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth. For example, a trans woman could be a person who was assigned male at birth but identifies as a woman. This definition includes non-binary people (those whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with the binary of 'man' or 'woman').

Transitioning refers to the steps a trans person may take to live fully in their gender identity, whatever that means to them. Everybody's transition is different. Transitioning can include:

- Social transition (e.g. changes in name, pronouns, presentation)
- Legal transition (e.g. changing legal name and gender)
- Medical transition (e.g. taking hormones and/or having 'top' and/or 'bottom' surgery to change your body).

Not everybody will do all or any of the steps above, but that does not invalidate their gender.

For more guidance see our Trans Inclusion Definitions and Terminology document (see back page).

What can you do to be a trans ally?

Listen to the diverse experiences of trans people. There are many different, intersecting elements to identity and individual experiences of being trans or transitioning will be very different.

Educate yourself. Learn about the challenges trans people face. Learn and use current terminology and stay informed (remember it changes over time). See resources on back page.

Respect individuals' gender identity by using their correct name and pronouns.

- **If you aren't sure what the correct pronouns are, ask.** Get into the habit of using 'they' or the person's name if you don't know their pronouns, to avoid using she/he (gendered pronouns).
- **If you make a genuine mistake and use the wrong pronoun, correct yourself, apologise briefly and move on.**
- **Wear a pronoun badge!** You can find out more about our **#PronounsMatter** campaign on the back page.

Respect people's privacy and personal boundaries. Avoid asking personal or probing questions. Do not ask about people's 'birth', 'old' or 'real' name or gender. Do not ask whether someone has had surgery or not.

Do not tell anyone about someone's trans status or history without their permission.

Do not question or police people's use of bathrooms or changing facilities.

Speak up. Make it clear that you won't tolerate transphobia in any form. Transphobic behaviour could include name-calling, derogatory jokes, intrusive or hostile questioning, refusing to use someone's correct pronouns or name, threatening to 'out' someone as trans, as well as unwanted physical contact and violence. **If you think someone is being transphobic and you feel safe to do so, call it out. You can report incidences in accordance with the Dignity at Work and Study Policy and/or anonymously through our Report & Support tool (see back page).**

Accept you may not always get it right! Be ready to listen to feedback, apologise and learn from your mistakes.

Resources

Queen Mary Resources

Trans Inclusion Policy Statement:

Queen Mary's approach and commitments to supporting trans staff and students.
<http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/protected-characteristics/trans/guidance/>

Trans Inclusion Definitions and Terminology:

<http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/protected-characteristics/trans/guidance/>

QM LGBTQ+ Staff Network:

<http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/protected-characteristics/sexualorientation/networks/qmout>

LGBT+ Society:

www.qmsu.org/groups/LGBT/

Report & Support: <https://reportandsupport.qmul.ac.uk/>

Dignity at Work and Study Policy:

www.hr.qmul.ac.uk/procedures/policies/dignity

If you have any feedback or questions please contact:

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[hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/
protected-characteristics/trans](http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/protected-characteristics/trans)

#PronounsMatter Leaflet:

<http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/equality/protected-characteristics/trans/guidance/>

General Resources

East London Out Project (ELOP):

<http://elop.org>

Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum:

<https://thlgbtvoices.wordpress.com>

Galop: www.galop.org.uk

Switchboard, LGBT+ helpline:

<https://switchboard.lgbt>

Gendered Intelligence, specialising in young trans people under 21:

<http://genderedintelligence.co.uk>

Mermaids, supporting young gender variant people:

<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk>

GIRES, for trans and gender non-conforming people

of all ages: www.gires.org.uk

TransUnite, a directory of trans support groups:

www.transunite.co.uk

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