



QUEENSLAND
ACADEMIES
Health Sciences Campus

QAHS Supporting Gender Diverse Students Strategy



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1. Statement of Commitment

Queensland Academy for Health Sciences (QAHS) is committed to providing all students with access to high quality education that is free from discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation, as well as language, culture, ethnicity, religion, health, disability and socioeconomic background. We support the rights of all young people and are devoted to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students.

At QAHS we acknowledge our diversity and respect the deeply personal and unique journey a student may experience when living authentically as their chosen gender identity.

2. Purpose

As a school community we will:

- Promote an educational environment that is welcoming, safe and free from discrimination for all students regardless of sex, gender identity, race, gender expression and sexual orientation
- Promote an inclusive community that encourages all students to express themselves and live authentically within their gender identity
- Ensure compliance with legislation concerning discrimination, bullying, harassment and privacy
- Collaborate, where possible, with students, families, local community members and support groups to ensure the needs of gender diverse students are negotiated upon and met
- Support staff in the continued development of an inclusive curriculum

Legislation and Policies

Under relevant state and commonwealth legislation, it is a requirement that schools ensure no direct or indirect discrimination occurs.

Relevant Legislation

- Anti-Discrimination Act (QLD) 1991
- Education (General Provisions) Act (QLD) 2006
- Sex Discrimination Act (Cwlth) 1984
- Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act (Cwlth) 2013

Relevant Policy

- Department of Education Diversity in Queensland Schools – Information for Principals 2017
- Department of Education Inclusive Education Policy 2018
- Department of Education Internal Guidance Materials to Assist Queensland State Schools in Supporting Gender Diverse Students 2017
- Department of Education Student Dress Code 5.0 2018

Privacy Laws

All students have the right to privacy. According to privacy laws, a person's gender identity is private and consent must be given by the student to disclose or share information. Information about a student's transgender status, legal name or gender assigned at birth constitutes medical information. Legal advice must be obtained before sharing without consent. Accordingly, there is no obligation to notify parents/caregivers or the school community that a student identifies as gender diverse as such notification could amount to a breach of the student's privacy.

- Information Privacy Act (QLD) 2009

3. Policy

At QAHS we value and affirm each student's chosen gender identity. For gender diverse students, each student experiences a unique transition process that may require varying levels of collaboration and/or support. We understand that school environments that respect and affirm gender diversity empower all students. We seek to act in a student's best interests which will depend on the circumstances and is different for each individual. We work collaboratively with students and, where possible and/or appropriate, their families, to negotiate a transition plan which is specific to their needs. This plan is an ongoing process that is regularly reviewed and updated as required, in accordance with the needs of the student.

Student Name(s)

Acknowledging a person's request to change their name or pronoun is an essential part of validating their identity. At QAHS staff are required to use the name, personal pronouns and gender identity of a student's request.

Student support plan

Students who are gender diverse, sexually diverse and/or intersex may wish to work with the Guidance Officer to develop a support plan. This may include name, pronouns, bathroom and change room access, uniform and confidentiality.

School Documentation/Records

It is a legal requirement (Public Records Act 2002; Information Privacy Act 2009) that public records be made and kept accurately. As such, QAHS is required to record on enrolment records a student's sex, as per:

- a state or territory birth certificate which specifies gender,
- a Registrar of Birth, Deaths and Marriages document pertaining to a change of sex, and/or gender, and/or
- a valid Australian travel document which specifies gender.

Official documents, such as academic reports, school references and school medical records may use the student's chosen preferred name upon their parents'/caregivers' request, or,

where appropriate, at the student's own request. This situation will be carefully managed by QAHS administration.

Curriculum

At QAHS we incorporate and promote an inclusive curriculum. When considering curriculum content staff review current research and ensure equitable access for all students. Professional development assists staff in developing and delivering curricular that seeks to avoid generalisations and considers the perspectives of those who are sexually and gender diverse.

Bathroom Facilities

At QAHS transgender or gender diverse students are permitted to access toilets and change rooms that match their affirmed gender, or a private facility, if they prefer. QAHS promotes safety and comfort for all students by offering individual toilet facilities.

School Uniform

A school uniform option is available that can be worn by students of any gender and is detailed in the Student Handbook's Uniform and Dress Code. Transgender or gender diverse students are permitted to wear either Option A or Option B formal uniform. At QAHS the sports uniform is gender neutral.

Sport

All students have the right to participate in sport. Where an event or activity may be separated by gender, the school will negotiate, where possible, for students to participate in their chosen gender identity. For competitive sporting activities, such as representative sport, in Queensland it is only lawful to restrict participation to either males or females if the restriction is reasonable having regard to the strength, stamina or physique requirements of the activity.

Camps/Overnight Excursions

For overnight events such as excursions and camps, students are permitted to access the same sleeping facilities as other students of their affirmed gender, if they choose to do so. Gender fluid and non-binary students will be consulted regarding their preferred accommodation. The same considerations with respect to bathroom and change room facilities within school will be applied to accessing such facilities on excursions/camps.

4. Community support

Wellbeing support/services

Understanding and transitioning one's gender identity can be a challenging process. At QAHS we have a diverse team of internal and external student support services available. Some of

the services also provide pathways and referrals to external services to further support students and their families.

Parental and caregiver collaboration

A family's acceptance and support of their child's gender identity is strongly associated with positive mental health and academic achievement. At QAHS we work closely with parents and caregivers to cater for the individual needs of transgender or gender diverse students, and provide appropriate referrals where necessary.

Parents and caregivers unaware

QAHS owes a duty of care to act in the student's best interests. When a student's family are unaware of their child's gender identity, the school will work with the student either by initiating collaboration with the relevant family or, if this is not an option, supporting the student's chosen gender identity at school.

5. Discrimination, harassment and bullying

At QAHS there is a zero-tolerance policy against any form of bullying, harassment and discrimination. Any incidents of Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying will be actioned as per the QAHS Student Code of Conduct.

6. Glossary of terms

Dead name	an informal way to describe the former name a person no longer uses because it does not align with their current experience in the world or their gender. Some people may experience distress when this name is used.
Dysphoria	the distress or unease sometimes experienced from being misgendered and/or when someone's gender and body personally don't feel connected or congruent. Many trans people do not experience gender dysphoria at all and, if they do, they may cease with access to gender affirming healthcare and/or peer support. With or without the presence of gender dysphoria, being trans is not a mental illness. Gender dysphoria does not equal being trans (Transhub, 2021).
Gender affirmation	the personal process or processes a trans person determines is right for them in order to live as their defined gender and so society recognises this. This may involve social, medical and/or legal steps that affirm a person's gender. A trans person who hasn't medically or legally affirmed their gender is no less the man, woman or non-binary person they've always been.
Gender expression	refers to how a person chooses to publicly express or present their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance, including clothing, hair, make-up, body language and voice. Western expectations of gender expression are based on a binary of men as masculine and women as feminine but many people do not fit into binary gender expressions.

Gender/gender identity	one's sense of whether they are a man, woman, non-binary, agender, genderqueer, genderfluid, or a combination of one or more of these definitions. Gender can be binary (either a man or a woman), or non-binary (including people who have no binary gender at all and people who have some relationship to binary gender/s).
Gender pronouns	refer to how a person publicly expresses their gender identity through the use of a pronoun. Pronouns can be gender-specific or gender-neutral (Rainbow Health Australia (formerly GLHV), 2016). This can include the traditional he or she, as well as gender-neutral pronouns such as they, their, ze and hir.
Intersex	an umbrella term that refers to individuals who have anatomical, chromosomal and hormonal characteristics that differ from medical and conventional understandings of male and female bodies. There are at least 40 different variations that may be apparent at different life stages or may remain unknown to the individual and their medical practitioners. Some people with an intersex variation are LGBTQ, many are heterosexual and most are cisgender.
Non-binary	an umbrella term for gender identities that sit within, outside of, across or between the spectrum of the male and female binary. A non-binary person might identify as gender fluid, trans masculine, trans feminine or could be agender.
Sex	a classification that is often made at birth as either male or female based on a person's external anatomical characteristics. However, sex is not always straightforward, as some people may be born with an intersex variation, and anatomical and hormonal characteristics can change over a life span.
Sistergirl/Brotherboy	terms used for trans people within some Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities. How the words Sistergirl and Brotherboy are used can differ between locations, countries and nations. Sistergirls and Brotherboys have distinct cultural identities and roles. Sistergirls are Indigenous people assigned male at birth but who live their lives as women, including taking on traditional cultural female practices Brotherboys are Indigenous people assigned female at birth but are a man or have a male spirit.
Transgender/Trans	umbrella terms used to refer to people whose assigned sex at birth does not match their gender identity. Trans people may choose to live their lives with or without modifying their body, dress or legal status, and with or without medical treatment and surgery. Trans people may use a variety of terms to describe themselves including but not limited to: man, woman, trans woman, trans man, non-binary, agender, genderqueer, genderfluid, trans guy, trans masculine/masc, trans feminine/femme. Trans people have the same range of sexual orientations as the rest of the population. Trans people's sexual orientation is referred to in reference to their gender identity, rather than their sex. For example, a woman may identify as lesbian whether she was assigned female or male at birth.

7. References

Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland <http://www.adcq.qld.gov.au/> Australian Endorsed 2020

Australian Transgender Support Association of Queensland (ATSAQ) <http://www.atsaq.com/>

Department of Education: (2017) Diversity in Queensland Schools: Information for Principals. <https://education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/diversity-information-for-principals.pdf>

Department of Education: (2017) Diversity in Queensland Schools. <https://education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/diversity-student-fact-sheet.pdf>

Human Rights Commission <http://www.hreoc.gov.au/>

LGBTI Legal Service: Open Doors Youth Service Queensland Aids Council (QuAC) <https://lgbtilegalservice.org.au/> <https://www.opendoors.net.au/>

Australian Institute of Family Studies, LGBTQIA+ glossary of common terms <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/lgbtqia-glossary-common-terms>

Queensland Human Rights Commission, Trans @ School, <https://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/your-responsibilities/for-schools-and-universities/trans-@-school>