Trans Policy (Staff) | Colleague Quick Guide

Introduction

This Quick Guide is here to help you, as a colleague within the University of Edinburgh, support Trans members of staff. The biggest thing we want you to know is that you have access to support and guidance, with this Quick Guide offering you some practical steps to providing informed support for colleagues.

Top Tips

Top Tip 1 – Learn

This could be your first time supporting a Trans member of staff... and that's fine! It may also just be the first time you're taking some time to do some learning in this space... and that's fine too! There's no expectation for you to be an expert on everything, but the steps below will help you be as prepared and informed as you can be.

- ✓ **Read the Policy**. The Policy has a lot of information and guidance within it. The more you know, the better the support you can offer and know your own role in all of this.
- ✓ **Learn the language.** There could be terms and concepts that you may be less familiar with, such as the many identities that sit under the Trans umbrella, different routes of transition etc. The Policy, and information on the Trans Hub, will help you and avoid placing the burden on a Trans person to do the educating for you.
- ✓ **What support is on offer?** You (and your colleagues) are not in this unsupported, and there is support from managers, HR, Staff Networks and peers to help navigate the policy/ the experience in general.
- ✓ **Understand your role.** If someone does come to you to discuss their gender identity it's important to remember you're not their manager, and, as such, it's not your role to be their only support or to do any of the formal steps. It's important both you and the colleague understand that. However, this does not stop you from being as supportive as you can be and to be a good colleague.

Top Tip 2 – Listen

As a member of staff, someone may choose to discuss their gender identity journey with you and want to talk about how that may look/feel like in the workplace. It's often not an easy step for them to take and you may well be the first person they've talked to about this. It might also not be something you will find an easy thing either and it may be the first time you've had to talk about this too. So, it's important that you first listen.

- ✓ **Establish when and where is the best place for a conversation**. Is this in-person? On teams? In a private room? Off-location? Have you given yourselves enough time?
- ✓ **Let them do the talking.** It's key you really listen to what your colleague has to say and not try to rush anything or flip the conversation onto you.
- ✓ **Ask open questions.** It's important for you to ask questions in an open way that ensures you're able to support your colleague in the best way for them, while establishing boundaries as to what they may want/not want to talk about right now. A good open question to ask is simply, "what support would you like from me?",
- ✓ **Remember it's *their* journey.** It's important to reiterate that they feel in control of what happens and that you won't do or say things without their knowledge/permission.

Colleague Checklist

Here's a quick checklist for you:

- ❑ I have read the Trans Policy (Staff)
- ❑ I have done any necessary reading to be as informed as possible e.g. exploring the Trans Hub
- ❑ I have clear consent and clarity on any next steps should a trans colleague ask me for support e.g. talking to other people about their identity
- ❑ I have established what support the colleague needs from me e.g. the occasional chat
- ❑ I have clarified how best to answer any questions that others may have from the team/colleagues/students i.e. if I do it, if their/a manager should do it, or if they wish to do it
- ❑ I have reached out for support (if needed) for myself e.g. HR Helpline, HR EDI,
- ❑ I have directed my colleague to support (if needed) e.g. HR Helpline, HR EDI, Staff Pride Network