



Responsible Unit	Human Resources
Last Reviewed/Updated	June 2022
Approving Sector Head	VP Administration & CFO
Policy	Gender Diversity Workplace Inclusion Policy

1.1 PURPOSE

Acadia University is committed to fostering a safe and welcoming work environment and does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Acadia University respects individual identities and believes that a person's identity, including their gender identity, is for them alone to determine.

This Policy focuses on ensuring a safe, inclusive and productive workplace environment for two-spirit, trans, non-binary, and other gender diverse employees. It sets forth guidelines to address two-spirit, trans, non-binary, and gender diverse employees' needs and how to protect their rights and safety while promoting a work environment that celebrates diversity.

1.2 LANGUAGE

For the sake of clarity, this Policy uses the term "gender diverse" as an umbrella term to refer to anyone who identifies as transgender or trans, non-binary, two-spirit, or any other gender diverse identity that is not cisgender.

1.3 SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Acadia University employees. Acadia University employees are expected to read and understand this Policy and how it relates to them and to expediently request additional information from their supervisor if they are uncertain about any aspect of this Policy. In accordance with this Policy, Acadia University employees:

- will work to prevent stigmatization by fostering dialogue and understanding of gender diversity in the workplace; and
- foster an environment where people can be who they are without fear of unwanted consequences, and where employees, community partners, and clients of all diverse genders are treated with dignity and respect.

2.0 COMMITMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 HUMAN RESOURCES

- (i) Foster a workplace that is welcoming and safe for people of all genders.

- (ii) **Check in with all new employees about their pronouns regardless of whether they may be cisgender or gender diverse.**
- (iii) **Maintain a straightforward process for employees to update their names and pronouns as needed should they chose to.** Names and pronouns are kept in employee personnel files, which includes basic information such as address updates, emergency contact updates, and other relevant personal information. When names and pronouns are updated, Human Resources or the applicable manager will, with the employee's consent, take prompt steps to ensure that all other workplace documentation reflects this updated information, including business cards, email address, name tags, and any other places where names and pronouns may be displayed.
- (iv) **Respect and protect the privacy of gender diverse employees.** This means:
 - a. Human Resources will be mindful to honour the importance of confidentiality and will avoid outing anyone in any workplace setting.
 - b. Human Resources has a streamlined, confidential process for keeping track of legal names and chosen names when these are different. This form will be shared with as few people as possible to minimize the risk of outing someone in the workplace. If a new employee has to provide documents that may have a different name than their chosen name (for example, a criminal record check), these documents will not be shared with anyone who does not need to see them.
- (v) **Coordinate training for all current and future employees focused on 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion.** For new employees, this training will be included in the onboarding process, so that new employees can understand how best to demonstrate respectful inclusion. For existing employees, training will be coordinated through Human Resources and the Equity Office.
- (vi) **Support employees who are transitioning at work,** including by updating names and pronouns as requested and ensuring gender diverse employees feel safe accessing the washroom that best aligns with their gender identity.
- (vii) **Provide clear information on time off for gender affirming care.** Human Resources understands that some gender diverse people may require gender affirming healthcare. Human Resources will work with this employee to provide accommodations as needed.

2.2 GENDER DIVERSE EMPLOYEES

- (i) **Should a gender diverse employee choose to, they may notify management of any updates to their personal information and, as applicable, make workplace support requests.** A gender diverse employee will notify their direct supervisor, a Human Resources representative, or another relevant member of Management, about any changes to be made to their employee record, such as updates to their pronouns and the name in their employee file, or any supports that may be required, such as time off for healthcare needs, if applicable.
- (ii) **Provision of information.** For clarity, gender diverse employees are only required to provide as much information as they choose and as would assist Acadia University in providing relevant support and fulfilling its legal obligations. Example of information a gender diverse employee may choose to share includes but is not limited to:

- a. The date the employee wishes to update their name and pronouns in the workplace, and whether the employee wishes this information to be communicated to coworkers.
- b. The employee's desired communication plans and timeline for sharing this updated information (who to bring on board, how, and when). The employee may wish to communicate this information themselves or can request that leadership communicate relevant updates (for example, through leadership sending a team email with the information).
- c. Notification to management of any requests for time off for gender affirming medical procedures, if applicable. The employee does not need to provide specific details to management about what kind of medical treatment or process they require. The employee may be asked to provide a doctor's note so that Acadia University can assess and provide accommodations such as medical leave, in accordance with the duty to accommodate under the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*.

(iii) **In unpredictable, volatile, or uncomfortable situations, gender diverse employees are never required to provide response to offending language or behaviour.** Instead, the employee may bring their concerns to a relevant member of management, who will follow up to address any situation in which any gender diverse employee experiences behaviours which may be considered harassing or discriminatory in nature.

2.3 MANAGEMENT

- (i) **Prioritize the needs of the gender diverse employee as much as possible,** providing special care to avoid any "outing" of the gender diverse employee without their consent.
- (ii) **Reassure gender diverse employees of their support and that they will work to create a climate of understanding and mutual respect among all employees.** Because every gender diverse person may have different needs, management will work with the employee to determine what type of support will assist them in feeling comfortable and respected in their gender identity in the workplace.
- (iii) **Provide organizational information.** Management will ensure that a gender diverse employee knows about Acadia University's policies and processes for supporting gender diverse employees, including this Policy, any policy governing diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and any policy and procedures regarding workplace harassment.
- (iv) **Communication.** With a gender diverse employee's consent, management will notify relevant management members who should be made aware of any pronoun or name updates so that organizational leaders can voice support when the employee's new name and pronouns are made known to the work team.
- (v) **Workplace Supports.** If any new or existing employee discloses that they are gender diverse, management will communicate with the gender diverse employee to explain available supports. This may involve sharing information on the following areas:
 - a. Ensuring the employee understands that if time off is needed for medical reasons, sick pay and leave policies will apply.

- b. In consultation with the employee, determining what updates should be made to the gender diverse employee's records, and when they will be made.
- c. With the consent of the gender diverse employee, determine how, and in what format, coworkers will be made aware of any gender identity-related updates such as new name and pronouns. For greater clarity:
 - It is up to the gender diverse employee to decide if they would like to make some coworkers aware of any such updates on a one-on-one basis beforehand.
 - It is up to the gender diverse employee to decide if they would like a written memo, email, or handout to be shared with staff or an in-person staff meeting to share any gender identity-related updates.
- d. In consultation with the gender diverse employee, decide what, if any, additional training should be provided for employees to help create a supportive environment.
- e. Identify what steps the employee should take if they experience any stigmatization or discrimination in the workplace.

(vi) In consultation with the gender diverse employee, ensure that any name change and new pronouns are updated in all workplace records and documentation. If an employee's legal name is different from their chosen name, Acadia University will retain the legal name in the employee file but will keep this information as confidential as possible and will refer to the gender diverse employee by their chosen name on all other documentation such as email, phone directory, nametag, company identification card, etc.

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

The gender identity of an employee is considered confidential and should only be disclosed with the consent of the employee.