

Changing my name: Supporting School of Medicine students, staff and placement providers

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Why have we created this document?

Students, staff and placement providers report difficulties in locating the information they need to understand how name changes are implemented both within the University and on placement. This document is designed to collate where that information is held and to provide some indication of what the School of Medicine expects from students, staff and placement providers.

Who might change their name?

People may choose to change their name for many reasons. This could include marriage, divorce, religious or cultural reasons, personal preference, or gender transition. The processes described in this document apply to anyone who wishes to update their name or identity information within the University of Leeds systems or during placements. This document is part of our commitment to fostering inclusive and supportive practices.

How do students change their name on the University of Leeds system? (to a new legal name)

Information on how to change your name is provided on the [University of Leeds Equality web page](#). In short, students who wish to update their name or other identity information on the University system need to complete a [web form](#). Students will be asked to provide identity information as held in university systems. For example, this might include:

- Student or staff number as currently held in university systems
- Name as currently held in university systems
- Which elements of their identity information they are requesting to update in our records.
- Supporting documentation relevant to the change may be required in some circumstances.

In the form, students can highlight any sensitive or complex aspects of their request. For instance, this would be particularly important to do if they would find it distressing for their former identity information to be visible after their name has been changed.

The University's digital identity specialists will work collaboratively to ensure that the student's request is treated sensitively and quickly. As a guide, in 2024/25 the team aimed to complete all identity changes within 30 days. The digital identity specialists can work with students to agree a plan which may result in a mutually agreed longer or shorter implementation plan. This might involve a confidential discussion about the systems the student uses and have used at the University so that the team can work with the relevant system owners and external vendors to make the necessary updates. For up to date information on time scales, please consult the University web pages and associated name change forms.

How do students change their name? (to their preferred name)

Students who wish to update their name or other identity information on the University system need to complete a [web form](#).

Students can ask to have a '**preferred name**' if they have not legally changed their name via deed poll. This request will be considered on a case by case basis. If students do not wish to change their legal name, they just need to select 'no' on the question: "Do you expect your name to be changed across all University systems, including those that are required to interact with external systems e.g. Home Office; Student Loans Company and HMRC?"

The extent to which a preferred name can be used in university systems and documentation depends on the situation. Submitting the web form will enable someone to discuss with the student what is possible.

In the form, students can highlight any sensitive or complex aspects of their request. For instance, this would be particularly important to do if they would find it distressing for their former identity information to be visible after their name has been changed.

Staff and students need to be aware that when a student requests a change to their preferred name, a decision will first be made as to whether the change is possible, if a change is agreed this is not always an immediate change across all our University systems.

Where a change is agreed, the University's digital identity specialists will work collaboratively to ensure that the student's request is treated sensitively and quickly. As a guide, in 2024/25 the team aimed to complete all identity changes within 30 days. The digital identity specialists can work with students to agree a plan which may result in a mutually agreed longer or shorter implementation plan. This might involve a confidential discussion about the systems the student uses and have used at the University so that the team can work with the relevant system owners and external vendors to make the necessary updates. For up to date information on time scales, please consult the University web pages and associated name change forms.

How will placement teams be notified when a student changes their name?

1. Automatic Updates in SPARC
 - Any changes to a student's name or related details in Banner are automatically reflected in SPARC during the overnight update.
2. Notifications During Rotations
 - If a student changes their name while on placement, SPARC will automatically send an email notification to the placement team who will contact the placement provider with the details. The Student Education Experience (SEE) Placements Team will contact the placement provide via email to confirm the details.
3. Updating Placement Provider Records
 - Upon receiving the notification, placement providers should update their records to reflect the new information.
 - Automated emails from the Faculty Placements Team also remind providers to re-run their reports to ensure they have the most current student details when making contact.

Placement name badges

Students across the MBChB, Physician Associates (PA) and Classified Undergraduate Programmes (CUPS) have been given the option of including pronouns on their placement badge, and badges have now been given out to most students. Students also have the option of having a preferred first name on their badge for example, if their name is Samantha but would prefer their badge to show Sam. The students will keep these badges for the duration of their programme.

Students also have the option of providing a phonetic spelling of their name to help placement teams with pronunciation and can do the same on their Minerva profile if they would like to. Phonetic spellings will be added to SPARC (placement allocation software) and be visible to placement providers.

What impact does using incorrect pronouns and names have on students and staff?

When a student's correct pronouns and names are used, this develops feelings of trust and their sense of belonging is likely to increase. Addressing someone by the wrong name or misgendering them by using incorrect pronouns, can be disrespectful, harmful, and even threatening to a gender-diverse person. Misgendering results in marginalisation and communicates that a person's identity is not seen as important.

What duty do the University and placement providers have to protect transgender people from discrimination?

The University and our placement providers have a duty to abide by the Equality Act (2010) which protects transgender people from discrimination based on their gender reassignment from the start of their social transition. This includes the right to be called their legal name.

If the university and/or NHS fails to abide by the Equality Act, this is breaking the law. The University has a public sector equality duty– we have a duty to students under our care. The purpose of the public sector equality duty is to ensure that public authorities and organisations carrying out public functions think about how they can improve society and promote equality in every aspect of their business. The three aims of the general duty are to make sure that public authorities have due regard to the need to:

1. Put an end to unlawful behaviour that is banned by the Equality Act 2010, including discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equal opportunities between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not

The University of Leeds School of Medicine seeks to foster an inclusive environment, we therefore ask students, staff and placement providers to be respectful of students' preferred names and pronouns.

Which University policies state the University's commitment to Trans Inclusion?

The University has a [Trans Equality Policy](#) which states that the University of Leeds will not discriminate against people on the grounds of their gender identity or gender expression.

Who can students talk to if this procedure isn't followed?

[Freedom to Speak up Guardians](#) – You can speak to the Freedom to Speak up Guardians about any issue that concerns you, big or small, including any form of discrimination.

[Report & Support](#) - Report and Support is a University wide initiative, whereby you can make a report anonymously or by speaking confidentially to an advisor, who will talk you through the various options you have.

[The Equality and Inclusion Unit \(EIU\)](#) – The EIU can also help with any questions concerning equality, diversity and inclusion activities, policies or procedures.

Resources

How can I learn more about Trans Inclusion and being an ally to the Trans community?

The University of Leeds has a [Trans Inclusion Module](#) which is accessible to all staff and students and covers topics such as pronoun use and trans inclusive language. The self-paced module should take approximately 25 minutes to complete and you do not need prior knowledge of trans equality or inclusion to complete the module.

The University of Leeds, School of Medicine is a signatory of the [GLADD UK Medical Schools Charter](#) on So-Called LGBTQ+ 'Conversion Therapy'. We continue to work towards creating a safer and more joyful experience for University of Leeds Staff and Students.

The Equality & Inclusion Unit has [guidance to support trans staff and students](#).

The School of Medicine has an [Anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia and anti-biphobia code of conduct](#).

Where can students find LGBTQIA+ spaces around Leeds?

[LGBTQIA+ Student life in Leeds](#) – Residence Life

[Equality & Inclusion Unit round up of External LGBT+ websites](#)

[Visit Leeds](#) – LGBTQIA+ events and spaces

How can students join LGBTQIA+ groups or societies on campus?

Leeds University Union has an LGBT+ society and an LGBTQIA+ Medics society:

[LGBT+ Society](#)

[LGBTQIA+ Medics Society](#)