

# Policy for changes to student name, gender and personal details in records held by the University of South Wales

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## **1. Introduction**

USW applicants, current students and alumni who change their name, gender identity, sex, title or date of birth may request changes to the records held by the University. Such a request will start a process by which the individual will agree the detail of the changes in dialogue with the University.

Under the law in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, some changes require official documentation before it can be reflected in University systems and documentation, while other changes can be updated by student request. The aim of this document is to clarify how the University will support requests to update names and other personal details held in its systems and on official documentation and student records.

## **2. Change of Name**

By law, if you want to be known by a different name you can change your name at any time, provided you do not intend to deceive or defraud another person. You simply start using your preferred name. You can change your forename or surname, add names or rearrange your existing names.

However, the University has a duty to prevent fraud and so can exercise the right to carry out checks as part of the process to update student records and official documentation to reflect requested name changes.

The name in which you apply to the University will be the name recorded into the University's student records database and will be used throughout your academic career at the University of South Wales, unless a change of name is formally requested. The name provided will be used on all correspondence, documentation and reflected in all University systems. It will appear on your official University record, your academic transcript, your final award certificate and Graduation brochure if you are successful.

If you need to change your legal name, the University will update all of your University records to reflect the change of name and it will be used from that time on.

A request to change your name as recorded on the University's student records system during your academic career must be submitted in writing and accompanied by documentary evidence of the relevant change (see Appendix 9.1), either in original form or as a certified true copy of the original.

A request to change your preferred name as recorded on the University's student records system must be submitted in writing but does not require any documentary evidence.

It is important to make sure that any corrections or changes to your name as it is held in the University's official student record are altered before an award is made. The award certificate presented on successful completion of the programme (i.e. at the point of conferment, the Assessment Board, which is normally a week before your formal results

are published) will bear that name. As this is a legal document, this cannot thereafter be changed unless in relation to gender transition, personal security or other exceptional circumstances.

Once you have graduated, it is not normally possible to change the name held on your record retrospectively or produce documentation in your new name. Academic transcripts and degree certificates can only be reissued to meet the legal requirements of name changes in relation to gender transition, personal security or an exceptional circumstance that can be evidenced. You cannot for example, have your award certificate re-issued in your pre-married name, if you graduated in your married name and subsequently divorced after you had finished your studies at the University of South Wales.

**If you change your name within the University you should also notify all other relevant external bodies and agencies of the change.**

### **3. Your University ID card**

Your first name and surname will appear on your University ID card as it is recorded on the University's student record system. However, ID cards displaying preferred name can be provided upon request for students who are transitioning or have personal security concerns.

### **4. Change of Gender Identity**

The University aims to recognise you in the gender in which you identify. The University will change the recorded gender identity on your student record on receipt of written confirmation of your request. No medical evidence or other documentation is required.

### **5. Change of Sex**

The University needs to keep a record of your legal sex to share with external organisations where required to do so for purposes such as visas and statistical returns.

The University will change your recorded legal sex, as required by law, if you have obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate. University Officers are not permitted legally to ask to see the Certificate, but may ask for documentary evidence, such as a birth certificate or passport.

### **6. Change of Title**

The titles Mr, Miss, Ms, Mrs, Mx are social titles and have no legal status. You do not need to provide any documentary evidence to support a request to be addressed by your preferred title. You may choose any of the title options, regardless of your legal sex or gender identity.

### **7. Change of Date of Birth**

In the rare circumstances that your date of birth is held incorrectly on University records, it can be updated following the presentation of any formal document (e.g. passport, driving licence).

If you wish to change your date of birth, for personal security reason for example, your University records will be updated on presentation of documentation that evidences your new date of birth or a letter from a Government Agency or Embassy confirming the change.

## **8. Requesting a Change of Personal Details**

### 8.1 Current Students

Requests can be submitted directly to the AZO [change your personal details enquiry](#).

If you are a transitioning student, please email [transadvice@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:transadvice@southwales.ac.uk) stating your intention to change your name or other personal characteristic, at which point a meeting will be arranged with relevant staff only. An advisor will arrange to view your supporting documentation (see Appendix 9) but no copies will be retained.

All appropriate University record systems will be updated with your requested changes at the agreed time.

The advisor will print you a new student ID Card following your change of name.

### 8.2 Past Students

If you believe that your circumstances indicate the need for exceptional consideration, or is in relation to personal security or gender transition, requests for a certificate to be reissued in your preferred name should be via email to [paststudents@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:paststudents@southwales.ac.uk), with supporting documentary evidence (Appendix 9), for consideration.

Please note that replacement of official documents will carry an associated administrative cost.

**Please note that all data held by the University in connection with any change of personal details will be treated in confidence.**

## 9. Appendix - Acceptable Supporting Documentation

### 9.1 Change of Name

#### **A marriage certificate or divorce decree absolute**

If you are wishing to revert from your married name to your previous name we will need to see the above documents, together with your birth certificate and a statement from you confirming the reversion to your previous name for all purposes.

#### **A certified copy of a birth or adoption certificate**

A certified copy of a birth or adoption certificate showing your preferred name will be evidence of a change of name.

#### **Public announcement**

You may decide to record your name change by placing an advertisement in a local or national newspaper. This should state that you have stopped using your previous name and have assumed a new one. A copy of the advertisement can then be used as evidence that you have changed your name.

#### **Statutory declaration**

A statutory declaration is a statement recording your intention to adopt a new name. For most purposes, a statutory declaration is generally accepted as evidence of your change of name. Preparing a statutory declaration can be complicated. If you want to prove your change of name by making a statutory declaration you should consult an experienced adviser, for example, one of the University's Student Welfare Advisers, or an adviser at a Citizens Advice Bureau.

#### **Change of name deed (previously known as a 'deed poll')**

A change of name deed is a formal statement to prove that your name has been changed.

If you are a young person under 18 you can only have your change of name recorded by a change of name deed by a person who has parental responsibility for you, although if you are over 16, this can only be done with your consent.

Changing your name by change of name deed can be complicated. If you want to use this as evidence of change of name you should consult an experienced adviser such as one of the University's Student Welfare Advisers, or an adviser at a Citizens Advice Bureau (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>)

#### **Police report /Agency letter**

The University is aware that some students may choose to adopt a pseudonym for personal reasons (including personal safety) during their academic careers. If you

are in this situation, the University will require a police report or solicitor's letter for example as verification of the change.

### **9.2 Change of gender identity**

No formal documentation is required to support a change of gender identity in student records.

The University will change your recorded gender identity in your student records on receipt of written confirmation of your request.

### **9.3 Change of sex**

The following documentation showing your sex will be evidence of a change of sex;

- Gender Recognition Certificate
- Certified copy of a birth or adoption certificate
- Current valid passport
- A letter from your doctor or medical consultant confirming your change of sex

### **9.4 Change of Date of Birth**

The following documentation showing your date of birth for a correction or amendment of your current date of birth;

- Certified copy of a birth or adoption certificate
- Current valid passport
- Driving Licence
- Government Agency/Embassy documentation

## 10. References

Academic Services, De Montford University. (2017). *Policy on student names*. Available: <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/the-student-gateway/academic-services/student-administrative-support/policy-on-student-names.aspx> . Last accessed 25th Sept 2017.

Equality Challenge Unit. (2016). *Trans staff and students in HE and colleges: improving experiences*. Available: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/trans-staff-and-students-in-he-and-colleges-improving-experiences/> . Last accessed 25th Sept 2017.

Irvin, Jim. Registrar, University of York (2015). *Policy on changes to student names*. Available: <https://www.york.ac.uk/students/studying/manage/student-record/name-change/> . Last accessed 28<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

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