

**WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY**



**Vice-Chancellor's
GENDER EQUALITY FUND
Final Report 2020**

**An exploration of WSU Staff's
understandings of trans and gender
diversity.**

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Recommendations

1. Better and more explicit training: Compulsory university wide training should be explicitly about TGD, and include both statistical evidence of discrimination and disadvantage and personal first-hand accounts, demonstrating the importance of training in this area. Preferably training should be led or designed in collaboration with TGD people;
2. Basic education: is required on TGD issues and definitions of sex, gender, sexuality and various identity categories;
3. Very clear guidance and printed materials: required to support best-practice. For example: How to use / ask about pronouns;
4. A clear and streamlined procedure for name and pronoun changes: Training needs to include awareness of name-change procedures, including contextualisation in terms of relevant TGD issues;
5. Diverse marketing materials and images: University marketing materials need to include images of diverse TGD identities;
6. Develop consistent messaging around TGD rights and the need for specific awareness and action (justification for why you need to ‘treat people differently to treat them the same’). There needs to be strong positive and vocal leadership from senior management / executive supporting this message; and
7. Anticipate and plan to manage possible backlash, maintaining consistent positive messaging in support of TGD people and of those colleagues who work with them.

Executive Summary

This research explored WSU cisgender staff understandings of trans and gender diversity (TGD), school-based support for TGD students and staff, and University policy on TGD. A key aim was to identify the needs of staff in regard to working more effectively with TGD students and staff in order to develop more inclusive policies and practices and to contribute to reducing inequalities based on gender diversity.

Research Methodology

This multi-method research included a staff on-line survey (multiple choice and open-ended questions) and a focus group. The online survey was completed by 346 staff members – 61% were professional staff and 39% academics. Seven participants volunteered to be involved in the focus group discussion.

Key Findings

- There was considerable misunderstanding and confusion around terminology (e.g. transgender, gender diversity, non-binary), with sexuality and gender identity often conflated;
- The majority of participants (approx. 80%) believed knowledge of TGD issues was important to their role or function at WSU; with 20% having been in a situation where gender identity was pertinent to their work (e.g. Affirmed names being different to names on staff roles and ID cards);
- There was a lack of awareness and knowledge of institutional procedures and guidelines relevant to TGD (e.g. gender affirmation/ use of pronouns). Participants requested resources and clear guidance in this area;
- A minority of participants did not believe TGD students and staff required 'special treatment', commenting they treated all people the same. Some considered TGD issues were concerns relevant to individuals only, rather than being reflective of structural problems;
- Participants overwhelmingly requested greater culturally appropriate awareness training opportunities on TGD issues. Eighty-five percent of survey participants were aware of the ALLY Network, but only 23% were members, with 90% of those having completed the training;
- Strong, supportive, vocal leadership at all levels and a whole institutional approach to TGD issues is also key to enhancing current practices in this area.

Itemised Budget Expenditure

Total funded amount \$5000

Date	Activity / Item	Cost (GST incl.)
	Research assistant	\$4900
	Gift voucher for survey prize draw	\$100
Total expenditure:		\$5000

Research Report

Introduction and Background

Transgender/trans and gender diverse members (hereon abbreviated to TGD) of organisations have distinct needs from those who are sexuality diverse (i.e. LGBTQ) and/or cisgender. Trans and gender diverse (TGD) can include those who transition from one gender to another, and anybody whose gender identity or presentation is outside of normative gender expectations. There is a dearth of literature on cisgender people's attitudes towards TGD people either in universities, other workplaces, or wider societies. There is a greater focus in the literature on attitudes towards sexuality diverse people in organisations, and strategies to create more inclusive environments. It is important to acknowledge that sexuality and gender diverse people, while often combined in policies and activism, have distinct identities and concerns, as well as different levels of social acceptance (Valentine, Wood and Plummer, 2009). Of particular concern is the ways in which TGD inclusion is often subsumed in sexuality diversity, LGBTQ issues, or gender equality. There is growing recognition of the need to address issues faced by specific identities encompassed within the LGBTQ acronym, which are often eclipsed through generalisations across the groups. Additionally, gender equity or diversity initiatives can often remain cisgender and binary oriented, failing to account for TGD staff and students.

The experiences of sexuality and gender diverse students and staff have generally been well researched in universities, including WSU (Ferfolja, Asquith, Brady & Hanckel, 2018; Goldberg, Beemyn, & Smith, 2019; Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld, & Frazer, 2010). This research has recommended a number of strategies to improve the inclusion of sexuality and gender diverse students and staff, including policy development and student and staff training (Beemyn & Brauer, 2015; Ferfolja et al., 2018; Lawrence, 2019; Squire & Beck, 2016). However, policy alone is not enough. Staff need to be knowledgeable and willing to implement inclusion (Seelman, 2014), especially since discrimination occurs in microclimates on campuses (Siegel, 2019).

Research emphasises that enabling environments are key to ensuring TGD inclusion, but also one of the most challenging to achieve (Nicholas, 2019). A core component of creating enabling environments is not just 'inclusion' but decentering 'gender-conforming privilege' (Case et al. 2012: 146). In a study of campus climate related to sexuality and gender diverse people at WSU, Ferfolja et al. (2020: 933) found that continuing:

exclusion serves to silence individuals across multiple levels and ... this, in turn, limits the visibility of, and redress for, exclusion, impacting on health and well-being. This tension ... can only be addressed safely and holistically through proactive and strategic endeavours on the part of the institution.

However, there is a critical gap in the research regarding perceptions, experiences, practices and needs of university staff who are expected to implement policies in relation to TGD students and staff (Linley & Kilgo, 2018). Often the first encounters students and new staff have are with professional staff (e.g. in schools, student services, libraries, security) who are core to students' and other staff members' initial

experiences, as well as to the continued assurance of effective whole university approaches to equity and inclusion of TGD members. Building on previous research conducted at WSU focusing on the experiences of TGD staff and students (Falconer, 2016; Ferfolja et.al., 2018), this VC Gender Equity Fund research project explored understandings and perspectives of cisgender staff responsible for implementation of policies in their everyday interactions with students and staff.

Western Sydney University is currently developing a transgender and transition policy (Western Sydney University, August 2020). Day, Loverno and Russell (2019), have recommended that TGD people be included in both policies together with and separate from sexuality diverse people. Further, it has been acknowledged that in order for institutional change to occur, there is a need to target the wider university community. Within this context, this research is timely and aimed to identify the various attitudes and extent of knowledge about TGD held by a sample of cisgender staff at WSU. The extent to which staff had engaged in diversity and inclusion training or initiatives and their assessment of whether this had provided them with greater awareness or capacities to work with TGD staff and students was also investigated. This allowed us to develop recommendations to enhance practices for working with TGD staff and students.

Literature Review

A scoping review was undertaken to determine the extent of, and gaps in, the existing literature related to non-TGD or cisgender staffs' attitudes in universities (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Nicholas et al. 2020). Fourteen relevant papers were identified: 10 from USA, 1 from Australia, 1 from Canada, 1 from Mexico and one from the UK. Many studies do not distinguish between gender identity and sexual orientation, but rather use a collective term like LGBT (Case & Lewis, 2012; Cunningham, 2015; Ryan et al., 2013), rendering invisible trans* inclusion. See appendix I for a table of articles in the corpus.

One study from Texas, USA examined 'student and faculty change agents' and their perceptions of 'obstacles to change, action strategies, and the influence of privilege and power dynamics on the institutional change process' (Case et al, 2012: 145-146). It found 'the process of publicly deconstructing GCP [gender conforming privilege]' (Case et al, 2012: 158) and 'an effort to first educate the oppressor' (159) to be effective educational strategies towards real cultural change. Four studies were concerned with the climate of support in universities for transgender, or LGBT students and faculty. The Australian study conducted by Ferfolja et al., 2020 at WSU, identified widespread exclusionary practices at work. Lewis and Ericksen (2016) found that faculty members tended to silence and avoid discussions of LGBT topics. A study in a Mexican University (Martínez-Guzmán & Íñiguez-Rueda, 2017) found two issues operating as symbolic power mechanisms around LGBTQ people, mockery, and ironically, respect. In this context, it was believed that LGBTQ people should 'respect' discriminatory attitudes and not draw attention to themselves, in order to be treated with 'respect'. De Jong (2017) found that while faculty were supportive of including content about transgender clients and issues in the curriculum, and accepting transgender people as students, there was less support for transgender faculty members.

Many of the studies concluded that a more inclusive and supportive climate could be achieved through policies and associated resources (Lewis & Ericksen, 2016); training of staff (Lewis & Ericksen, 2016); provision of gender-neutral bathrooms, establishing Ally groups, offering LGBTQ scholarships, recruitment of LGBTQ staff, and having visible safe spaces (McCarty-Caplan, 2018); and LGBTQ leadership (Marine, 2017). Gacita et al. (2017) point out that training in particular can improve staff attitudes. In a UK university, training staff on facts and myths in transgender media coverage was found to reduce bias, improve knowledge of transgender issues, and resulted in better support for transgender students and staff (Krutkowski et al., 2019). Lewis and Ericksen (2016: 249) concluded: 'faculty needed sensitivity training and administration should take the lead'. However, the findings from this scoping literature review pointed out that such practices are not currently widespread. For example, an online survey of 44 administrators in pharmacy colleges across the US found a substantial range of inclusion resources and policies in these colleges (Jacobson et al., 2017). Only half had inclusive policies on sexual orientation and/or gender diversity, with only 10% having gender neutral or single occupancy restrooms, and none offering LGBT scholarships.

Studies of heterosexual and cisgender staff allyship and activism show that co-opting the power of cisgender faculty can advance activism (Case et al., 2012). Heterosexual and cisgender staff engage in allyship and advocacy for a range of reasons, both personal and from a sense of professional responsibility (Ryan et al., 2013). However, there can be both personal and career costs (Messinger, 2011). Marine identified a 'diversity of opinions and stances' (2017: 1182) amongst student affairs administrators in women's colleges in the US regarding their support of transgender students, identifying three profiles: 'ambivalent', 'supporter' and 'advocate'. There are a 'myriad of obstacles and resistance' to this activism (Case et al., 2012: 153), with the major one being belief systems. Cunningham found staff in athletic departments perceive the benefit of inclusive policies is that LGBTQ staff can bring their 'whole self' to work and act as 'role models' for students. However, there were perceived negative effects to the reputation of the institution, such as other athletic departments marketing themselves as more attractive to parents of prospective students who might be concerned about the prospect of having LGBTQ sports coaches, and backlash from stakeholders (Cunningham, 2015).

Methods

This research included conducting an all-staff on-line survey and a focus group with volunteers from the survey. The survey included multiple choice and open-ended questions (questions attached in appendix II) and had a response rate of 346 staff members. At a confidence level of 95% with a 5% margin of error, 345 is the ideal sample size of the total WSU staff population to ensure we have the correct amount of statistical power available to run any comparisons (for example) or other tests with this small margin of error (using Qualtrics sample size calculator). Of these 346 respondents, 61% were professional staff and 39% academic. Survey respondents were invited to volunteer for a focus group to gain more in-depth qualitative understandings of staff's awareness of and attitudes to TGD people. The focus group had 7 attendees.

The discussion was transcribed, with both the qualitative survey responses and focus group data analysed thematically following the approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) whereby the researchers, informed as they are by existing literature are active in 'identifying patterns/themes, selecting which are of interest, and reporting them' (80). In particular, this was undertaken with the guiding research interests in mind of mis/understandings of TGD, awareness of TGD, opinions towards TGD, and experiences and opinions of training on the issue to date. In this way, analysis can be understood as 'theoretical thematic analysis' as it was 'driven by [our]... theoretical or analytical interest in the area' (Braun & Clarke 2006: 84).

Findings

Basic understandings and definitions

In the survey, most respondents demonstrated a better understanding of transgender people who transition from one gender to another, with 90% agreeing that transgender means people who transition with medical intervention; and 93% agreeing that transgender means people who transition socially. Encouragingly, 86% of respondents agreed that transgender means anybody who says they are transgender, demonstrating broad support for self-identity. However, there was divergence on whether transgender includes people outside of the binaries, with only 30% agreeing that it includes people who do not identify as male or female, and 32% agreeing that it includes non-binary. Conversely, most respondents did not feel that people who transition gender are 'gender diverse' and reserved this term for people who do not identify as male or female (93%), non-binary (93%) and gender non-conforming (81%). Positively, 92% of respondents supported the statement that gender diverse means anybody who says they are gender diverse. These results demonstrate that despite broad support for self-identity, the terminology can be misunderstood even by those with positive attitudes. These numbers may be explained due to only 30% of respondents having family members or friends who identify as TGD.

One of the most significant misunderstandings was the conflation of sexuality or sexual identity with gender identity. A minority but significant number of people selected true for the statements that transgender means 'people who are gay and lesbian' (6%), 'people who are attracted to the same sex' (7%) and 'people who are bisexual' (6%). These numbers are even greater for agreement with statements that gender diverse means 'people who are gay and lesbian' (11%), 'people who are attracted to the same sex' (14%) and 'people who are bisexual' (17%).

This illustrates a key area for education or awareness: the distinction between the concepts of sex-assigned-at-birth, gender, and sexuality. Sociologists have long noted that they are often collapsed in the popular imagination (Kessler & McKenna, 1978), and LGBTQ+ activists and advocates have long supported the necessity of understanding their distinctness (Hill et al., 2021). Literature suggests that misconceptions can underpin prejudice (Acker, 2017). Thus, better institution-wide education and training covering the basic concepts would be useful.

Awareness

Forty percent (40%) of survey respondents indicated having interacted with a student or staff member who has disclosed their identity as transgender or gender diverse in their work at WSU. Twenty percent (20%) answered yes to 'have you had any situations where staff members' or students' transgender or gender diverse status has been pertinent', demonstrating that it is a present and relevant issue. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of people agreed that knowledge about transgender and / or gender diversity is important to their role and function in the university.

Of the pertinent situations detailed by survey respondents), the most common was related to the inclusion of student or staff affirmed names or titles in university systems, impacting ID cards and class rolls. Many of the respondents stated that they did not know the procedures for changing details in systems. Related to this, 45% of respondents did not know what the option 'Preferred Name' is used for in university systems.

Additionally, 11 respondents disclosed that a colleague or student they knew had affirmed their gender. Some of these respondents stated that this was a difficult process, for which they could use more guidance; and a few indicated it was handled well by the university. Four respondents specified that they had been asked to use a different name, and 9 had been asked to use different pronouns for a colleague or student. Related to this, respondents were asked how comfortable they are or would be with using gender neutral pronouns with results shown below (Figure 1):

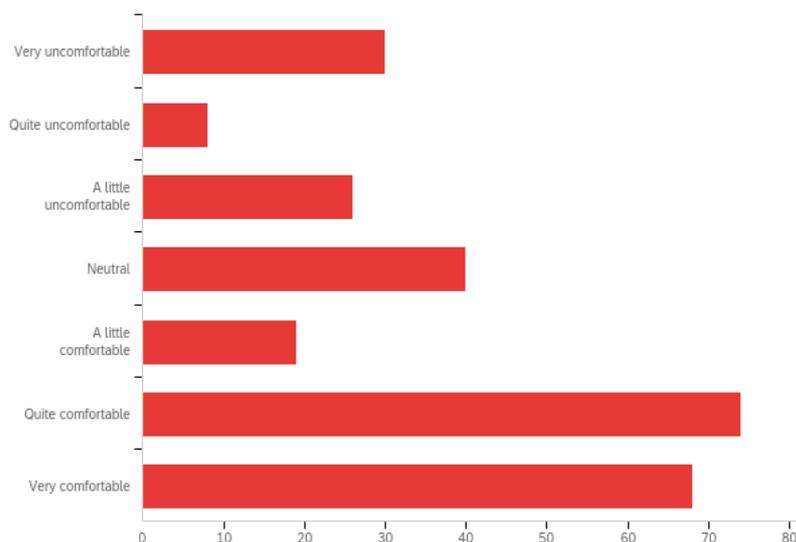


Fig 1: How Comfortable are you or would you be with using gender neutral pronouns?

Focus groups participants noted that learning the correct language and how to use pronouns can be challenging and requires training, practice and time. However, it was generally stated that they had accepting and inclusive teams. Some recounted that colleagues dealing with issues, such as a change of name, would avoid using pronouns when talking to the student; or would use wrong pronouns behind the scenes, pointing out: 'that happens just through lack of awareness'. There were positive accounts given

in the focus group of staff teams with a good awareness of transgender issues and a pro-active approach to managing them:

... the last four months, things have just gotten so much better. Like, there are conversations about like, Oh, can we make them remove gender and title from [university IT system]? Because who needs that? ... I think it speaks to how more diverse we were than I probably would have assumed.

However, other participants recounted that, despite having a generally accepting and inclusive team, gender diversity itself was never explicitly discussed. This was noted as an omission by focus group participants. As such, many respondents suggested compulsory training that explicitly addresses TGD.

Resistance and Backlash

A key theme that emerged in the survey, and reiterated by a focus group participant, was resistance to 'special treatment' of TGD people and an appeal to a gender / or difference blindness – the need to not place a focus on gender or difference and to treat all people the same. At its most extreme, in the survey, this manifested as hostility to considering TGD issues separately from existing equity and diversity policies. A third of respondents (31%) did not consider specific policies or procedures related to TGD staff and students necessary. More strongly, when given the opportunity to elaborate on whether a staff member's or student's TGD status had ever been pertinent in one's work, many respondents (15 out of 90 elaborating on this question) commented that they believed it is never pertinent; with many also stating that there should not be specific policies and procedures for TGD staff or students. The following quotes exemplify the spectrum of these statements:

Whether a staff member identifies or does not identify as transgender and/ or gender diverse is irrelevant. All people regardless of how they identify should be treated equally with the same respect and professionalism.

Why do we need any other policies about gender diverse people? It is their choice and their choice is very important, however whether they choose to identify as male, female or non-binary should have nothing to do with their education. Everyone is entitled to an education and existing WSU policies and Human Rights law support people with their choices.

At the most extreme end were some hostile comments reflecting backlash discourses circulating in media about TGD being invented, a choice, and as creating further division in society, or as a disputed ideology (Nicholas 2019). When asked what support was needed by respondents and their colleagues to be more inclusive of transgender and gender diverse people in the workplace, 30 of the total 202 qualitative responses, indicated that it was either not an issue, only an individual not organisational matter, or was going too far, as epitomised in the following comments:

Treat everyone the same regardless of gender, gender identity, race, religion.
Stop trying to separate people into boxes;

less categorization and more coaching on individual respect;

I accept people for who they are, not their choice of gender;

gender of all types is accepted and does not need to be further highlighted as a point of difference; and

people's genders don't effect our work at all.

The tendency towards being difference-blind has been noted in literature (Beagan and Kumas-Tan, 2009; Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2016) and tends to be characterised as symptomatic of unrecognised privilege (Frankenburg, 1993). Resistance to conceptualising disadvantage of TGD people as structural and individualising issues tends to derive from a myth of meritocracy and an appeal to being 'gender-blind'. For example, one respondent stated, 'the main thing is whether there is room for career advancement based on merit without discrimination, and I believe that that is the case.' This sentiment is a contestation of the validity of TGD people. One survey respondent wrote in response to the question about what support was needed by respondents and their colleagues to be more inclusive of transgender and gender diverse people in the workplace:

That's not an open question; it supposes the need for greater inclusivity exists - yet that has not been shown. The 'trans' and 'non-binary' categories are still very fluid and contested forms of discourse, yet you are supposing a need for normalised organisational response.

Whilst this was a minority perspective, it must be taken into consideration when designing training, delivering messages, and in organisational responses to these issues. This parallels well-documented resistance to other forms of equity and diversity training around gender equality and race (Stephens, Rivera, & Townsend nd). Best practice indicates this is best managed through addressing explicit resistance as part of institutional policy and culture, maintaining consistent messaging, and not merely individualising the issue. Stephens, Rivera, and Townsend (nd: 11) point out, 'reducing bias and increasing diversity will be most effective when organizations make changes at both individual (bottom up) and organizational (top down) levels.'

Most advocates argue that, given basic inequalities (well-documented in the literature about TGD people in universities outlined above), it is necessary to treat people differently to treat them the same (Beagan and Kumas-Tan, 2009). Training should clearly explicate the problem and the need for this to be an explicit consideration in an organisation, with both statistical evidence and personal narrative to humanise the issue. This will be discussed further below in the sub-section 'what do staff need'?

Experience of Training

A large majority (85%) of survey respondents were aware of the Ally network and what they do, but only 23% were members. Of those who were members, 90% had attended training. A focus group participant commented, 'I was part of Ally ... So that could be the reason I became more, you know, open and accepting.' Survey respondents who had attended Ally network training were asked what they found useful about this training. Of the 41 open-question responses, 63% indicated they gained information and understanding about LGBTQ people and issues, including hearing staff and students' lived experience; 27% learnt about what they themselves could do to support LGBTQ staff and students; and 17% found it useful to hear what support the university had in place for LGBTQ people. A further 17% valued an opportunity to be in a community of practice, or, as one respondent explained, to have 'conversations with colleagues and opportunity to press pause and reflect on values meaning with others'. This is consistent with other research that recommends more discussion of TGD topics within gay-straight alliances (Poteat et al., 2018).

The key strengths of Ally training seemed to be raising familiarity, awareness, and empathy about TGD in cisgender participants, such as, 'the breakdown of constructed pre conceived ideas', as one survey respondent commented. However, the key drawbacks were the lack of focus on TGD as pointed out by the following respondent:

I have to say Ally training was mostly based around queer, gay, lesbian people. They didn't discuss a lot about transgender [and] gender diverse people.

A key area for expansion in Ally training seems to be more practical strategies as a next step after empathy and awareness raising as raised by one respondent:

I found it useful to understand about a broader range of sexually and gender diversity. I also found it useful in raising both my awareness and understanding of inclusivity practices. I would like to know more about the role of cis-gendered allies in actively supporting and including sexually and gender diverse people and roles as bystanders to be proactive in incidences of inappropriate treatment of others.

Moreover, focus group participants felt that there needs to be more formal advertising of the Ally network, including to new staff members joining WSU: 'I think maybe even just a bit more knowledge about what it is and how you can be involved, I think would be super helpful.' The following subsection identifies what staff indicated they need from training on TGD issues.

Only 28% of survey respondents had attended other training offered by Equity and Diversity. Of these respondents, 14 mentioned the mandatory online training, of which 4 found it useful, and 3 others not useful; one elaborated that being online made it limited. Nine respondents had attended equal opportunity training and found it very useful. Seven had attended bullying training and found it also very useful. Four respondents had attended sexual harassment training but had mixed feelings. Two had attended mental health training and agreed it was useful. One respondent completed bystander racism training, but didn't offer an opinion about its usefulness. Finally, one

respondent had completed disability awareness, and another unconscious bias training, both indicating positive feelings about this training.

Additionally, one focus group respondent noted that, for them and their colleagues, inclusion is associated much more with “people with disabilities, or people, gay, lesbian sort of spectrum”.

The following section identifies what respondents expressed a desire for regarding specific training and printed materials about TGD.

What do staff need?

The areas respondents felt the university does least well in regarding TGD staff and students were: staff HR systems; name and pronoun recognition; bathroom provision; and language usage. Respondents felt the university does best in counselling services; staff recruitment; language used; and staff HR systems.

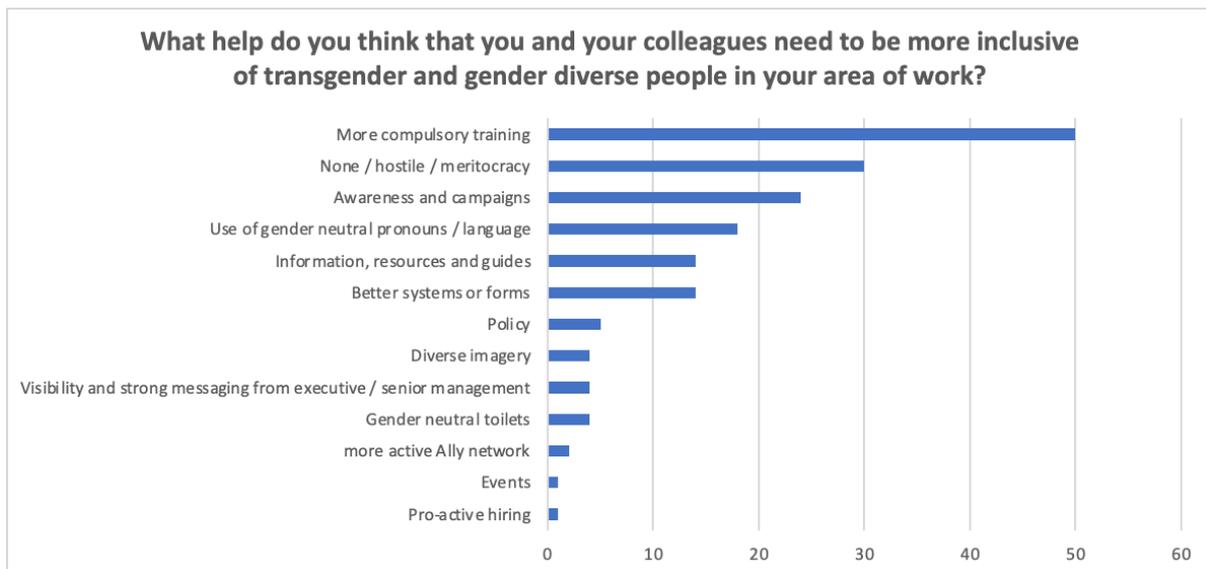


Fig 2: What help do you think that you and your colleagues need to be more inclusive of transgender and gender diverse people in your area of work?

Figure 2 shows the areas in which survey respondents considered they and their colleagues needed more help in regards to TGD issues. The most common responses were: more compulsory university wide training, preferably by TGD people, with real-life case studies; and a focus on pronouns and language use. One respondent stated: ‘Training. It’s a safety issue. If I have to do WHS, then I should have to do this’. Other comments included:

I think if it was even compulsory, I think would be good. So at least everyone can, can have that, I guess, shared experience and an educational experience together and can tackle any issues that come up together.

Training is vital. It's not something I understand, I don't understand the difference between gay lesbian queer, and all the other letters that go after that. I don't understand why a person wants to change their gender. I don't judge them for it, I just don't understand it.

There is a strong desire for training to begin with but there is a need to go beyond awareness, to put the principle of inclusiveness into practice:

To increase that awareness will be good. So that even if it is a little bit doubt in some people's mind, why this happening? ... I also thought, Oh, why, why why sort of things but then when I started reading about it, and understanding, okay, nobody can help it. That is the way it is. (Focus group participant)

People want to help and understand but don't know how:

I think that just that would come down to education. Yeah. Not being disrespectful on purpose. ... For myself, I've had 50 odd years of people look like this, so they are this. And now it's not that way. So, it's just part of the learning process, I think. (Focus group participant)

Front line staff stated they had training on name and gender changes in the system but felt that the context for this was lacking in the training; for example exploring 'what is gender? What is sex? What is the difference? What is happening?'. One focus group participant suggested an:

... holistic overview of the topic, and the different nuances and intersectionality between that, and also, everyone just thinks that like it's same as being gay, like they think that because LGBT, it's all the same. It'd be nice to break that myth, I think, within my team, especially since we're the frontline for students. (Focus group participant)

There was a strong desire for training to be in-person, but if not possible, that it should be an interactive online training session with real people and scenarios, and interactive exercises, rather than the format of reading written text and then being required to answer multiple-choice questions to demonstrate your learning:

I think you could make a really good unit out of this with some videos of you know, talking heads of people who have been through or maybe some you know, you can develop some interesting roleplay exercises. (Focus group participant)

People want very clear guidance, especially on terminology and how to use and ask about pronouns:

When we're training new staff or you know, if we're going to one of those seminars on customer service, that is how to talk to someone who is gender diverse, who maybe uses Mx pronouns or you know, they/them, and then how to recover from when, and we've all done it, the inevitable I've said something

wrong and I feel like a dumb dumb, like you know, I don't want to insult this person and I want to apologise respectfully but still be professional about it. It should be part of, in my view, it should be part of customer service and how we train, especially frontline staff, with how to treat students or customers. (Focus group participant)

After resistant or hostile responses, discussed previously in the section on backlash, the next most common answer was awareness raising and visibility. Suggestions here were: more queer visibility and vocal support from the executive level; events; more inclusive imagery in marketing; Yammer campaigns and updates. Relatedly, people were keen for printed material, policies and information on terminology, pronouns and wording as a practical way to make change:

I think we need more information and ongoing training. There is plenty of goodwill but staff may blunder inadvertently. The 'alphabet' and terminology around this area has changed significantly and frequently changes, and there are subtle issues around the terminology and the shifts that are difficult to keep up with. (Survey respondent)

A suggestion was:

maybe an A4 (or smaller or bigger, whatever it needs to be) page with information on the meanings of transgender and gender diverse (along with other statuses, i.e. LGBTQI) and how to be more inclusive of each, e.g. how to address them, what would cause offence (i.e. what not to say). (Survey respondent)

Pronouns and gender-neutral language were perhaps the biggest preoccupation, with respondents keen to learn and get this right. Examples of comments by survey respondent include:

- 'practising use of different pronouns when talking, to get in the mental habit of being able to change these';
- 'I think a robust conversation about pronouns at WSU would be useful';
- 'pronoun guidelines to trans gender, gender diverse information generally. (changing terminology and definitions)';
- 'Updates on suitable language/wording/imagery'; and
- 'reminders (Yammer/E-Updates) to use gender neutral language.'

Additionally, some survey respondents suggested expanding the practice of identifying pronouns in email signatures, with one comment suggesting, 'Encouragement for all staff to indicate their preferred pronouns in email footers etc, to normalise and indicate support and acceptance for anyone who wishes to choose their gender identity.'

Increasing individual staff awareness requires a whole institution approach. The diversity of people depicted in 'the new picture base for teaching slides' was mentioned as an example of normalising diversity in everyday practices; it was also considered a useful resource that saved work for individual teaching staff. It was pointed out by one respondent that 'Just normalising transgender and gender diverse people in marketing

and what not, more often - like it's not a big deal. I think that helps.' Additionally, 4 people responded that they would like to see strong and consistent leadership from senior executive staff on this issue beyond lip-service:

The role of Senior Leadership cannot be more important here. We all (staff and students) need to see 'real' actions which clearly demonstrate acceptance and commitment to diversity, not just flashy opportunities to look good in LGBTIQ+ ranking scores (such as marching in Mardi Gras) but baulking at the 'real deal' such as providing institutional support for marriage equality, which portrays Senior Leadership as being hypocritical. (Survey respondent)

There was also mention of greater support for gender diverse research, and of enforceable policies in regards to measurements of gender in research more generally:

It would also be great to see the HREC suggesting more appropriate and inclusive gender terminology in research (e.g., using the ACON recommendations for gender identity and gender assigned at birth). We need to make this more commonplace to change culture. (Survey respondent)

It is worth noting that HREC (human research ethics committee) has guidelines for gender-inclusive language on survey instruments influenced by the ACON guidelines, but that this was developed recently, is not a matter of enforceable policy, and needs to be sought out by researchers on the HREC website.

Conclusion

WSU has begun to address the need for greater awareness of the inclusion of TGD staff and students through the development of a Transgender Support Policy, and providing some important training through the ALLY program. However, this research identifies the main issues that require greater focus and support at WSU in order to improve current approaches to inclusivity of TGD students and staff. This research with cisgender staff at WSU reinforces the need for strong, supportive and vocal leadership at all levels of the university, especially at senior executive and management levels; taking a whole institutional approach to inclusion; and specific culturally-appropriate awareness training about TGD issues, for all staff, informed by and / or led by TGD people; resource materials, including clear guidance on relevant procedures, such as name changes; and greater reflection of TGD in marketing materials, are all key to best inclusive practices. Incorporating these recommendations into WSU policies and practices will make a significant contribution to tackling discrimination experienced by TGD staff and students. Through this commitment, it will also further the organisation's global success in addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals of Reducing Inequity (SDG #10) and Gender Equity (SDG #5), and enhance WSU's Sage Athena Swan Silver application.

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Appendix 1: Table of Articles for Scoping Literature Review

Author	Year	Data	recommendations	Themes
Case, K. A., Kanenberg, H., Erich, S. A., & Tittsworth, J. (2012)	2012	a transwoman student and 3 cis faculty allies; participatory action research, interviews with these people, and another cis student and another cis staff member on a university committee	none	the story of getting gender identity added to non discrimination policy
Cunningham, G. B. (2015)	2015	Data sources included individual interviews with coaches and administrators (n = 17), a reflexive journal, websites, university materials, and external publications.	none	mostly focussed on sexual orientation
de Jong, D. H. (2017)	2017	41 Faculty in social work faculties in Christian colleges in the US. Most, perhaps all, cisgender. Online survey.	none	
Ferfolja, T., Asquith, N., Hanckel, B., & Brady, B. (2020)	2020	2395 survey responses, 17.3% from staff. Interviews, including 13 staff, purposively selected by key stakeholder role. Document audit	none	representation and (in)visible diversity of sexuality and gender diversity, safe(r) spaces and networks, and experiences of harassment.
Gacita, A., Gargus, E., Uchida, T., Garcia, P., Macken, M., Seul, L., . . . Wayne, D. B. (2017)	2017	pre/posttest results on a training module on creating LGBT safe spaces in the faculty for staff and students	Suggestions for what such training could include	
Jacobson, A. N., Matson, K. L., Mathews, J. L., Parkhill, A. L., & Scartabello, T. A. (2017)	2017	44 responses to an electronic survey of administrators of pharmacy schools in the US	More than half of the institutions who responded to the survey have a student organization on campus, specific to pharmacy or as part of the larger institution, which focuses on LGBT students and allies. About half have public written diversity/multiculturalism statements and equal benefits for LGBT faculty and staff. Areas for improvement include provision of LGBT inclusion training for faculty /staff/students, roommate-matching	not about attitudes, but the resources / policy / training / provision the colleges have.

			programs, and gender-neutral/single occupancy restrooms within all buildings on campus.	
Krutkowski, S., Taylor-Harman, S., & Gupta, K. (2019)	2019	Reflections on a “Fake news? Trans edition” workshop run for staff at University of Roehampton	No, but then a follow up was developed with the library on “Cataloguing Trans Authors”, which addressed how library catalogue metadata deals with transgender authors’ name changes, and how the institution’s publishing staff can update their records both locally and internationally.	
Lane, J., Carrier, L., Jefferies, K., & Yu, Z. (2019)	2019	looks like a description of a student led ally coalition approach in a school of nursing - not research?	none	
Lewis, M. W., & Ericksen, K. S. (2016)	2016	Focus group with 6 LGBTQ students, and two focus groups of each 15 faculty members, sexual orientation undisclosed [sic]. At a Historically Black University. Topic was campus climate for LGBTQ students.	Important factors identified in the discussion: Training, policies, curriculum, student organisation,	from the faculty focus group: campus climate, classroom climate, faculty response, training needs, needs for a supportive climate, administration role.
Marine, S. B. (2011)	2011	interviews with 31 student affairs administrators at 5 women's colleges in the US about transgender students	Not recommendations, but a table of actions taken in 8 categories - Use of inclusive language; Provision of education/awareness; Accommodations for students; Sensitivity to student needs; Departmental leadership; Equipping trans* students for life outside the women’s college; Resource referrals; Institutional support/transparency	Three participant profiles - ambivalent, supportive, advocate
Martínez-Guzmán, A., & Íñiguez-Rueda, L. (2017)	2017	4 groups of 5-7 people, one of which was teachers (the rest students), SOGI status not disclosed. Public university in Mexico	none	2 discursive strategies identified: carrilla (joking, mockery) and respect.
McCarty-Caplan, D. (2018)	2018	The study examined the relationship between master of social work programs’ (MSW) support of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people (LGBT-competence) and the sexual minority	No, but this study’s results indicate that improving LGBT-competence of MSW programs could involve activities such as inclusion of sexual minorities in organizational nondiscrimination and	

		competence (LGB-competence) of social work students. To assess LGBT-competence, survey data were gathered from a sample of MSW program directors and faculty members within 34 MSW programs in the United States.	employment policies, providing gender-neutral bathrooms, instituting LGBT student/ally groups, providing academic funding for LGBT scholarship or students, or actively recruiting faculty who identify as LGBT or an LGBT researcher/ally, creating “safe spaces” for LGBT people	
Messinger, L. (2011)	2011	interviews with 30 faculty members engaged in advocacy for LGBT supportive policies. All but one cisgender, almost half heterosexual.	none	proposed model of faculty activism, a combination of Individual Characteristics and Situational Characteristics. Also four areas of findings - reasons for getting involved in LGBT advocacy; types of advocacy; factors associated with successful advocacy; barriers.
Ryan, M. P., Broad, K. L. P., Walsh, C. F. A. B. D., & Nutter, K. L. A. B. D. (2013)	2013	an in-depth qualitative study of a heterosexual ally organization. Interviews with 24 allies, and document analysis eg training manuals. 5 of the 24 were LGBQ		

Appendix II: Survey questions

Q1-3 Participant information and consent questions

Q4 Do you identify as a transgender or gender diverse staff member? (NB this research is to gauge the awareness of *non-trans* and *non-gender diverse* staff).

Yes

No

Q5 What does the term 'transgender' mean? In each of the following options, please indicate whether they are True, False, or Don't know

	True	False	Don't know
It means people who transition from male to female, or female to male through medical intervention such as surgery or hormones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who transition from male to female, or female to male socially, without medical intervention such as surgery or hormones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who don't identify as male or female	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are non-binary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who don't conform to what most people think a man or a woman should be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are gay or lesbian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are attracted to the same sex	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are bisexual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means anyone who says they are transgender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6 What does the term 'gender diverse' mean? In each of the following options, please indicate whether they are True, False, or Don't know

	True	False	Don't know
It means people who transition from male to female, or female to male through medical intervention such as surgery or hormones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who transition from male to female, or female to male socially, without medical intervention such as surgery or hormones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who don't identify as male or female	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are non-binary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who don't conform to what most people think a man or a woman should be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are gay or lesbian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are attracted to the same sex	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means people who are bisexual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It means anyone who says they are gender diverse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 Does the university have any policies or procedures that relate to transgender and gender diverse people that you know of?

- Yes
- No

Q8 What is your role (tick all that apply)?

- Professional staff
- Academic staff - teaching
- Academic staff - research

Q9 Are you aware of the ALLY network at WSU and what it does?

- Yes
- No

Q10 Are you a member of the ALLY network?

- Yes
- No

Q11 Have you attended ALLY training?

- Yes
- No

Q12 What did you find useful about ALLY training?

Q13 Have you attended other training offered by Equity and Diversity?

- Yes
- No

Q14 What other training by Equity and Diversity have you attended, how was it useful and/or limited?

Q15 Do you have any family members or friends who identify as transgender or gender diverse?

- Yes
- No

Q16 Transgender and Gender diverse are umbrella terms to describe people whose gender does not align with the sex (male / female) assigned to them at birth. Transgender may include people who were assigned as a man at birth but choose later in life to transition to live as a woman, or vice versa. They may undertake gender-affirming surgery or not. The umbrella of 'trans' and gender diverse also includes non-binary people who may identify as or with both genders, neither, or outside of them. In your opinion, does WSU need a specific policy and procedures that relate to trans and gender diverse students or staff?

- Yes
- No

Q17 Have you encountered any situations in your work at Western Sydney University wherein you have interacted with a student or staff member who has disclosed their identity as transgender or gender-diverse?

- Yes
- No

Q18 Do you think knowledge about transgender and/ or gender diversity is important to your role and function in the university?

- Yes
- No

Q19 Have you had any situations where staff members' or students' transgender or gender diverse status has been pertinent?

- Yes
- No

Q20 Please elaborate:

Q21 How comfortable are you / would you be with using gender-neutral pronouns if asked? (e.g. if a person uses 'they/them' rather than he / she).

	Very uncomfortable	Quite uncomfortable	A little uncomfortable	Neutral	A little comfortable	Quite comfortable	Very comfortable
Level of comfort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q22 Do you think that WSU supports transgender and gender diverse staff and students well through:

	Yes	No	Not sure
Student enrolment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff HR systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IT systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Name and pronoun changes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Name and pronoun recognition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counselling services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bathroom provision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language used	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student recruitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff recruitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Name changes to records and degrees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q23 Do you know what the 'preferred name' is used for in Western Sydney University systems and practices? If so, please elaborate:

- No
- Yes _____

Q24 What help do you think that you and your colleagues need to be more inclusive of transgender and gender diverse people in your area of work?

Appendix III: Glossary

From Transhub (2021) <https://www.transhub.org.au/language>

Cisgender: A term used to describe people who identify their gender as the same as what was presumed for them at birth (male or female). 'Cis' is a Latin term meaning 'on the same side as.'

Cisnormativity: The assumption that everyone is cis. This may result in misgendering including using the wrong pronouns, or designing services, products, or campaigns that assume everyone is cis.

Deadname: A term used by some trans people to describe the name they were given and known by prior to affirming their gender and/or coming out.

Misgendering: Referring to someone by words or language that is not affirming for them, such as using a former name or pronoun, or making assumptions about their appearance.

Non-Binary: This is an umbrella term for any number of 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, agender, bigender etc.

Trans and gender diverse (TGD): These are inclusive umbrella terms that describe people whose gender is different to what was presumed for them at birth. Trans people may position 'being trans' as a history or experience, rather than an identity, and consider their gender identity as simply being female, male or a non-binary identity. Some trans people connect strongly with their trans experience, whereas others do not. Processes of gender affirmation may or may not be part of a trans or gender diverse person's life.

