Transgender and/or Gender-Nonconforming Teacher Candidates

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Information in this document is current as of May 2023.

Supporting Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Teacher Candidates: Shifting from a Reactive to a Proactive Stance
v1 Last updated May 22 2023.
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1. General

a. What resources does the Faculty of Education have for transgender and/or gender-nonconforming Teacher Candidates?

The Faculty of Education values the participation of transgender and/or gender non-conforming people in the teaching profession, and welcomes the 2012 addition of ‘gender identity’ and ‘gender expression’ protected grounds in the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Faculty also recognizes that transgender teacher candidates and those who are gender non-conforming (but not necessarily transgender) are preparing to join a profession with norms that have historically referenced a strict gender binary. Transgender and/or gender non-conforming teacher candidates are encouraged to contact the Practicum Office (practicum.office@queensu.ca or 613-533-6202) prior to completing the Practicum Registration form (sent directly to candidates and available in the Information Hub in OnQ) and/or to share relevant information in the special circumstances box. Candidates may also wish to participate in the Faculty of Education’s Genders and Sexualities Alliance (GSA) https://educ.queensu.ca/gsa. Queen’s and local Kingston supports for transgender students and community members are listed in the B.Ed. Program Handbook. The Yellow House Student Centre for Equity and Inclusion on main campus is a hub for 2SLGBTQIA+ and BIPOC student support on campus, and teacher candidates can walk in or make an individual appointment with the Sexual and Gender Diversity Advisor (Kel Martin in 2023/2024) (https://www.queensu.ca/yellow-house/). Any Faculty member with a Positive Space sticker (https://www.queensu.ca/positivespace/home) on their door has completed Positive Space training and is able to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students and other community members.

b. What should I do if I experience gender expression or gender identity discrimination during my time in the B.Ed. program?

First, know that “Queen’s is committed to fostering a campus environment in which all students, staff, and faculty are treated with dignity and respect. The university encourages members of the Queen’s community who experience or witness harassment or discrimination to disclose their experience. Disclosures are held in confidence and our support services are client-driven. Faculty, staff, and students can confidentially consult on their options, seek informal resolutions, and initiate a formal report, or any combination of these options” (Harassment and Discrimination Support and Reporting Queen’s). It is important to consider where this discrimination is taking place, as teacher candidates spend time in the Faculty for their coursework, in schools for practicum placements, and in a variety of external settings for Alternative Practicum (AltPrac). If you are experiencing discrimination, or a climate that is unsafe or not conducive to your learning for reasons related to gender identity or gender expression (or other Ontario Human Rights Code protected grounds) …

i. … in the Faculty:

There are a number of campus-wide resources you can access (https://www.queensu.ca/inclusive/resources/equity-diversity-antiracism), and the Faculty of Education faculty, staff, and administration are supports you can access. The Faculty of Education has an EDID (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization) Committee that is a central point of contact for EDID concerns, and supports and advocates for systemic change for students, faculty and staff. They can be contacted anonymously or non-anonymously here: https://educ.queensu.ca/community/equity-diversity-and-inclusion.

You could also choose to meet with the Associate Dean of Teacher Education, an Academic and Career Advisor in the Faculty of Education Student Services Office, and their contact information is on the Faculty of Education website. The Education Student Society (ESS) also has an Equity Representative (email esscncil@queensu.ca) who will help you address any concerns you may have, and can bring these concerns (anonymously, if you wish) to any of the people above or the EDID Committee.

At any time, you can request a meeting with a Human Rights Advisor in the Queen’s Human Rights and Equity Services office. “An advisor can, with your permission, speak to people on your behalf in order to help resolve the problem and may, where appropriate, attend meetings as a support person, but is not your advocate or representative.” https://www.queensu.ca/humanrights/

If you need to access mental health support due to experiencing discrimination or for any reason, there are counselors with office hours dedicated to West campus (call Student Wellness Services at 613-533-2506 and ask for the education counselor at Duncan McArthur).
ii. … during a school practicum placement:
It is important to document each incident in detail, as soon as you can, and decide how you might like to proceed.
If you are not comfortable with any of the steps below, please reach out to the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Coordinator (Alana Butler in 2023/2024) and/or the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Decolonization (EDID) Committee Co-Chairs (Jamie Kincaid and Pam Serff in 2023/2024); visit https://educ.queensu.ca/community/equity-diversity-and-inclusion.
If the alleged discrimination or harassment is from a student, also be sure to document each incident in detail, and speak with your Associate Teacher about next steps. If it is safe to do so, you may have a conversation with the student yourself, with your associate teacher, or your associate teacher may do so by themselves. You can also alert your Faculty Liaison (PROF 410/411 instructor) about what is taking place. It is likely they will have recommendations.
If the alleged discrimination or harassment is from your Associate Teacher or another adult in your practicum school, follow these steps:

STEP 1: If possible, and you are comfortable, bring the issue to your Associate Teacher OR your Faculty Liaison (PROF 410/411 instructor). If Step 1 is unavailable to you or does not resolve the concern, then:

STEP 2: Contact your PROF 410 (Andrea Martin in 2023/2024) or PROF 411 (Pamela Serff in 2023/2024) Coordinators. If Step 2 is unavailable to you or does not resolve the concern, then:

STEP 3: Contact Natalie Lefebvre, Practicum Manager. If Step 3 is unavailable to you or does not resolve the concern, then:

STEP 4: Contact the Executive Program Director, Teacher Education Program (Stephen Sliwa in 2023/2024). If Step 3 is unavailable to you or does not resolve the concern, then:

STEP 5: Contact edudeans@queensu.ca to schedule a meeting with the Associate Dean of Teacher Education (Peter Chin in 2023/2024).

These steps align with the Ontario Teacher's Federation (OTF) preferred process (http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2013/11/HarassmentGuidelines1.pdf) for harassment complaints if the alleged perpetrator is an Associate Teacher or other OTF member (not an administrator). The linked document sets out informal and formal pathways when harassment is alleged to have occurred. It is important to know that seeking support by following the five steps above does not necessarily mean making a formal written and named complaint.

iii. … on AltPrac:
Document each incident in detail, and contact your FOCI (Concentration) instructor for advice and support. It is a good idea to find and share with them the policies on harassment and discrimination for the institution you are placed with. This will give you a better insight into how to address the problems you are facing, as well as the proper channels for communication and action.

No matter where the discrimination or harassment is taking place, remember that harassment in any form is never acceptable, and your safety and well-being are a critical concern of the Faculty of Education.

c. An Associate Teacher, Faculty Liaison or B.Ed. Instructor (etc.) kindly wrote me a reference letter but misgendered me/used my former name (etc.). How should I proceed?
The first and best course of action is to thank the writer for their letter, and point out the errors. You might offer to correct the letter yourself and send it back for their final approval and signature. If for any reason you do not feel as though you can make this request, consider asking the Faculty of Education's Practicum Office to act as an intermediary and request the changes on your behalf. However, communicating openly with the writer is the best solution.

2. Facilities

a. Where can I find an all-gender washroom on West Campus?
There is an all-gender washroom in B Wing with two stalls, one of which is also accessible. It is located on the main floor next to the Technological Education area. There are also single-stall, accessible all-gender washrooms on the second and third floors of A Wing, directly to your right as you exit the elevator. All three washrooms are indicated in yellow on the maps below:
3. Name, Gender and Queen’s Records

a. My gender on SOLUS is incorrect. How do I change this?

If you have looked at your Demographic Information on SOLUS (https://saself.ps.queensu.ca/psp/saself/EMPLOYEE/SA/c/SA_LEARNER_SERVICES.SSS_STUDENT_CENTER.GBL) and noticed that the gender indicated (see Figure 4) is not accurate, contact Office of the University Registrar (613-533-2040) and it will be updated. You do not require any formal documentation in order to request this change.

b. What gender options are available in SOLUS?

The options available in SOLUS are male, female, undeclared, and other. There may be ways in which information or opportunities are made available to students using the entries in this field, but this is not clear.

c. How can I ensure my instructors use my preferred first name?

Most Faculty of Education instructors receive their class list from OnQ, the Queen’s online learning management system, which is automatically populated by information from your student record in SOLUS. If your preferred name is not currently in SOLUS, you are able to add it (see question 3d below)! This will automatically update in OnQ within 48 hours, so that your preferred name appears on each instructor’s class list at that time. However, if you have not done so two weeks in advance of the first class meeting, your instructor may not access the update or be regularly checking for updates. Your best strategy is to have a conversation with your instructor as far in advance as you can, asking them about their plans to collect attendance and ensuring that your preferred name is used in all public communications.
d. How can I add my preferred first name to my student record?

To add a preferred name to your student record, you will have to access SOLUS. To do so, go to my.queensu.ca, select “Student” and click on “SOLUS” underneath the “Teaching & Learning Applications” sub-header. After signing in using your NetID, scroll down to “Personal Information” and click on “Names.” Select “Add a New Name” and fill in the information, including your Prefix, First Name, Middle Name, Last Name, and Suffix. Be sure to indicate that this is your preferred name from the “Name Type” dropdown.

Figure 5 • SOLUS “Add a new name” window. Source: https://saself.ps.queensu.ca/psp/saself/EMPLOYEE/SA/c/SA_LEARNER_SERVICES.SSS_STUDENT_CENTER.GBL?

![Image](https://saself.ps.queensu.ca/psp/saself/EMPLOYEE/SA/c/SA_LEARNER_SERVICES.SSS_STUDENT_CENTER.GBL?

e. If I’ve added a preferred name in SOLUS, does this become automatically used across OnQ, or just in the attendance list?

OnQ will use the preferred first name that you have added to your student record in SOLUS (see question 3d above) in the gradebook, discussion boards, and all other functions.

Figure 6 • SOLUS “Add a new name” window. To have your name populate the class list for OnQ, be sure to select the “preferred” name type. Source: https://saself.ps.queensu.ca/psp/saself/EMPLOYEE/SA/c/SA_LEARNER_SERVICES.SSS_STUDENT_CENTER.GBL?

f. If I add a Nickname in my onQ User Profile, will this Nickname override the preferred name (or legal name, if no preferred name has been added) from SOLUS?

The Nickname feature in onQ only adds information to your onQ profile, and does not override the name that is obtained through SOLUS.

g. How do I legally change my name?

If you have lived in Ontario for twelve (12) months or more and are over the age of sixteen (16), you are eligible to apply for a legal name change (https://www.ontario.ca/page/change-name). The cost is $137 in most cases. Those who need to change their name before a post-secondary graduation are eligible for alternative service options under “Urgent Requests” (https://www.ontario.ca/page/change-name#section-4) (please contact Service Ontario directly at 1-800-461-2156 for more information). Please note that a criminal record check is required for your legal name change application.

If you have lived in Ontario for fewer than twelve months, please consult the requirements for your permanent residence regarding legal name changes. Please note that a name change on a federal document such as your passport (https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/canadian-passports/change-name.html) or Social Insurance Number (https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/after-applying.html) will need to be handled by the federal government at a Service Canada (not Service Ontario) location.

You can contact the Yellow House on main campus with questions and for support with this process, if you need.

4. Practicum

a. I’m starting my practicum next week! What do I wear?

The question of what to wear is one that many teacher candidates (TCs) ask themselves before practicum, and this can weigh heavily on transgender and/or gender non-conforming TCs who are entering a highly gendered profession. Firstly, it is important that you wear something that is professional and indicates your position as a future teacher, not a student. However, you should also wear clothes that allow you to feel your best, regardless of your gender identity and/or gender expression. Do not feel pressured to dress up in a way that fits the conventions of your sex assigned at birth or your gender identity, and do not feel pressured to maintain a consistent gender expression throughout your practicum.
if that is not who you are. The Practicum Handbook contains
more information about things like school staff dress codes,
and what to do if they do not leave room for your gender
expression. If you experience any communication that you
ought to dress differently, and this references your gender
expression, this may be an instance of gender expression
discrimination (see question 1d above).

b. Do I have to go by Ms. or Mr. when I'm in
my practicum school?

Being called the wrong title is a form of misgendering similar
to being called the wrong pronoun. If one or both of these
titles do not align with your gender identity, you cannot
be asked to go by them, as this many constitute gender
expression and/or gender identity discrimination. If neither
Ms. nor Mr. work for you, Mx. (usually pronounced “mix”)
is an increasingly popular gender-neutral title. However,
some teachers prefer to be addressed without the use of an
honorific and may choose a different form of address
from their students; a common path among nonbinary
teachers is just going by their last name, or going by a noun
title like ‘teacher X.’ This is an area of evolving experience in
education, a domain in which ‘Ms.’ OR ‘Mc’ have long been
the only options. If you anticipate using a title that will not
be automatic for those in your practicum school, considering
communicating this to the Practicum Office in advance
(e.g., using the special circumstances box on the Practicum
Registration Form or by contacting the Practicum Manager –
Natalie Lefebvre in 2023/2024) so that you can be supported in
having this important need met. The name tag that you
receive from the Faculty uses the title that you input into the
Practicum Registration Form. If you have a credential that
offers you a title (e.g., Dr.) which you would like to have on
your practicum name tag (in place of Ms., Mr. or Mx.), it may be
possible to have this on your name tag. Students Services will
print you a new name tag without cost if the change relates
to a human rights ground (e.g., gender identity or gender
expression).

5. Graduation
and Convocation

a. Convocation is coming up. How do I
make sure that my correct name is used
in the ceremony?

Your name in the convocation program will be generated
automatically from your “Primary” (legal) name on SOLUS.
If you have obtained a legal name change (see question
3g above) before convocation, be sure to have your name
entered and selected on SOLUS by October 15th for a Fall
Convocation. During the convocation ceremony, you will
receive a card where you will write your own name to be
announced as you cross the stage. You are free to write your
preferred name on this card. Unless you are receiving an award
at convocation, it is unlikely that anyone will speak about you
onstage using gender pronouns. Rather, the announcer just
says the name(s) you have written on your card. If you are
receiving an award at Convocation, however, it is a good idea
to ask the Faculty of Education Student Services office who
will be reading the award script, and ask that your pronouns
are shared with that person (likely an administrator), and that
this is verified in advance. NOTE: Deadlines for changes for
Degree List purposes must be received no later than April 30th
for Spring Convocation and October 15th for Fall Convocation.

b. What is the washroom situation in Grant
Hall (where students are marshalled prior
to entering the convocation hall)?

According to the AMS Social Issues Commission (https://
www.queensu.ca/positivespace/sites/webpublish.queensu.
capospwww/files/files/res_washrooms.pdf), there is no
all-gender washroom in Grant Hall. The nearest all-gender
washrooms are in Jeffrey Hall (121 or 324) or Ellis Hall (137, 433,
or 438). Both of these buildings are located across University
Avenue from Grant Hall.
c) Which name will appear on my official transcript from Queen’s University?

According to University policy (http://www.queensu.ca/registrar/resources/policies/student-names), a student’s full, legal name will appear on all official documents, such as a transcript. In order to change your legal name (see question 3g above) with the University (while enrolled or after graduation), you must complete and submit a Name Change Form (http://www.queensu.ca/registrar/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.uregwww/files/files/name_change_form.pdf), with proper documentation.

6. OCT Certification

a. I am applying for my OCT certification. What name(s) do I need to provide?

When applying to the OCT for certification, the name you provide must be supported with documentation such as a birth certificate or passport (see Figure 10). You must also provide a ‘common name’ (i.e., a preferred name), which does not require documentation and, according to the OCT’s website, is used for correspondence sent by the OCT and to support search results in the Find a Teacher function on the OCT website. You may change your name in the future by providing the OCT with a legal change of name certificate (see question 3g above). Your full legal name will appear on your teaching certificate, not the common name that you provide to the OCT (see Figure 8 below to see where your common name and legal name are used with OCT). If you anticipate changing your name, it is recommended that you submit the paperwork to do so by the end of the second semester of the B.Ed. program (Consecutive) or B.Ed. year (Concurrent).

Figure 8 • Legal Name and Common Name Usage with OCT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Name and Common Name Usage with OCT</th>
<th>Legal Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence to you</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find a Teacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT online public teacher registry</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching certificate</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. Can members of the public see my legal name on the OCT website?

Every OCT-certified teacher in Ontario can be located in the OCT registry using the name they have provided to the OCT. Prior names you have taught under (including the name originally submitted to the OCT by the Faculty of Education, whether or not you have taught in an Ontario school) will also be listed there in the Name History drop-down menu, including your birth name, unless you apply to have it suppressed so that the public cannot see it. To do so, you will need to fill out a form entitled “Request to Update Registry Information” (https://www.oct.ca/-/media/Forms/Request to Update Registry Info/update_e.pdf) and provide proof of a legal name change, as well as pay a $25 fee (this is standard for all name changes, but may be waived if the request is related to a Code protected ground like gender identity). The common name that you provided to the OCT upon registration is collected with the intention to use for correspondence from the OCT, but appears in the search results for the “Find a Teacher” function on the OCT website.

Figure 13 • Search Result for the “Find a Teacher” function on the OCT Public Register. Source: https://www.oct.ca/findateacher/results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Number</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Certified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>700322</td>
<td>KEL ROWAN MARTIN, OCT</td>
<td>Kel</td>
<td>Good Standing</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14 • An Example of the public register for OCT. Source: https://www.oct.ca/findateacher/memberinfo?memberid=700322

KEL ROWAN MARTIN, OCT

NAME HISTORY

Registration Number: 700322 / Issued: Oct 08, 2019 / Status: Good Standing

DEGREES

• Bachelor of Arts, Honours, University of Guelph, Ontario / 2017
• Bachelor of Education, Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, Ontario / 2019

PROGRAM OF TEACHER EDUCATION

• Bachelor of Education, Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, Ontario / 2019

BASICS QUALIFICATIONS

• Intermediate and Senior, Drama/Arts / October 2019
• Intermediate and Senior, Visual Arts / October 2019

c. Does the OCT require information about my gender in order to certify me as a teacher in Ontario?

Yes, but this is self-selected by you, not sent by the Faculty. There is no indication on the OCT website that this information is ‘verified’ using supporting documentation. When applying to OCT, gender is a required field, for which there are three options: Female, Male, and X. This information is collected because the OCT is a regulator that must provide annual reports to The Fairness Commission (http://ort.fairnesscommissioner.ca/report.php?qid=32&year=2018), which continues to request information on gender. The OCT only uses this information to determine which title should be used in correspondence to the teacher. We note that the information being collected (see Figure 13) is actually sex (e.g., male, female, intersex) and not gender (e.g., man, woman, nonbinary) and that this error is endemic to how information of this kind is collected across sectors.

Figure 15 • Required box indicating “gender” when applying for OCT certification. Source: https://apps.oct.ca/OLR/Help/HGenderE.html

Figure 16 • Information provided by OCT regarding the “X” gender marker Source: https://apps.oct.ca/OLR/Help/HGenderE.html

GENDER

X is a third gender identifier for use by people identifying as Trans, Non-Binary, Two-Spirit or Intersex as well as anyone who chooses not to display their gender identity. This definition is used by the Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services.

d. Is gender indicated on my public OCT record?

No. The example screenshot below is what is visible on the OCT public record. The record indicates the teacher’s full (often legal) name or names they have taught under, registration number, status and standing with the College, degrees, teacher education program, basic qualifications, and status history.

Figure 17 • An example of the OCT public register. Source: https://www.oct.ca/findateacher/memberinfo?memberid=700322

KEL ROWAN MARTIN, OCT

NAME HISTORY

Registration Number: 700322 / Issued: Oct 08, 2019 / Status: Good Standing

DEGREES

• Bachelor of Arts, Honours, University of Guelph, Ontario / 2017
• Bachelor of Education, Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, Ontario / 2019

PROGRAM OF TEACHER EDUCATION

• Bachelor of Education, Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, Ontario / 2019

BASICS QUALIFICATIONS

• Intermediate and Senior, Drama/Arts / October 2019
• Intermediate and Senior, Visual Arts / October 2019

STATUS HISTORY

Certificate Type | Status | Effective Date | Expiry

Certificate of Qualification and Registration | Good Standing | Oct 08, 2019 |  |