



Name of the Policy/Guidelines	Non-Discrimination Against Transgender Persons
Short Description	This Policy aims to create inclusive education opportunities and environment for transgender individuals, where their rights are identified and respected and their needs are met.
Scope	This Policy applies to all applicants, students, program participants, faculty and staff at Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham.
Policy Status	Revised
Date of Approval of Original Policy	2011
Revision no.	5
Brief description of the last revision	The latest updates to the policy include a description of the role and contact details of the Equal Opportunity Cell, which serves as a point of contact for transgender persons facing any form of discrimination.
Date of approval of the current revision	1 December 2024
Effective Date	1 December 2024
Approval Authority	School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Leadership Council, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham
Contact	Center for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality / UNESCO Chair on Gender Equality Email: dean_sbs@am.amrita.edu Phone: +91 94460 40075

Introduction

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham firmly believes in the rights of all human beings regardless of their gender. In addition to our general policies and procedures on non-discrimination based on gender, these guidelines aim to address specific challenges faced by transgender persons so as to prevent and eliminate any systemic inequality faced by them. Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham also aims to provide a culture of equity, so that each person can grow in a conducive environment irrespective of how they identify themselves.

Definition

According to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act of 2019, a transgender person can be defined as a person whose gender does not match the gender assigned to that person at birth. It includes trans-man or trans-woman, person with intersex variations, genderqueer and persons having such socio-cultural identities as Kinner, hijra, aravani and jogta.

Principles

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham aims to create inclusive education opportunities and environment for transgender persons, where their rights are identified and respected. We want to provide a system of education wherein transgender students learn together with other students without fear of discrimination, neglect, harassment or intimidation. We are committed to providing a system of teaching and learning that is suitably adapted to meet the needs of such students.

As stated in our general policies and procedures on non-discrimination based on gender, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham has a zero-tolerance policy on gender harassment, which includes any conduct creating an unpleasant or offensive, hostile, or intimidating environment for transgender persons. Any discrimination faced by transgender persons whether as students, staff or employees, at all levels, will be dealt with sternly.

No student or staff will be treated any less favorably than any other on the grounds of their gender identity, including in relation to the admission process, learning and teaching system, award of research grants, accommodation, safety and health issues, and disciplinary processes.

All staff members must ensure that their conduct with students, visitors and fellow employees is of accepted social, moral, ethical and social norms. Any act contrary will be dealt with sternly.

Supporting staff and students

We understand that identifying as a transgender person in a world still adjusting can be very challenging and mentally exhausting. We thus encourage any student, staff, or employee-facing any challenge or have any question regarding the same, to reach out to us. We are committed to providing support to the best of our abilities.

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham set up several committees to facilitate the reporting of any incident of harassment, discrimination, or any related matter. The contact of the complaint committees can be found here: <https://www.AMRITA.edu/grievance>

Transgender persons facing any kind of discrimination can also reach out to the Equal Opportunity Cell in charge of promoting equity, diversity, and social inclusion; preventing and addressing discrimination or bias; supporting grievance redressal for disadvantaged groups, including women; raising awareness on social exclusion; and sharing information and resource mobilisation for inclusivity: eoc@amrita.edu.

The committees will undertake inquiries with regard to complaints, ensuring that complaints are kept confidential to the extent necessary and that adequate protection is provided to the person reporting discrimination.

Gender Sensitization Programs

To promote a supportive environment, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham offers specialized training programs for staff and faculty to enhance understanding of gender diversity across campus. This training covers gender identity and stereotypes, safe spaces, gender spectrum, gender-sensitive language and self-confidence. Furthermore, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham hosts community-building events such as transgender awareness panel discussions or workshops to promote understanding and inclusivity among campus members. These initiatives aim to create a more cohesive, educated, and welcoming campus community.

Community Engagement and Support

Whenever needed or requested, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham will explore opportunities to connect transgender students with mentors in their chosen fields, helping them to build professional networks and access career development resources. This initiative aims to create a pipeline of support and opportunities for transgender students as they transition into the workforce.

Transgender Clinic at AIMS Health Sciences Campus

In January 2017, a Transgender Clinic was established within the Department of Psychiatry of AIMS Health Sciences Campus, where individuals who feel they need a place where they will not be judged will be able to openly share their issues and questions.

The Transgender Clinic offers a variety of approaches to support and help individuals in the best way possible, including by providing psychological support, pharmacological interventions, and help with sex reassignment procedures.

The Clinic is open to all, including the students of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham.

Contact: <https://www.AMRITAhospitals.org/kochi>

Resources

According to the Transgender Persons Act (2019), a transgender person has a right to be recognized as such. This Act sets up a procedure by which a person who identifies as a transgender person can apply for a certificate of identity by writing an application to the District Magistrate.

Consult the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act of 2019:
<https://socialjustice.nic.in/writereaddata/UploadFile/TG%20bill%20gazette.pdf>

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham conducts periodic reviews of this Policy to assess its effectiveness and make necessary updates to address evolving challenges and opportunities.