

Purpose & Scope

Honoring and respecting the individuality of everyone in our college community is an important and vital part of Quinsigamond Community College's core values of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We are passionate about building and sustaining an inclusive, respectful, and equitable environment for all students, staff, faculty & Alumni. To that end, QCC recognizes the right for students and employees to self-identify how they choose to do so. This entails identifying with your lived name rather than your legal name. The purpose of this policy is to encourage, protect, support, and create a culture where community members feel they can express themselves.

It is crucial that we acknowledge and respect how members of our QCC community wish to be addressed and treated. No one should ever find themselves in a position where their identity is disregarded or overlooked. Therefore, through this policy and beyond, we are dedicated to ensuring that everyone's identity is respected and recognized. We are committed to cultivating a climate where all individuals feel welcome and safe to represent themselves unapologetically and authentically in every aspect of campus life.

Definition

Lived Name: A lived name, also known as chosen name, is the name that an individual self-identifies by in their daily life, interactions, and communications, regardless of its alignment with their legal or birth name. It is the name that reflects their identity, self-expression, and how they wish to be addressed by others within a particular community, organization, or context.

Legal Name: Often a legal name is the name given at birth but may change subsequently. Legal name appears on official documents such as birth certificate, passports, driver's licenses, social security cards, and other government-issued identification. It is the name that is recognized by law and used for official documents/purposes, such as legal transactions, employment records, tax filings, and other formal documentation.

Policy

The Lived Name Policy is followed when any Student seeks to be identified by their lived name rather than their legal name. The College acknowledges that a lived name can and should be used where possible in the course of college business and education. Students may use a lived name wherever a legal name is not required on internal documents, communications, systems, and web portals. Examples of where lived names can be present include, but are not limited to:

- Student identification cards
- Email and calendar entries
- Class rosters and advisor lists
- Learning Management Systems
- Diplomas, awards, and recognitions

This form does not change a student's legal name. A student's legal name shall be used on all College documents, systems, and communications external to the College and/or where a legal name is required. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Financial aid records
- Student accounts records

- Student personally identifiable information
- Student directory information
- The recipient's full name on the face of the envelope
- Payroll records
- Health records
- Official transcripts
- Federal immigration documents
- Interactions with government agencies
- All mailed envelopes, including window envelopes

In order for any Student/Employee to change their legal name on all College records, a court order or other acceptable legal documentation is required and has been granted.

Please note that there are certain limitations that prevent us from updating existing your record in external accounts such as Pearson products, My Math Lab, Castle Branch, QCC Bookstore, Gallagher, etc. If the account is already created for you, that original name will stay intact until manually updated by the account user. In those cases, the best solution for users to reach out to their contacts and request they update your account to reflect the lived name and new QCC student email address.

Procedures

Procedures for Students

- For those wishing to request a lived name change, please review the College's Lived Name Change Policy and complete the Request of Lived Name Change Online Form. Questions may be directed to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at dei@qcc.mass.edu.
- While Quinsigamond Community College makes every effort to make requested lived name, gender, or pronoun changes in all appropriate places and in a timely manner, **the process may take up to 10-14 business days.**
- Once the lived name change is processed, the Registrar's Office will notify the IT Service Desk to update your QCC student email address to reflect the change. The IT Service Desk will follow up with you once done, and the new QCC student email address will be sent to your personal email address.
- **It is highly recommended to use your Lived Name on your QCC ID card.** Please allow 48 hours after your request has been processed and you can come to the Office of Student Life, Fuller Student Center to have your new ID printed.

Procedures for Employees

- In order to change your lived name, please do one of the following:
 - Email humanresources@qcc.mass.edu. Once your email is reviewed by Human Resources, you will receive a confirmation of receipt.
 - Visit Human Resources in Office 222 in the Administration Office. No need to bring anything with you.
- **The change will usually take 1-2 weeks to become effective, but during peak times of the semester could take up to 3 weeks to complete.**
- This process is for internal employees, all new employees will be able to complete this process during onboarding.

FAQs & Tips

The purpose of this guide is to provide tips and guidance for using and addressing lived names & pronouns.

Why are lived Names and Pronouns important to our community?

- It is morally the right thing to do by address people on how they identify. Utilizing a person's lived name shows signs of respects and creates a welcoming culture.
- It is our goal and commitment to create a learning environment where students and employees feel empowered, safe, and provide a non- discriminatory educational environment.
- Utilizing the wrong name and/ or pronouns can cause unintentional harm to a person by devaluing their identity.

How/ Should I ask students/ employees for their Lived Name or Pronouns?

- Yes! – Model the behavior/ expectation.
 - i.e. “Good morning/Good afternoon, my name is Kevin Lovaincy. My pronouns are him, his, himself. If you are comfortable, let's go around the room and introduce ourselves with our names and pronouns.”
- Ask people what name and pronouns they would like you to use, rather than assuming. When in doubt, use their name or gender-neutral pronouns, such as “they/them.”
- Always make it clear that people can choose what and how much personal information to share.
- Create and normalize space for people to share their pronouns by sharing your own (during introductions, on name tags or business cards, in Zoom meetings, in your email signature).
- This creates a safe and inviting space for students to similarly introduce themselves.

What if I use the wrong pronoun/ lived Name?

- Apologize when you make a mistake or misgender someone. Be willing to correct yourself and others.
- Don't make it a big deal. Acknowledge and apologize for the mistake and move forward. Harping on a mistake can focus unwanted attention on the person who was just called by the wrong name.
- Be proactive. Ask the student/employee (*privately*) how they would like you to handle when you (or others) make a mistake in using an incorrect name or pronoun, and respect how they would like you to remedy the mistake.

Is the Lived Name Policy only for folks who are a part of the LGBTQIA+ community?

- No, there is a strong assumption that this policy only speaks to the LGBTQIA+ community. However, this policy also supports individuals who are divorced and no longer want their name to be associated with their ex-partner.
- This policy support and protects victims of domestic violence who often utilize a lived name to protect themselves.
- Culturally, a lived name can be utilized to enforce or indicate the correct pronunciation of an individual's name. i.e Luis vs. Luís.

How do I avoid unintentionally offending someone with a lived name or worn pronoun?

- Take the necessary time to educate yourself on what you do not know. It is not the individual's responsibility to educate others about their lived experiences.
- Don't make assumptions about gender identity or expression based on observations. Instead,

understand that for some students/ employees, gender identity or expression does not match physical appearance or sex assigned at birth or may change over the course of the time you know the individual (genderfluidity).

- Be respectful of privacy and avoid topics directly involving medically assigned concepts and scientific concepts.
- Ask yourself if personal questions about the student's name and/or gender identity are necessary for the student to be academically successful. If not, do not ask the question.
- If a personal question is necessary to the student's success, ask permission to ask it and wait for permission to be granted before asking something that delves into a student's private life. Avoid asking private questions in a public space or in front of an audience.
- If gender or gender identity comes up as a subject in class, don't put a student on the spot by saying, "*You are trans, Kevin. Can you tell the class about this issue from your perspective?*" Instead say, "Does anyone else want to comment on this subject?"

Can I rely on class rosters for a student's correct name?

- Class rosters and campus databases may reflect a student's legal name rather than their lived name. To avoid using the wrong name or mispronouncing a student's name, invite students to share their name in introductions.

What do I tell a student who ask me to use their lived name in class, but the class roster only reflects their legal name?

- Tell the student you are happy to call them by their lived name and write it down on the class roster for future classes. After class, provide the student with follow up information regarding the lived name online form and policy.

How do I adopt inclusive language to be mindful and supportive of an individual identity?

- Adopt inclusive language, such as "parent/guardian," "folks," or "everybody," rather than gendered language, such as "mom and dad" or "ladies and gentlemen."
- When in doubt, use their name or gender-neutral pronouns, such as "they/them."

Why do we have a Lived Name Policy?

- **Respect for Intersectionality:** Lived name policies demonstrate respect for individuals' gender identities, cultural backgrounds, and personal preferences by allowing them to use the name that feels most authentic to them.
- **Inclusivity:** This policy fosters a more inclusive environment by recognizing and affirming the diversity of identities within our QCC community. This inclusivity can lead to increased morale, productivity, and a sense of belonging among employees.
- **Reduced Discrimination and Harassment:** By acknowledging and respecting individuals' chosen names, lived name policies can help reduce instances of discrimination and harassment based on gender identity or other personal characteristics.
- **Retention and Recruitment:** Institutions that embrace lived name policies are often more attractive to diverse communities/ talent pool. Employees/ students are more likely to stay with institutions where they feel respected and valued for who they are, leading to improved retention rates and easier recruitment.
- **Legal Compliance:** Lived name policies can help institutions comply with anti-discrimination laws and regulations by ensuring that employees/ students are not subjected to unfair treatment based on their lived names or gender identities.

- **Improved Customer Relations:** For public-facing positions, allowing employees to use their lived names can lead to better interactions with their community, as it demonstrates an understanding and respect for diverse identities.
- **Positive Public Image:** Adopting inclusive policies like lived name policies can enhance an institution's reputation and public image, showing that they are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, it is important to note to be committed to doing the work and not taking a performative approach.
- **Personalization and Comfort:** Using a lived name can enhance individuals' comfort and well-being in the workplace/ learning environment, as it allows them to be addressed in a way that feels authentic and meaningful to them.

Please avoid phrase such as:

- *"I'll never get that name/pronoun right."* This suggests that using the person's preferred first name or their pronouns is burdensome, and you won't commit to honoring their identity.
- Grammatically it these pronouns do not make sense.
- This will be hard for me to learn; this didn't exist in my generation.