**Guidance notes on creating a Pronouns Policy**

**Creating your Pronoun Policy**

A pronouns policy can be as simple as encouraging your employees to include their pronouns in their email signatures. When creating a guide or policy on pronouns it should form part of a wider suite of documents and policies supporting LGBTQ+ employees.

For example:

* Transition and Change to Gender Expression Guide and Transition and Change to Gender Expression Plan
* Managers Guide
* HR Guide
* Pronouns Policy
* Glossary of Terms

Make it clear that you are not requiring individuals to share their pronouns – because while this is empowering at the community level, forcing someone to identify their pronouns when they are not comfortable doing so can be disrespectful and harmful.

**Use the below template as guide to help layout your document.**

**Introduction and purpose**

This guide is part of a suite of documents supporting trans/non-binary employees at [NAME]. [NAME] is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion, recognising that not everyone has a binary gender identity and that a person’s gender identity should not be assumed based on their appearance. This policy creates a way for people to make their preferred forms of address (pronouns) known instead of relying upon assumptions.

This policy applies to all those who work at [NAME].

Indicating your pronouns is a personal choice and **entirely voluntary**, however all colleagues have a responsibility to be alert to someone indicating their pronouns. Judging by name or appearance is not always an accurate method for determining a person’s pronouns. It’s good practice for us to normalise sharing our pronouns, rather than expecting people to assume them correctly (even if they do).

**What are pronouns and why is it important?**

We all use pronouns as part of everyday conversation. A pronoun is a word that refers to someone or something that is being talked about (like “he”, “she,” “it,” “them,” and “this”).

Gender pronouns (such as “he/him/his” and “she/her/hers”) refer to people that you are talking about. Gender pronouns are the way that we constantly refer to one another’s gender identity - except we often don’t think a whole lot about them. Often, we interpret or “read” a person’s gender based on their outward appearance and expression, and “assign” a pronoun. However, our inference as to that person’s gender identity may not be correct.

Everyone deserves to have their chosen name and pronouns respected in the workplace. Some employees may opt to use gender expansive pronouns such as “they, them and theirs” instead of, or as well as, “he, him and his” or “she, her and hers.” In addition, some employees may prefer the honorific “Mx” instead of “Ms” or “Mr”.

Employees can choose to make their pronouns known in various ways, as detailed in the section below.

**Communicating your pronouns**

* All employees can voluntarily include personal pronouns in email signature lines and in letter correspondence. [Provide details of where any signature block template which includes templates can be found]
* Employees may have an online profile for contacts, work referrers and prospective clients which can include personal pronouns
* Employees can request their pronouns are included on their name badge.
* [Updating your personal details with HR, IT systems].
* [Other staff directories and personal information]
* Include your pronouns when doing introductions chairing meetings and encouraging others to follow.

**Awareness**

To aid all employees to build their awareness, here are some ideas for getting pronouns right:

* Try to get into the habit of using “they/them” until you know someone’s pronouns, e.g. “There is someone here to see you. I will ask them to take a seat”.
* When you introduce someone use their pronouns so that others know what pronouns to adopt, e.g. “This is Jen, they work in Finance. This is Fred, he works in Marketing”.
* Listen to how people speak about themselves and follow suit.
* Pronouns may be detailed underneath their email signature if you have received an email from them.
* If you are unsure, discreetly ask people what their pronouns are (e.g. “Sorry, I didn’t catch your pronouns”).

**Further Information**

If you have any queries or concerns about the way this Policy is being implemented, please contact

[HR/D&I lead/Trade Union Representative].