

Guide to LGBTQ+ Inclusive Customer Service

gender identity & gender expression



Sometimes, the way that we perceive a person is not the same as the way they identify internally. It's important to never assume how someone identifies (language like "Mr.," "Miss," "sir," "ma'am," etc), as this can be perceived as disrespectful, and to instead use terms that are encompassing of everyone, or to just use someone's name.

2

appropriate & inappropriate questions



As you build relationships with students, you may want to ask them questions about themselves and their lives. It's important that those questions are not invasive or invalidating of someone's identity. Some examples of inappropriate questions toward an LGBTQ+ person might be, "Are you transitioning?" "Have you had the surgery?" or "Are you a real man/woman?" Alternative questions could be, "What pronouns do you use?" or "How do you want me to address you?"

3

names & IDs



At Lehigh, students have the ability to display their chosen name, rather than their legal name, on their student ID. This means that a student might change the name they use midway through the year, or may go by a name that could seem surprising based on their gender expression. It's important to respect someone's request if they ask for you to call them by a different name.

Though students can also update their photo on their ID cards, some may express their gender differently than their photo. If you want to ensure that a student is using their correct ID, you can ask them to verify their LIN number, which will stay consistent regardless of the name displayed on their ID.