

Diverse Gender Tertiary Students in New Zealand: How to Create Inclusive Environments

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Research Question	1. Do gender diverse students experience discrimination related to their gender identity within tertiary settings? If so, how does this discrimination occur?
Findings	Gender normativity Administration processes and policies Lack of staff awareness Minority stress

Discrimination is happening

“It’s silent. The discrimination is silent. It’s evasive...and the minute you are not heard or you are not represented, that is when this invisible discrimination starts to happen.

And there is no more insidious discrimination than people forgetting you are there.”

(Lucy, M2F whawahine takatāpui)

“...if I’m stressed out, it makes it very easy for me to be triggered by something that comes up about my gender or past issues.

Going to the bathroom is a specific problem.

Occasionally I’ll be really stressed out and need to go to the bathroom, so I’ll look for the closest to find that they’re gendered.

There is one bathroom at Uni that I have found that is a non-gendered bathroom, it’s just a bathroom and they have got locked doors. Little individual rooms basically, which is perfect. But there is only the one of them and it’s quite far away.”

(Sam, gender fluid)

Summary of findings re discrimination

gender normativity

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admin processes

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lack of staff awareness

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minority stress

“I went looking for discrimination
and found resilience”

Research
Question

2. What strategies support the inclusion of gender diverse students within tertiary settings?

Findings

Participants personal strategies
Visibility within policies and processes
Education for staff

“I’ve got two me’s.

There is the legal me and then there is the real me.

And because of certain legalities I’m stuck with the legal me and can’t quite shake it but I try to keep it in the background as much as possible.”

(John, agender)

Support each other

“The roll got passed around to sign it so they know we have been there, because there are a lot of students.

And I usually sit next to them, and every time that roll comes round it's always wrong. It's always under the name that they are registered under, not their preferred name.

I have taken to getting it before they do, erasing it as much as I can and writing it in correctly and making a note for them to please change it and then passing it [on]. They appreciate it because it is literally every time we go to the workshop. They shouldn't have to deal with that.”

Summary of findings re strategies

education

+

policies and processes

+

action

=

authentic inclusion

Where to from here?

- Educate yourself
- Actively demonstrate your awareness
- Investigate
- Question
- Use your privilege