



What are Pronouns?

According to **Stonewall**, pronouns are the words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation – for example, 'he' or 'she'. **But not everyone identifies with the binary definitions of gender (male and female)** so they may prefer gender-neutral pronouns such as 'they/them' or 'ze/zir'.

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But isn't 'they' a plural?

Not always. It can be used as a plural but it applies to the singular as well and you have probably been using it that way all of your life without realising. Mermaids UK explains that "We use they/them pronouns in everyday conversations, and many people don't even realise. If you've just come across a set of keys on the floor, most people would say 'someone dropped their keys'. Non-binary people use all kinds of pronouns. Many use they/them, she/her, he/him or a combination."

FUN FACT: Using they/them as a singular is nothing new at all. You will find it used in texts such as The Canterbury Tales, Shakespeare's Hamlet and even the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights.



Why do pronouns matter?

It's okay to be confused if this is new to you but a person's gender and their right to be respected is no less valid because you don't understand it.

Someone's pronouns are not always obvious so you can ask, just as you would ask somebody's name and if you choose to, you can take opportunities to make your pronouns known too e.g. on your email signature or on your Zoom/ Teams title. By taking these steps, we help to create a more inclusive work space, not making assumptions of someone's gender identity based on their appearance or name.

How to use pronouns

All the following guidance is optional. We do not expect anybody to 'out themselves' so only share your pronouns if you feel comfortable doing so.

1. Introducing yourself



Get into the habit of introducing yourself with your pronouns. You may not be trans yourself but introducing yourself with your pronouns alongside your name is the best way to make trans people feel more comfortable. If you start doing this then others will follow, so make this business as usual in every meeting and interaction you have.

3. Policies & Letters



There is no reason to use gendered pronouns in any policies or letters you are writing (unless writing to a specific person and they have already told you their pronouns). Check through your work and replace 'he/she' with 'them' and if addressing letters or emails never start with 'Dear Sir/Madam' but use a gender-neutral alternative such as 'To whom it may concern' or 'Dear Participant/Colleague' or find out the person's name and title.

2. Email Signature



It's easy to add your pronouns to your email signature and this is a discreet way to avoid misgendering someone which can be very hurtful for trans people and embarrassing for non-trans people. It also signals that you are a trans ally and will help everyone to refer to each other in a respectful way.

4. Zoom & Teams



Zoom: As well as introducing your pronouns verbally, you can quickly add them to your Zoom name.

Teams: Whilst there isn't an official pronouns feature on Microsoft Teams, you can add them as a status message.

[View the full instructions for Zoom here.](#)

[View the full instructions for Teams here.](#)

How do I learn more?

We have a list of frequently asked questions and wider resources available for staff to learn more about being a trans ally as well as wider LGBT+ and EDI topics on the Equality Diversity & Inclusion page of SASP's Intranet. **I want to show that I am a trans ally**

Now that you know a little more about the importance of pronouns, **if you would like to add your pronouns to your SASP email signature email the Comms Team!**

WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

Pronouns are the words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation



Not everyone identifies with the binary definitions of gender (male and female) so they may prefer gender-neutral pronouns such as 'they/them' or 'ze/zir' – *Stonewall*.

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All the following guidance is optional. We do not expect anybody to 'out themselves' so only share your pronouns if you feel comfortable doing so.

1. Introducing yourself: Introducing yourself with your pronouns alongside your name is the best way to make trans people feel more comfortable.

2. Email Signature: This is a discreet way to avoid misgendering someone which can be very hurtful or embarrassing. It also signals that you are a trans ally and will help everyone to refer to each other in a respectful way.

3. Policies & Letters: There's no reason to use gendered pronouns in any policies/letters you are writing (unless writing to a specific person and they have already told you their pronouns).

4. Zoom & Teams: You can quickly add your pronouns to your Zoom or Teams name. Scan the QR code to find out how



A more detailed version can be accessed by scanning the QR code to the right: