

# **Principles for Installation of Gender-Neutral Toilets at UEA**

## **1. Background**

The University hosts a wide variety of communities including all genders, as well as a range of cultural and religious needs.

The issue of appropriate toilet facilities has a long history of contention in the workplace. The University wishes to provide appropriate facilities for all. To this end there has been a programme of conversion of numerous single stall toilets across campus to gender neutral facilities since 2016. The gender-neutral facilities are marked on the interactive campus map, as are binary facilities.

This guidance is proposed to achieve consistency where refurbishment and/or new buildings are being undertaken.

## **2. Inclusive Building Design**

Section 9 of the Estates Manual covers principles for inclusive design, almost entirely from the perspective of full access for disabled people.

It is proposed that the agreed principles in this paper be added to a revised version of the Universal Design Guide. Section 4.2 of the Guide covers General Access, with 4.2.2 covering disabled toilets.

4.2.3 covers Changing Places, for which signage should also be gender neutral.

As an additional point, it is recommended that the Guide also be updated with knowledge and guidance acquired in recent years regarding the provision of Islamic Faith Facilities, including facilities for washing prior to prayer.

As well as catering for the transgender and non-binary community GNTs provide safe spaces for parents to bring their opposite sex children, or for elderly visitors with opposite sex carers who may not be disabled but do need assistance.

## **3. General Principles**

### **3.1. Refurbishment**

It is recommended that wherever possible, gender neutral toilets (GNTs) are available in every building, as a minimum on every other floor. It is recognised that it may take some time to reach this objective, depending on the number of toilets already in existence and the design of existing facilities. However, this is the recommended aim.

Where facilities are being refurbished they can be converted to GNTs. This can apply to single stall toilets or those with several stalls. All stalls must have side walls from ceiling to floor without gaps.

## **3.2. New Builds**

It is recommended that every new build aims to have a mix of GNTs and traditional binary facilities. The design recommendations in 3.1 apply to new binary facilities as well as GNTs. This will support the ease with which further conversions to GNTs can be made in the future, if desired.

## **3.3. Health and Safety**

The Health and Safety Executive have published guidance on the basic provision needed depending on the likely 'traffic' of people in and through the relevant building.

## **3.4 Minimum and Ideal Provision**

### **3.4.1. Single Stalls**

It is recommended that single stalls, unenclosed by a wider area, should include a minimum of a mirror, small shelf, hand basin, hand drying facilities and toilet. It is recommended as many single stall toilets as possible are retained across the University to support those with 'shy bladder syndrome' (paruresis) of which it is estimated there are four million sufferers in the UK.

Where such stalls are designed to contain hand-basins and hand drying facilities it is recommended that these are installed on the same side of the space to avoid water splashing across the cubicle which can generate slippages or avoidable concerns about cleanliness.

### **3.4.2. Multiple Stalls in a Larger Enclosed Area**

It is recommended that, in areas of high traffic where there is the potential for queues, a gender neutral ante-room is provided as a pleasant area for students or staff to wait for an available cubicle.

As a minimum, it is recommended there be:

- a row of cubicles with full doors and walls affording privacy to all users;
- Cubicles would open out to a row of hand basins with a mirror above each and communal hand drying facilities;
- Stalls should have good lighting. Bare bulbs are to be avoided. Translucent covers to diffuse lights are recommended. Harsh strip lighting is not appropriate.
- All cubicles should be provided with:
  - Feminine hygiene facilities.
  - A mirror
  - A small shelf

Wherever possible it is recommended that the University go beyond the minimum provision to ensure a comfortable experience for students, staff and visitors.

## Recommended:

- Cubicles be larger than the minimum space deemed acceptable by British Standards.
- A small hand basin and hand drying facilities be included in each cubicle along with the minimum facilities listed above.
- Baby changing facilities with hand washing and drying facilities and a nappy bin available be included in a corner of the area, wherever possible.
- Where possible a separate gender-neutral space for changing (see UDG Section 9, 4.2.3) be designed into new builds.
- Baby change facilities should also be factored into the campus.
- Rest spaces for those who need, for medical reasons, e.g. chronic fatigue or chronic pain, to rest for short periods during the day, should be included across the campus.

## 4. Signage

The University recommends the use of language and symbols:

TOILET, or ALL GENDER TOILET are both suitable with the following symbol (*designed by Sam Killemann, Guide to Gender*) or similar:



## 5. Safety

The concerns for privacy of those in the transgender or non-binary communities must be balanced with concerns for safety of all users. It is recommended that toilets are positioned, where possible, away from communal areas with seating and away from the rear of buildings.

Issue date	23 October 2018
Status	FINAL
Review frequency	N/A
Next review date	30 April 2021
Equality impact assessment undertaken	N/A
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Document reference	Principles for Installation of Gender-Neutral Toilets at UEA