

# University of Exeter Student Names Principles

## 1. Overview and purpose of document

1.1. To fulfil a wide range of legal responsibilities, including fraud prevention, and to uphold the highest standards in its administrative and academic work, the University acknowledges the importance of obtaining and maintaining accurate records of the identity of all its students. The Student Names principles document sets out the University's approach in this area.

1.2. The University is committed to creating a truly inclusive environment for our students throughout their time at the University of Exeter and beyond, whilst ensuring we meet our legal obligations.

## 2. Recording of names

2.1. The Student Information System (SITS) will record a student's legal name as provided during application to the University. The record remains unchanged for the duration of a student's studies and beyond, unless formal notification is received from the individual student and a request made for the name to be changed.

2.2 The Student Record System (SRS) and Student Information System (SITS) will record a student's preferred name and surname as provided during their application to the University. The preferred name can be changed in SRS throughout a student's time at the University of Exeter. Changes to preferred names can be made by the student without intervention of the Student Records team and do not require any formal documentation.

2.3 The University recognises that a student may have a single name rather than a 'forename' and 'family name' or 'surname'. The University accepts a single name as a student's legal name where it appears as such on the passport or other accepted identification documentation. The single name is recorded in the 'forename' field in SRS and a value of '-' is recorded in the surname.

2.4. With the exception of students whose names comply with the format set out under clause 2.3 above, all student names will be recorded on SRS according to UK convention with the forename and additional middle names following by the family name.

## 3. Use of legal names

3.1. The legal name as recorded on SITS is used by the University for activities related to legal requirements, such as invoices, accommodation contracts and annual University registration processes and University ID cards (UniCard). This name also appears on any formal documentation produced by the University to record a student's academic achievement or student status, such as student status letters, award certificates, academic transcripts and the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR). Without exception, the University does not permit preferred, alternative or amended names to be used for these purposes.

3.2 The legal name will be used in communications with the named next of kin, trusted contacts, or third parties designated as confirmed fee payers through the annual University Registration process.

3.2. Where a student has a single name recorded as their legal name, the award certificate shows the name as recorded in the forename field on SITS and SRS and the academic transcript shows a null value in the surname section.

3.3. Legal name fields in SITS and SRS do not support non-Latin characters but do allow accented characters. This covers scripts including, but not limited to, Chinese, Russian (Cyrillic) or Arabic, whilst still allowing accented Latin characters including, but not limited to, é, ñ, ü.

## 4. Changing the University's legal name record

4.1. The process to change the University's legal name record of a current student is managed by the Student Records Team. A student wishing to change their legal name, including where a typographical error has been made, are to contact Student Records on [studentrecords@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:studentrecords@exeter.ac.uk) including a copy of a legal document showing the full legal name. Accepted documents will include such items as:

- valid passport
- birth certificate
- driving licence.
- marriage or civil partnership certificate
- a divorce decree absolute or civil partnership final order
- change of name deed or enrolled deed poll
- statutory declaration of new name

4.3. International students who have a UK Visa are should seek advice from [the International Student Advice](#) team on how to update UK Visas and Immigration

4.4. Where a student's legal name changes, the formal record and related documentation will only record the new name where the student has informed the University during the period of study, in accordance with Section 4 of this principles document, and where satisfactory evidence of a legal change of name has been provided.

4.5. A student's award is conferred in the legal name that they hold at the time of conferral. The legal name will be printed on award documentation. The University will not normally change a former student's name on formal academic records following a legal name change. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as the protection of an identity or a name change as part of gender transition, will a name change be considered. Such requests should be made in writing to Student Records on [studentrecords@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:studentrecords@exeter.ac.uk) including a copy of a legal document showing the full legal name.

## 5. Preferred names

5.1. The University permits a student to indicate a preferred first name which will be used in University systems and communications. Examples of circumstances where a different preferred name to a legal name may be applicable for use include (but are not limited to):

- international students wishing to adopt a different name during their time at University
- transgender or non-binary students
- students who wish to be known by a middle name rather than their first name; or
- for personal security

5.2. While the University understands and accepts the need for permitting preferred names to be recorded on its systems for use across the University, it reserves the right to refuse to record a preferred name if it is not considered appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended.

## 6. Recording and use of preferred names

6.1. A preferred name is recorded in the Student Record System (SRS). Changes to preferred names can be made by the student without intervention of the Student Records team and do not require any formal documentation.

6.2 A preferred name will be used on study systems such as (but not limited to) timetable, library, ELE2, digital check-in and class registers. It will be used in University communications and will be used during the University Graduation ceremonies. As shown in clause 3.1 of this document legal names will be shown on University award documentation.

6.2. A student's UniCard is produced using the student's legal forename initial and surname as they can be used for formal identification on campus.

6.3 Preferred name fields in SITS and SRS do not support non-Latin characters but do allow accented characters. This covers scripts including, but not limited to, Chinese, Russian (Cyrillic) or Arabic, whilst still allowing accented Latin characters including, but not limited to, é, ñ, ü.

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