



Academic Support Office
Student and Academic Services

Policy on student names

Created: February 2023

Originating Directorate: Student and Academic Services

Policy on student names

Under the law in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, you can change your name at any time, provided you do not intend to deceive or defraud another person.

There is no legal procedure to follow in order to change a name. You simply start using the new name. You can change your forename or surname, add names or rearrange your existing names. However, like other public organisations and financial institutions in the UK, universities have a duty to prevent fraud and so can exercise the right to make certain requirements mandatory.

In an attempt to eliminate fraudulent applications and enrolments, we require every applicant, whether applying directly, online or on paper, or via a clearing-house, to apply using the name shown on your passport or birth certificate. This name will be used throughout your academic career, unless a formal change of name is requested later.

The name will be used on any acceptance and visa letter that the university issues before enrolment. You must notify us of any spelling errors immediately, so they can be corrected before any further correspondence is sent to you.

If the British style of forename and surname is not used in your culture, you should insert the complete name on the surname line of any form.

The correct name will also be registered on the enrolment form and will eventually appear on the final award certificate if you are successful. If this name is different to that shown on your entry qualifications, you will need to provide suitable evidence, as shown in the list below.

Any subsequent request to change your name on the database during your academic career must be submitted in writing and accompanied by written evidence, either in its original form or as a certified, true copy of the original.

Please note that changes cannot routinely be made retrospectively e.g. you cannot have your award certificate re-issued in your maiden name following a divorce, marriage or change of name after you have finished your course at DMU. However, a trans student may ask for a degree or diploma certificate to be reissued in their new name (see below for more information).

Evidence

Examples of appropriate forms of evidence are:

- **A marriage certificate**
- **A divorce decree absolute:** If you wish to revert to your maiden name we will also need to see your birth certificate and a statement from you confirming the reversion to your maiden name for all purposes.

- **A certified copy of a birth entry:** This will be evidence of a change of name if the new name has been recorded in the birth entry.
- **Public announcement:** You may want to record your name change by placing an advertisement in a local or national newspaper. This should state that you have stopped using your previous name and have assumed a new one. A copy of the advertisement can then be used as evidence that you have changed your name.
- **Statutory declaration:** A statutory declaration is a statement that records your intention to abandon your old name and adopt a new one. For most purposes, a statutory declaration is generally accepted as evidence of your change of name. Preparing a statutory declaration can be complicated. If you want to prove your change of name by making a statutory declaration you should consult an experienced adviser, for example at a Citizens Advice Bureau.
- **Change of name deed (previously known as a 'deed poll'):** A change of name deed is a formal statement to prove that your name has been changed. Only a person with parental consent can use a deed to record a change of name for children or young persons under the age of 18; however, if you are over 16, this can only be done with your consent.
You can have a change of name deed prepared by a solicitor. Solicitors' fees for preparing deeds can vary and can be expensive so it is advisable to find out the cost before proceeding. Alternatively, you can prepare your own deed on a prescribed form that is available from legal stationers.
Changing your name by deed can be complicated. If you want to use this as evidence of change of name you should consult an experienced adviser such as an officer of your local Citizens' Advice Bureau.
- **Police report:** The university is aware that family problems can lead sometimes to the adoption of a pseudonym for personal safety by students during their academic careers. If you are in this situation, the university will require a police report as verification of the change.

Information for trans students

At DMU, we believe in creating a safe, inclusive space for all our students, and we are happy to support our trans students should they choose to change their name.

The process for changing your name is as follows:

Current students: You should write to the university stating your intention to make the transition, at which point a meeting will be arranged with relevant staff only. Records will be changed to reflect your chosen name at the agreed time. You will need to provide a statutory declaration of name change only if you originally registered under another name and wish to obtain a degree or diploma certificate in your new name.

Graduates: You will need to provide a statutory declaration of name change if you originally registered under another name and wish to obtain a degree or diploma certificate in your new name. This information will only be viewed by the registry officer who will make the necessary changes to the system.

Applicants: If you took your entry qualifications in another name, you will need to provide a statutory declaration of name change.

Please note that all data held by the university in connection with any name change will be treated in confidence and will never be disclosed to a third party without your permission.