

## **POSITION STATEMENT ON GENDER DIVERSITY**

**18 November 2016 – International Transgender Day of Remembrance**

Wits University marks international Transgender Day of Remembrance, in honour of transgender members of the university community in 2016 - a year we celebrate in implementing gender neutral toilets – a move that joins other examples of best practice, such as our Safe Zones@Wits and Wits Pride programmes. This statement of commitment is affirmed by university leadership in a promise to transgender members of the Wits in unconditional support.

Wits recognises the considerable diversity in gender expression and identity among our staff, students and visitors, and believes that people who are transgender—including all who are included under the transgender umbrella, binary or non-binary, must be afforded the same respect and rights as cisgender people. Wits asserts that discrimination and prejudice directed against any individuals on the basis of gender identity or gender expression, whether real or perceived, are damaging to the social, emotional, psychological, physical, and economic well-being of the affected individuals, as well as society as a whole, and Wits seeks elimination of prejudice, both inside and outside the University, in public and private sectors.

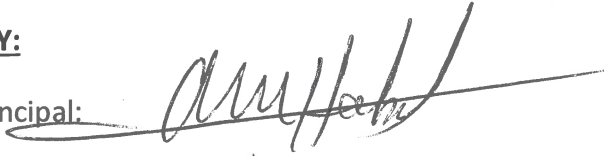
Wits believes that a non-judgmental and affirming attitude toward gender identity enables students, visitors staff, both academic and those in professional administration, to provide maximum support and services to those whose gender departs from the cisgender assumed 'norm'. Wits supports the development of supportive and knowledgeable living contexts for those struggling with factors like dysphoria, access to medical support in transitioning, legal barriers to name and gender marker change, prejudices, biases, and transphobia. Instances of transphobia in the university community are unacceptable, and will be dealt with in line with existing policies.

Wits supports curriculum policies in all its faculties and departments that eliminate discrimination against those who are transgender, provide equal opportunities to all students for investigating issues of relevance to transgender populations; and develop and provide training for lecturers and supervisors regarding gender diversity issues through the Safe Zones@Wits programme.

Wits reaffirms a commitment to human rights and freedom and opposes all public and private discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression, and all attendant benefits, rights, and privileges. We celebrate our transgender community, today and every day, for the valued unique contributions that are made, and those who continue work in keeping our university a safe, welcoming and affirming space for all members of the LGBTIAQ+ community.

**SIGNED IN SUPPORT BY:**

Vice Chancellor and Principal:



SRC President:



Dean of Humanities:



Dean of Science:



Dean of Engineering and the Built Environment:



Dean of Commerce, Law and Management

Dean of Health Sciences:

Dean of Student Affairs:



Director of Transformation and Employment Equity:



Director of the Gender Equity Office:



President of NEHAWU:



President of AL TSA:



President of ASAWU: