



THE FACULTY OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE POLICY

Introduction

1. This document is the Faculty Office (FO) gender-neutral language policy. It is a drafting practice document.
2. The purpose of this document is to set out the Policy of the FO concerning the use of gender-neutral language in drafting Rules and other written communications. It represents the official view of the FO on the topic.
3. The FO understands that its regulated community, service-users and the wider population increasingly expect communications and drafting to reflect them in an inclusive manner that provides equal respect to all. Gender-neutral drafting in communications and legal documentation has multiple benefits for equality and inclusion, including promoting gender equality and equality across the gender-identity spectrum. Furthermore, a significant percentage of the population no longer sees gender as binary and expects to see a new and better approach to gender identity and expression in documentation.

Adoption of Policy

4. The Master's Advisory Board held on 23 September 2020 recommended to the Master that the FO adopt a policy for the use of gender-neutral language in all its communications. The Policy was considered by the Board at its meeting on 1 December 2020 and formally approved by the Master on .

Applying the Policy

5. This section indicates how the Policy is usually applied.
6. What is gender neutral drafting? In its broadest sense gender-neutral drafting involves:
 - avoiding gender-specific pronouns and adjectives (such as “she/her/hers” or “he/him/his”);
 - avoiding nouns that might appear to assume that a person of a particular gender will do a particular job or perform a particular role (e.g., “chairman”).
7. A range of techniques are available for avoiding gender-specific pronouns. Which of them works best will depend on each specific context. The techniques available are set out in the table annexed.
8. These techniques are not all suitable in all contexts. Some of these techniques (for example repeating the noun or using masculine and feminine pronouns) may produce awkward or artificial sounding sentences unless they are used in moderation. In some cases, a simple substitution of words will not be possible and some originality is required to re-express a particular matter.

9. It is recognised that the terms of the Policy do not require the use of neutral words in inappropriate cases.

Program to remove gender specific language in older Rules

10. The Faculty Office will start a programme for the removal of gender specific language in all its Rules as and when they require amendment, however minor such amendments might be. If or when time and resources permit, the Faculty Office would like to move to a single rule book incorporating all of its current separate Rules and when this is achieved, all gender specific language will be removed.

ANNEX

Guide to making gender-neutral documents and communications

This guide is produced in the context of the Faculty Office's strategic commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The table below contains suggestions that may assist you in making a gender-neutral document or other communication. For the most part gender-neutral wording decisions are very simple and a neutral term can just be slotted into the place of a gendered term. In more complex cases, it can help to rethink the order of the sentence, to Google alternative terms, or to consider whether the phrase / sentence is necessary at all.

Gendered word / phrase	Suggested neutral word / phrase
"He", "She" or "He / She"	They
"His", "Her" or "His / Her"	Their
"Him", "Her" or "Him / Her"	Them
"Man" / "Woman"	Person (or occasionally "human" can be more appropriate, e.g. "humankind")
"Chairman" / "Chairwoman"	Chairperson (or "Chair")
"Dear Sir / Madam"	This could be replaced with "To Whom it May Concern", "Dear Colleague", "Dear Notary", etc.

“Male” or “Female” as adjective	Don’t use if not necessary to do so: for example, the adjective in phrases like “male notary” or “female solicitor” is not usually necessary. However, you might use these terms where gender is specifically relevant, for example in a report on the number of female Notaries in the profession/a firm.
“Male” or “Female” on forms	<p>First, consider whether you need to know the gender of each person completing the form, and remove the gender question if not.</p> <p>If you do need to include a gender question, e.g. for statistical purposes, it is advisable to include the further options “Other gender” and “Prefer not to disclose”².</p>
Images	Try to include diversity of gender in the images you use in webpages, etc., and consider how you might overcome stereotyping.
Symbols	A range of gender-neutral symbols are available.