



Resource Guide. Diploma Name

Background

The University recognizes that many members of its community use names other than their legal or official names first provided to the University (official/legal name) to identify themselves. For some students and employees, a chosen or preferred name may be an important component of their identity. Therefore, the University has established guidelines that allow students and employees to indicate their chosen or preferred first names to the University community even if they have not changed their official/legal names.

Preferred Name Guidelines

University of Arizona students may choose to identify themselves within the University community using a preferred first name that differs from their official/legal name. A student or employee's preferred name will appear instead of the person's official/legal name in select University-related systems and documents, provided that the preferred first name is not being used for the purpose of misrepresentation. The official/legal name will continue to be used in all University-related systems and documents that require a verified legal name.

Students with a current UA NetID may set a preferred name in UAccess Student Center. From the Student Center, select Personal Information, Preferred Name Change, then choose the option to edit the current name or enter a new one. Please note that you will only be allowed to use alpha characters with the exception of periods, apostrophes and hyphens. [Click here for more information.](#)

Diplomas

It is recommended that the diploma name match your official, legal name, however a preferred name may be considered. See your Graduation Services Advisor for details. ([Link to Grad Services: Click here](#)).

The student name listed on a diploma or certificate must match the official name on file at the University (first name, last name) with the following exceptions:

- Option of first name or initial
- Options of diminutive or alternate form for the first name
- Option of a first name which conforms with the graduate's genuine expression of gender identity
- Omission of the first name when the middle name is used as a salutary name
- Option of middle name or initial
- Inclusion of former or maiden name
- Inclusion of proper capitalization and accentuation of name
- Inclusion of maternal surnames as culturally appropriate

Neither titles nor degrees previously earned will be included as part of a graduate's name on a diploma.

All requests are reviewed on a case by case basis. The preferred name requested on the diploma must match the preferred name listed in UAccess. This is necessary for future non-third-party verification that may take place.

If you decide to change your diploma name back to your primary name after graduation, please note that you will be required to request and pay for a replacement diploma. Primary name changes are only permitted in cases of legal name changes through the Courts.

Apostille

Diploma apostille can ONLY be provided when using your legal full name.

Note for Degree Verification

Third parties using the preferred name appearing on your diploma will not be able to verify your degree through the National Student Clearinghouse because of name mismatch. Enrollment/degree verification is provided using your full legal name.

Note for Graduates planning to live or work abroad

The University of Arizona considers the diploma to be a ceremonial document. Some countries may require your diploma (in conjunction with your official transcript) for various legal, immigration, and employment purposes. Choosing to print your preferred name on your diploma may result in unforeseen complications due to discrepancy between your diploma and other documents (e.g. transcripts, passport, birth certificates, etc.) that contain your primary (i.e. legal) name. To avoid such complications, we recommend printing your primary name on your diploma if you plan to live, study, work outside of the United States.

Note for student/graduates of professional schools [Law, Medicine, Nursing, etc.]

Before opting to print your preferred name on your diploma, please take into consideration that professional licensing requirements require you to use your legal name. For example, State Bar application and licensure and federal employment/guidelines require the use of the legal name. Using your preferred name on your diploma may result in rejection, delay, scrutiny, and/or requirements for additional proof of identification associated with any application for employment, licensure, credentialing, visa application, and/or other processes that require verification of your education records.