



Casting call for actors for 'High Heels aren't Compulsory', a drama set in a Scottish university, produced by Lock Up Your Daughters Productions

Auditions to be arranged.

Contact Annabel Cooper on [annabel.cooper@ed.ac.uk](mailto:annabel.cooper@ed.ac.uk) or 07713 392007 with headshot and CV.

Plot outline: Carolyn Mortimer is a university lecturer; this is the first day of her of her transition from male to female. She arrives at her office, which she shares with her colleague Helen, and everything is new, but the same. Just as she gets settled her boss Professor Edgerton comes in to request that she cover a lecture for a colleague who is ill. It's a first-year lecture and while she has told all her older students what to expect of her this year, she is going to appear cold in front of this class and she is anxious. With reason, because at the beginning of the lecture she is heckled by a student, Callum, with transphobic taunts until she flees the room in tears. Another student, Josie, finds her in her office, bringing her handbag which she left in the lecture. Josie tries to comfort Carolyn and is soon joined by Helen, who talks her down from her panic. Helen gets the story from Josie, and takes them both to Prof. Edgerton. At the beginning of the next lecture, the Prof. gives a stern lecture to the class and hauls the offending student and his buddies off for academic discipline. Carolyn restarts her lecture.

Character profiles:

### Carolyn

Early to mid-30s, mid-level academic, Carolyn holds a lectureship and supervises a couple of PhD students. She is transgender and has newly transitioned from male to female in her workplace.

She takes her responsibilities to the students seriously and will go to some lengths to do her job properly. She is single, not seeing anyone, and cynical about romance with a number of failed relationships behind her (or him as was).

She is observant and analytical, but doesn't know everything about being a woman, not having grown up in the culture of expectations that girls do. She will make mistakes, but only once. She can be badly embarrassed by those mistakes, which will spur her not to make them again.

She is anxious about her transition and how she will be accepted by her students and her employers; she deals with her anxiety by planning ahead as far as she can. Her main goal is to fit in.

### Helen

Mid-to-late 40s, Helen is a senior academic with several PhD students and a couple of postdocs working for her.

Helen is not concerned about fitting in; she has carved herself a niche where she is comfortable, she knows how the system works, and nobody is willing to mess with her.

Bluestocking in style, or its modern equivalent, jeans and a cardigan, abrupt in manner, Helen might be mistaken for a lesbian / spinster but has in fact been happily married to her husband for 25 years.

### Josie

Josie (Joscelyn) Cavanagh is a bit of a trust-fund activist, from a wealthy background which she rejects in favour of various political causes. Small, high-energy and scruffy, she spends a lot of her time working for various causes. She has picked up Carolyn as a cause – this will cause friction in time because Josie is well-meant but quite an interfering person who doesn't in fact know it all. She only thinks she does. Nor does she always know best what's right for everyone.

Josie is early twenties, has spent time on the student union board as ents convenor (there were a lot of right-on bands that year) and keeps changing her degree and acing the exams.

She also has a thing for Carolyn, apart from any political motivation.

### Prof. Jim Edgerton

Late forties to fifties, businesslike, organised, careerist and quite pompous. He is non-plussed by his junior lecturer's life choice, but he will follow the university rules and policy as far as they require and he takes every breach as an affront.

His main concern is the status of the department and while he will support Carolyn to the limits of the law and policy, he won't go any further and is irked that he has to do anything at all.

There is tension between him and Carolyn in that that he might be judging her unfairly for being trans\* and possibly for being a woman.

### Callum Ferguson

First-year medical student, 19, taken a gap year to go travelling. Like many medics he is from an upper-middle-class family, and an expensive school. He is effectively an over-privileged bully who has not been told 'no' often enough in his life.

### Mark Harkins, Robert McHugh

(non-speaking parts) Mark and Bobby are Cal's cheering section. A similar age and background to Callum; 19, expensive school, gap year, but follower types, they are the kind who will laugh along at their friend being outrageous at a lecturer's expense.

### Harry

A university security guard; solid, no-nonsense, manning the gate to the car park.