

## LGBT+ Policy

**Proposer** Liam Deary (LGBT+ Officer, Open Place)

**Seconded** Jim Read (LGBT+ Officer, Trans and Non-Binary Place)

### Summary

A general policy setting out the Union's stance on some of the issues that face LGBT+ students, and the actions we will take to tackle them. This is an update to the LGBT+ policy passed on 6th December 2012, adding more detail and bringing the Union's policy up to date with the issues LGBT+ students face now. It covers sex and relationship education, mental health, blood donation, LGBT+ participation in sport, gender identity services and gender recognition, discrimination and hate crime, sexual assault and domestic/relationship abuse, and education and widening participation.

### Content Warnings

Discrimination, hate crime, sexual assault, rape, self-harm, suicide.

### Council Notes

Sex and Relationship Education:

1. The quality of relationship and sex education (RSE) provided in schools varies wildly across the UK. A study by Terrence Higgins Trust found that:
  - a. 61% of respondents received RSE once a year or less.<sup>1</sup>
  - b. 1 in 7 respondents did not receive any RSE in school at all.<sup>2</sup>
  - c. 50% of young people rated the RSE they received in school as either 'poor' or 'terrible', while only 2% rated it as 'excellent' and only 10% as 'good'.<sup>3</sup>
  - d. 95% of respondents were not taught about LGBT relationships.<sup>4</sup>
  - e. 75% of young people were not taught about consent.<sup>5</sup>
  - f. 3 in 5 respondents did not receive or did not remember receiving any information about HIV in school.<sup>6</sup>
2. Following government consultation on the topic, Education Secretary Damian Hinds' proposal for more LGBT+ inclusive, compulsory sex and relationship education passed through the House of Commons in March 2019 with a resounding majority.<sup>7</sup> However, this will help future students, not current students, with changes only set to come into force in England in September 2020.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Terrence Higgins Trust, (2018). *Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)*. [online] Available at: <https://www.tht.org.uk/our-work/our-campaigns/relationships-and-sex-education-rse> [Accessed 19 Jul. 2018].

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Pink News, (2019). *MPs vote for LGBT-inclusive, compulsory relationship and sex education*. [online] Available at: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2019/03/27/mps-vote-lgbt-inclusive-compulsory-rse-education/> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2019].

<sup>8</sup> Duffy, N., (2018). *Schools to teach about same-sex relationships and gender identity under new sex and relationships education plan*. [online] Pink News. Available at: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2018/07/19/sex-and-relationship-education-gay-relationships-gender-identity/> [Accessed 19 Jul. 2018].

## Mental Health:

1. LGBT+ people are 1½ times more likely to develop depression and anxiety compared to the rest of the population.<sup>9</sup>
2. Gay and bisexual men are four times more likely to attempt suicide across their lifetime than the rest of the population.<sup>10</sup>
3. A transgender mental health study showed that 88% of transgender people had experienced depression and 84% had thought of ending their life.<sup>11</sup>
4. Of trans people under the age of 26, 48% have attempted suicide and 59% have considered doing so.<sup>12</sup>
5. The International Classification of Diseases (ICD 11) was recently revised to remove 'Gender Incongruence' from the category of 'Mental and Behavioural Disorders'.<sup>13</sup>
6. Drug use by gay and bisexual men was three times higher than for straight men, and illegal drug use by gay and bisexual women was four times higher than among heterosexual women.<sup>14</sup>

## Resources:

7. There are specific issues that affect LGBT+ individuals that others do not experience.
8. While there are some confidential resources available to LGBT+ students, they quickly go out of date and there is no online resource.

## LGBT+ Participation in Sport:

9. At the time of the Union's last LGBT+ Survey, only 43% of respondents were members of a sports club, and of these participants only 52% found their sports club to be inclusive or mostly inclusive.<sup>15</sup>
10. 17% of LGBT+ people have experienced and 49% have witnessed homophobia or transphobia in sport.<sup>16</sup>
11. 66% of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people felt that there were problems with homophobia and transphobia in sport and that this acted as a barrier to LGBT people taking part.<sup>17</sup>
12. Many LGBT+ students are discouraged from participating in sport, or coming out to their teammates, for fear of bullying and discrimination.<sup>18</sup>
13. The Union has responsibility for ensuring access for all members to all its events and clubs/societies.

## Blood Donation:

14. Men who sleep with men are still prohibited from donating blood within 3 months of having sex.

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<sup>9</sup> King, M., J. Semlyen, S. See Tai, H. Killaspy, D. Osborn, D. Popelyuk, I. Nazareth. (2008). *A systematic review of mental disorder, suicide, and deliberate self harm in lesbian, gay and bisexual people*. [online] BMC Psychiatry. Available at: <https://bmcp psychiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-244X-8-70> [Accessed 14 Aug. 2018].

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Semlyen, J., M. Milton, K. Johnson, K. Rimes, A. Kerr. (2016). *Mental Health and LGBT People: Call for Evidence; British Psychological Society response to the London Assembly Health Committee*. [online] British Psychological Society. Available at: [www1.bps.org.uk/system/files/consultationpapers/responses/BPS-response-Mental-Health-and-LGBT-People-Approved.pdf](http://www1.bps.org.uk/system/files/consultationpapers/responses/BPS-response-Mental-Health-and-LGBT-People-Approved.pdf) [Accessed 17 Sep. 2018].

<sup>12</sup> Nodin, N., E. Peel, A. Tyler, I. Rivers. (2015). *The RaRE Research Report: LGB&T Mental Health – Risk and Resilience Explored*. [online] PACE. Available at: [http://www.queerfutures.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/RARE\\_Research\\_Report\\_PACE\\_2015.pdf](http://www.queerfutures.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/RARE_Research_Report_PACE_2015.pdf) [Accessed 17 Sep. 2018].

<sup>13</sup> [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/721725/GRA-Consultation-document.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721725/GRA-Consultation-document.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-misusefindings-from-the-2013-to-2014-csew/drug-misuse-findings-from-the-2013-14-crime-survey-for-england-and-wales#estimates-of-illicit-drug-use-by-ethnicity-and-sexual-orientation](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-misusefindings-from-the-2013-to-2014-csew/drug-misuse-findings-from-the-2013-14-crime-survey-for-england-and-wales#estimates-of-illicit-drug-use-by-ethnicity-and-sexual-orientation).

<sup>15</sup> UEA SU LGBT+ Survey 2017

<sup>16</sup> Stonewall

<sup>17</sup> [www.stonewall.org.uk/media/lgbt-facts-and-figures](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/media/lgbt-facts-and-figures)

<sup>18</sup> UEA LGBT+ Survey 2017

## Marriage Equality:

15. Although same sex marriage was legalised in 2013 under the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act, trans people still do not have access to fair and equal marriage.
16. Under the Gender Recognition Act 2004, a married trans person cannot seek legal gender recognition without the permission of their spouse.<sup>19</sup>
17. The 'spousal veto', as this is known, is recognised in the government consultation on the reform of the Gender Recognition Act as a key area for change.<sup>20</sup>

## Gender Identity Services and Gender Recognition:

18. There are only 8 Gender Identity Clinics (GICs) in the UK, including 1 for children and young people, and none in Wales.<sup>21</sup>
19. Waiting times for Charing Cross GIC are currently 14 months.<sup>22</sup>
20. Referrals to the Charing Cross Clinic in London have quadrupled in ten years from 498 in 2006/07 to 1892 in 2015/16.<sup>23</sup>
21. There is a high rate of complaints<sup>24</sup>
22. According to an audit carried out by the Charing Cross Clinic in 2014, 20% of trans women were self-medicating with hormones purchased online.<sup>25</sup>
  - a. This carries serious health risks, due to the unknown origin of the drugs and the lack of regulation and supervision.
  - b. Waiting times exacerbate this issue, as trans people may be inclined to self-medicate in order to obtain bridging prescriptions.
  - c. Due to some hormones being delivered by injection, there is a higher risk of HIV and other blood infections if self-medicating, from the unsafe use of needles.
23. Since the Gender Recognition Act 2004 came into force, only 4,910 trans people have sought gender recognition.<sup>26</sup>
  - a. There is no robust data on the number of trans people currently living in the UK, but the government estimates it to be between 200,000-500,000.<sup>27</sup>
  - b. Trans people are not seeking gender recognition because the process is 'too bureaucratic, expensive and intrusive'.<sup>28</sup>

## Home Life and Estrangement:

24. LGBT+ people are disproportionately affected by estrangement, and many people are still at risk of being disowned by family and friends after they come out.
25. Among those who were out to their immediate family, one out of every ten (10%) respondents reported that a family member was violent towards them because they were transgender. Prevalence of family violence differed greatly depending on the time period during which a respondent transitioned, with those transitioning ten or more years ago (15%) experiencing almost twice as much violence as those who transitioned in the past year (8%).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/7/pdfs/ukpga\\_20040007\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/7/pdfs/ukpga_20040007_en.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/721725/GRA-Consultation-document.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721725/GRA-Consultation-document.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> [www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jul/10/transgender-clinic-waiting-times-patient-numbers-soar-gender-identity-services](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jul/10/transgender-clinic-waiting-times-patient-numbers-soar-gender-identity-services)

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/721642/GEO-LGBT-factsheet.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721642/GEO-LGBT-factsheet.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/721642/GEO-LGBT-factsheet.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721642/GEO-LGBT-factsheet.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reform-of-the-gender-recognition-act-2004>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/USTS-Full-Report-FINAL.PDF>

26. Eight percent (8%) of transgender respondents who were out to the immediate family they grew up with were kicked out of the house, which represents 6% of the whole sample. Those who transitioned 10 or more years ago were twice as likely to have been kicked out of the house (16%) as those who transitioned within the last year (7%).<sup>30</sup>
27. In one study, 40% of homeless youth identified as LGBT. The #1 reason for homelessness among LGBT youth is that they ran away because of family rejection. The #2 reason is that they were thrown out for being LGBT.<sup>31</sup>
28. One shocking statistic from NYC's Hetrick-Martin Institute showed that homeless queer women aged 13-15 who they had encountered reported that 50% were homeless because they ran away after being raped by a father or brother to 'cure' them.<sup>32</sup>

#### Discrimination and Hate Crime:

1. In 2013, one in six LGBT+ adults had experienced a hate crime or incident in the last 3 years.<sup>33</sup>
2. More than half of younger LGBT+ people experience homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying in Britain's schools.<sup>34</sup>
3. Nearly half of pupils who experience bullying have symptoms of depression.<sup>35</sup>
4. Four in five LGBT people who have experienced a hate crime or incident didn't report it to the police.<sup>36</sup>
5. Owen et al. found that LGB people have more negative perceptions of the police than heterosexuals. Trans people had more negative perceptions of the police than the rest of the LGBT+ community.<sup>37</sup>
6. 41% of trans respondents to a Stonewall survey said they had experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months.<sup>38</sup>

#### Sexual Assault and Domestic/Relationship Abuse:

1. Research by Stonewall shows that one in four lesbian and bi women have experienced domestic abuse in a relationship.<sup>39</sup>
2. Almost half (49%) of all gay and bi men have experienced at least one incident of domestic abuse from a family member or partner since the age of 16.<sup>40</sup>
3. A report by the The Scottish Transgender Alliance indicates that 80% of trans people had experienced emotional, sexual, or physical abuse from a partner or ex-partner.<sup>41</sup>

#### Education and Widening Participation:

1. LGBT+ students are largely not considered a widening participation group.
2. There is no mention of LGBT+ students in UEA's *2016-20 Widening Participation Strategy*, *2018-19 Access Agreement* or *2019-20 Access and Participation Plan*.
3. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), which is the designated data body for English higher education, does not collect data on LGBT+ students as a widening participation group.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/USTS-Full-Report-FINAL.PDF>

<sup>31</sup> <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Durso-Gates-LGBT-Homeless-Youth-Survey-July-2012.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> <https://oblogdee.blog/2013/01/01/the-ongoing-plight-of-homeless-queer-youth/>

<sup>33</sup> [www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/hate\\_crime.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/hate_crime.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> [www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/The\\_School\\_Report\\_\\_2012\\_.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/The_School_Report__2012_.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> [www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/The\\_School\\_Report\\_\\_2012\\_.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/The_School_Report__2012_.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> [www.stonewall.org.uk/media/lgbt-facts-and-figures](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/media/lgbt-facts-and-figures)

<sup>37</sup> [doi.org/10.1007/s12103-017-9420-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-017-9420-8)

<sup>38</sup> [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/721642/GEO-LGBT-factsheet.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721642/GEO-LGBT-factsheet.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/criminal-law/domestic-violence>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/criminal-law/domestic-violence>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/criminal-law/domestic-violence>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/07-02-2019/widening-participation-summary>

## **Council Believes**

### Sex and Relationship Education:

1. LGBT+ students should have access to sexual health information which is inclusive, comprehensive and free of charge.

### Mental Health:

2. More needs to be done to recognise the LGBT+ community as a group at high risk of developing mental health issues.
3. Access to support is the right of all students, not a privilege.

### Resources:

4. LGBT+ people should be able to access general advice and information confidentially.
5. Resources should be inclusive, comprehensive, and free of charge.

### LGBT+ Participation in Sport:

6. LGBT+ people are entitled and encouraged to play sport at UEA.
7. No one should face discrimination on the basis of their gender identity or sexuality.

### Blood Donation:

8. The current ban is discriminatory and prevents willing donors from giving blood and saving lives.

### Marriage Equality:

9. The current wording of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 is discriminatory, with regards to the 'spousal veto'.<sup>43</sup>
10. The decision on whether to continue with a marriage should be with the trans person and their spouse, not the government.

### Gender Identity Services and Gender Recognition:

11. The services currently available are inadequate, and waiting times are too long.
12. Legal gender recognition should be available for all trans and non-binary people, without unnecessary waiting times or expense.

### Education and Widening Participation:

13. LGBT+ students face barriers to education that their heterosexual/cisgender peers do not experience, and should be considered a target group for widening participation initiatives.

## **Council Resolves**

1. To ensure that any sexual health campaign the SU runs includes material about both relationship education and LGBT+ sex education.
  - a. To ensure that any sexual health or relationship education campaign includes material about domestic and relationship abuse and consent.
2. To work with UEA medical centre and Student Support Services to determine how health services could be made more accessible for LGBT+ people, including:

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<sup>43</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmwomeq/390/39006.htm>

- a. Working to update the medical centre login screen system, so that patients do not have to choose 'male' or 'female'.
  - b. Exploring options for mental health support at SSS that is specifically tailored to LGBT+ people.
3. To develop a mental health awareness campaign targeted at LGBT+ students, giving them clear points of contact and reassurance, which does not insult, isolate, or intimidate its target audience.
  - a. This would include an opt-in system similar to the current DLO system run by SSS, and 1:1 advice and guidance meetings with an advisor similar to a disability advisor.
  - b. This would be particularly beneficial for trans students who are transitioning during their time at UEA.
  - c. To include in this campaign support for estranged students.
4. To create pages on the SU website containing information on transitioning, name changes, and hate crime reporting.
5. To mandate the Activities and Opportunities Officer to include training on the needs of LGBT+ students in both sports and societies training, to tackle discrimination.
6. To encourage sports clubs to engage with LGBT+ students. They could and should be encouraged to:
  - a. Hold regular mixed gender friendlies.
  - b. If possible, enter mixed gender competitions.
7. To campaign against any ban on donation of blood by men who sleep with men.
  - a. If there is a blood drive on campus, hold an awareness event about the ban.
  - b. Invite Anthony Nolan for bone marrow donation and THT for HIV testing when there is a blood drive on campus
8. That the Union will publicly support the removal of the 'spousal veto' from legislation on same sex marriages.
9. That the Union will publicly support the improvement and expansion of NHS gender identity services.
10. That the LGBT+ Officers (with the support of the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer) should work with the University Medical Centre, to ensure that practitioners are aware of, and up to date on, the referral process for Gender Identity Clinics.
11. That the Union will conduct a survey into the experiences of LGBT+ students at UEA, and the barriers they face to education.
  - a. That the Union will take relevant action based on the results of this survey, which might include lobbying the university to include LGBT+ students in their next Widening Participation Strategy.
12. That if any of the aforementioned issues come up in the parliamentary or news cycle, the LGBT+ Officers (with the support of the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer) are mandated to release a statement.
  - a. The statement should highlight appropriate actions that students can take to support their LGBT+ colleagues.
  - b. If public consultation is taking place, the statement should include guidance on taking part, and the officers should promote the consultation to relevant student groups.