

1740 A Transgender and Non-Binary Students Policy for UEA

(passed 15 October 15)

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Union notes:

- 1) That transgender and non-binary students are disadvantaged and marginalised in society and at UEA, facing issues like harassment, misgendering, lack of access to adequate healthcare, lack of access to appropriate toilets, poorer employment prospects, lack of appropriate prefixes, lack of non-binary recognition and difficulties in changing university details;
- 2) That there has never been an attempt to estimate how many students at UEA are transgender and/or non-binary, but that the National Union of Students estimates that around 28,000 students in the UK are;
- 3) That the 2013 Concrete Sex Survey suggested that non-binary students make up at least 1-2% of the UEA population;
- 4) That according to research conducted by the NUS, over half of trans and non-binary students (51%) have considered dropping out of university;
- 5) That the position of LGBT+ Officer has only ever been held by a cisgender individual;
- 6) That in 2014, UEA's Trans Place in its delegation to the NUS LGBT Conference went unfilled;
- 7) That the Union's website does not tell people that if they fail to identify as LGBT+ upon registration they will be unable to vote in the LGBT+ Officer election, which has led to some students being unable to vote in elections despite being eligible;
- 8) That many trans and non-binary students, particularly non binary students, may not identify as LGBT and thus may be excluded from elections that they are eligible to vote in;

- 9) Students in the LGBT+ caucus have raised that they have found it difficult to change their names or genders on UEA records using the current UEA email and registry system;
- 10) That Action for Trans* Health provides one of the few centres for trans-related resources concerning medication, administrative changes, housing and the role of the NHS in transitioning;
- 11) That the UK's gender recognition laws still requires trans people to pay fees, go through medical examinations and go before an unelected panel before being able to change their gender on government records. These same laws also refuse to recognise non-binary people.

Union believes:

- 1) That "transgender student" (to be abbreviated as "trans") shall be defined by UUEAS as being any student who identifies wholly or partially as not being the gender they were assigned at birth. This includes, but is not limited to, people who identify wholly with another gender, are genderfluid, are bigender, have no gender or fall under the non-binary umbrella, as well as trans women and trans men;
- 2) The union recognises that not all non-binary people identify as transgender, however, and will extend its support, aid and activism to non-trans non-binary people whilst respecting their gender identity and not describing them as trans if they do not wish to be;
- 3) That we have no tolerance for transphobia and will oppose it wherever it appears;
- 4) That gender identity is defined by the individual, not by society or by societal norms. Trans men are men, trans women are women and non-binary people are non-binary;
- 5) That non-binary, agender, genderqueer, pangender, bigender and genderfluid people exist and are as valid in their gender as any man or woman;
- 6) That people have an unquestionable right to identify as a gender different to the one which they were assigned at birth;

- 7) That people's gender identities are not matters of debate, and that the Union will accept trans and non-binary students without forcing them to justify their existence or their rights;
- 8) That gender neutral pronouns such as "They/Them/Theirs", "Xey/Xem/Xeirs" and other gender neutral variants are all valid pronouns and should be respected by fellow students, by the Union and by the University and its staff;
- 9) That trans and non-binary students have the right to access gender neutral toilets without being faced with unfair restrictions or unreasonable distances to travel;
- 10) That trans and non-binary students have the right to access the toilets that make them feel comfortable and safe in their gender;
- 11) That trans and non-binary students have the right to access healthcare vital to their mental wellbeing and physical transition, and to do so without unreasonable barriers, expenses or waiting times;
- 12) That trans and non-binary students have the right to have their gender recognised by institutions of government, administrative bodies, businesses and other institutions, including the University of East Anglia;
- 13) That if the University of East Anglia forces trans and non-binary students to jump through hoops in order to change their name on official records, it is failing to look after their welfare;
- 14) That trans and non-binary students have the right to change their "official" name and gender on university records without unfair restrictions or excessive stress, and to have those names and genders recognised by the officials and staff of UEA;
- 15) That trans and non-binary students as a Liberation Group deserve their own specific representation within the democratic structures of the National Union of Students;
- 16) That using "X" as a gender marker for non-binary students is dehumanising and erasing of non-binary genders;
- 17) That trans and non-binary students should not have financial barriers put in the way of their transition and should be able to access basic transition supplies;
- 18) That the liberation of trans and non-binary students requires both activism and education, and that UUEAS can play an important role in

changing mindsets around trans and non-binary issues as well as fighting for inclusive policies and institutions;

- 19) That any future policy relating to trans and non-binary students should not be drawn up unless trans students from across UEA have had the opportunity to input into a discussion of the policy through a committee, discussion group, survey, caucus or some other method;
- 20) That no policy on trans and non-binary students should be written solely by a cis person without consulting the elected representative(s) of trans and non-binary students;
- 21) That the Union should support trans and non-binary people in demanding the replacement of the 2004 Gender Recognition Act with an Act that would allow trans and non-binary people to self-define their gender, without a need for excessive "evidence" or invasive procedures, as well as demanding an Act that recognises non-binary people.

Union therefore resolves:

- 1) To affiliate to Action for Trans* Health at the cost of one fundraiser per annum;
- 2) To send one delegate to their national conference, to be elected by trans students in a manner determined by the LGBT+ Caucus;
- 3) To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer to –
 - a) Ensure that the LGBT+ registration question on the union website is "do you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, transgender, non-binary, intersex and/or another group within the LGBTQIA+ community?";
 - b) Ensure that any such registration question makes it very clear that if students do not register as LGBT+, they will be unable to vote in the LGBT+ Officer election or in elections for NUS LGBT Conference delegates;
 - c) Ensure that LGBT+ students are reminded, in advance of elections, that they will be unable to vote if they do not register as LGBT+ and to outline the process for doing so.

- 4) To mandate the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to –
- a) Notify Action for Trans* Health of our affiliation to their organisation;
 - b) Press for UEA to work with the Union's LGBT+ Officer and Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to improve UEA's training on trans and non-binary issues, and to extend this training to lecturers and teachers;
 - c) Create guides to NHS healthcare services for trans and non-binary students, so that those services are more easily accessible, transparent and understood;
 - d) Campaign for UEA to ensure that its process for changing names on official records is clear, consistent, accessible and simple and does not cause undue stress or anxiety;
 - e) Campaign for UEA to ensure that students who have not changed their name via deed poll are provided with the option of having a 'preferred name' on UEA records, and that the process for adding this name is simple, accessible and not stressful;
 - f) Campaign for UEA to offer advice services on how to change your name via deed poll through the Dean of Students, such as providing a deed poll template;
 - g) Ensure that there is a simple and non-stressful service, provided through the UUEAS Advice Service, to help trans and non-binary students fill out a deed poll form and present it to the university as proof of a name change;
 - h) Campaign for the University to ensure that on all official documentation for which gender is asked, there will be a provision for non-binary and other gender options. The Union will, under no circumstances, accept X as a non-binary gender marker or an abbreviation, and will oppose any moves towards X markers;
 - i) Lobby for students to have the option of rejecting all prefixes on official UEA records and leaving the prefix space blank;

- j) Campaign for there to be at least one gender neutral toilet in every single university building on campus;
- k) Ensure that, in Union communications and documentation, 'transgender' will be abbreviated as 'trans' without an asterisk as the asterisk is disliked by the vast majority of trans and non-binary people¹;
- l) Ensure that, on all SU documentation and communications where gender is asked, the Union will provide for non-binary and other gender options;
- m) Campaign for UEA to ensure that campus cards will be re-issued free of charge for trans and non-binary students who have come out since receiving their initial campus card, if they wish to change their prefix, name and/or likeness to better reflect their current gender;
- n) Campaign for UEA to explicitly recognise medical transition appointments, and transition in general, as an extenuating circumstance when it comes to issuing extensions for coursework and resits for exams;
- o) Campaign for UEA to have a graduation dress code that is not gender-specific, and instead follows the example of Cambridge University in stating that "students can choose to wear what they like as long as it is 'suitably smart dress'... 'Smart dress' is defined without reference to considerations of gender identity or expression",² as opposed to the current UEA dress code which states guidelines for "male" and "female" students and demands that "male" students wear suits³;
- p) Campaign for UEA to draw up its own Transgender and Non-Binary policy, based on this policy, which will also apply to staff;
- q) Provide an easily accessible list of UEA's gender neutral toilets, along with their locations, on the Union's website.

¹ <http://www.uktrans.info/attachments/article/377/terminology-survey-results.pdf>

² <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/23/us-gay-transgender-college-idUSKBN0P31LT20150623>

³ <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/graduationoffice/summer-graduation/dress>

- 5) To mandate Management Committee to issue a public statement of support for a full-time NUS Transgender Students Officer if a proposal for one is presented to NUS National Conference.
- 6) To mandate all five of UEA's NUS National Conference delegates, for as long as this policy is valid, to vote in favour of proposals for a full-time NUS Transgender Students Officer if they are presented at NUS National Conference.
- 7) To mandate Management Committee to investigate the costs of offering the following products discounted or for free in a manner to be determined by the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer and LGBT+ Officer:
 - a) Shaving razors;
 - b) Shaving foam;
 - c) Basic foundation available in a range of colours to suit a variety of skin tones;
 - d) Binders;
 - e) Packers;
 - f) The aforementioned guides to NHS healthcare for trans and non-binary students;
 - g) Other trans and non-binary resources to be developed by the Welfare Officer working with the LGBT+ Officer and UEA Pride committee.
- 8) That the exact process by which discounted/free items and resources will then be distributed will be developed by the LGBT+ Officer and the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer, with a particular concern to ensuring confidentiality of transgender and non-binary students and ensuring reasonable access to resources.