

## **1288 LGBT+ Policies**

Passed 6 12 12

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### **Union Notes:**

#### **1) Sexual Health:**

- a) Data is collected by the NHS for men who sleep with men, but not for women who sleep with women.
- b) Often sex between two women is not considered 'sex'.
- c) There are false assumptions that women who sleep with women cannot catch STIs, etc.

#### **2) Mental Health:**

- a) The statistics for mental health issues within the LGBT+ Community are staggering. LGBT+ people are at significantly higher risk of developing mental health issues.

#### **3) Resources:**

- a) The Union runs a very commendable Advice Centre.
- b) That issues that affect LGBT+ issues are very different to those others may experience.
- c) That there is no confidential resource area, either physical or online, at UEA other than speaking to a member of staff at the Advice Centre or Dean of Students.

#### **4) Heteronormative views:**

- a) The Union is an equal opportunities organisation, and this extends to the three media societies: Concrete, UEA:TV, and LiveWire.
- b) That heteronormative means portraying in the media the idea that being straight is normal.

#### **5) LGBT+ Participation in Sport:**

- a) At UEA, 52.8% of LGBT+ students who played sport were not out to their team mates.
- b) The Union has responsibility for ensuring access for all members to all its events and clubs/societies.

#### **6) Blood Donation:**

- a) Blood donations save lives, but men are banned from giving blood if they have had sex with another man in the last year.

#### **7) Gender Neutral Marriages:**

- a) Gender neutral marriages would mean that any two people, regardless of gender, can legally be married.

### **Union Believes:**

#### **1) Sexual Health**

- a) Facts need to be presented to dispel the myth discussed in Union Notes 1c.)
- b) That sex doesn't have to involve a penis! Sex between women who sleep with women is sex just as much as it is between two men or a man and a woman.
- c) Data collected by the NHS on women who sleep with women would be extremely useful in tackling common misconceptions.

#### **2) Mental Health:**

- a) Not enough is done to target the LGBT+ community as an 'at risk' group of developing mental health issues.
- b) That access to support is the right of all people, not a privilege.
- 3) Resources:**
  - a) LGBT+ people should be able to access general advice and information confidentially.
  - b) That resources should be comprehensive and always free.
- 4) Heteronormative views:**
  - a) That wherever possible, heteronormative views should be challenged.
  - b) That previous 'sex issues' of Concrete have had a severe lack of statistics/discussion/articles on LGBT+ sex and issues.
- 5) LGBT+ participation in sport:**
  - a) LGBT+ people are entitled and encouraged to play sport at UEA.
  - b) No member should be discriminated against on the basis of their gender identity or sexuality.
- 6) Blood donation:**
  - a) The ban prevents willing donors from giving blood and saving lives.
- 7) Gender Neutral Marriages:**
  - a) That LGBT+ people have valid relationships built on love, just as in any heterosexual relationship.
  - b) That LGBT+ couples should be allowed to share all the same rights and privileges as heterosexual couples, in marriage or otherwise.

**Union Resolves:**

- 1) Sexual Health:**
  - a) That when the Union is conducting a sexual health campaign, women who sleep with women are suitably informed of the risks outlined above.
  - b) To support any campaign that calls on the NHS to collect data with regards to women who sleep with women.
- 2) Mental Health:**
  - a) To work with the NHS and Dean of Students to see how accessible students think mental health services are; and to find out their expectations/experiences of these services.
  - b) To develop a major awareness campaign targeted at LGBT+ students giving them clear points of contact and reassurance.
  - c) Such a campaign will not insult, isolate or intimidate its target audience.
- 3) Resources:**
  - a) To develop, with the University, an online resource centre, which will be confidential to access and available 24/7.
  - b) That, when space allows, the Union will provide a room dedicated to being a 'safe-space' for the liberation officers. This room will be used for support group meetings, housing resources, and a base for campaigns. Should a new Union House building be made, it should include a room for each of the liberation campaigns, as is common practice amongst Universities worldwide.
- 4) Heteronormative views:**

- a) That the Union should **inform** and encourage Union media societies to challenge the heteronormative view. Especially when discussing issues like sex, etc.

**5) LGBT+ Participation in Sport:**

- a) That the Union should encourage sports clubs to engage with LGBT+ students. They could and should be encouraged to hold events such as:
  - i) Open training sessions - these would also act as taster sessions for the sport. They could be open to all genders through a collaboration with both gendered sports teams (such as mens and women's football hosting a joint open training session).
  - ii) Hold regular mixed-gender friendlies.
  - iii) If possible, enter mixed gender competitions.
- b) That clubs will report back to the LGBT+ officer, or designated Full Time Officer, explaining what they had done that year to challenge discrimination in sport.

**6) Blood Donation:**

- a) To campaign against any ban on donation of blood by men who sleep with men.

**7) Gender Neutral Marriages:**

- a) That the Union will publically support gender neutral marriages, and will support any legislation proposed by the government to introduce them.
- b) That the LGBT+ Officer will, on behalf of the Union, sign any such petitions supporting this.