

October 2016

Checklist for Developing Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality in Post School Education

60% of students have witnessed bullying based on sexual orientation, with one on 10 saying they see it every day.

The above is just one of several findings in the Pride and Prejudice report about sexual orientation and gender identity equality in post school education. The report was published by the Forum in February 2016.

The Forum also found that 17% of staff have experienced name-calling at work, and one in 10 had been threatened or intimidated.

Recommendations are made in the report, many of which can either be followed up or acted upon by branches. With the evidence of widespread discrimination, it is clear, that there is more work that needs to be done to include and support LGBT+ people in further and higher education today.

This checklist is drawn from the findings in the Pride and prejudice report. This list is specifically drawn up to inform UCU reps to support action in these equality areas within their organisations. The full version of the report is available on the UCU website:

https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/7929/Pride-andPrejudice-in-Education-Feb16/pdf/ucu_prideandprejudiceineducation_feb16.pdf

The Forum used the terms LGBTQ+ and non-binary gendered, these and other terms are explained in the report. The sub headings used in this checklist have been developed specifically for this document. For further info and support in developing action using this checklist please contact Seth Atkin, UCU Equality Support Official, satkin@ucu.org.uk

What branches can do?

1. Increase understanding across the organisation that many LGBTQ+ people are not 'out'.
2. Take steps to enable all staff to provide support for colleagues who are targets of bullying and harassment.
3. Signpost to support services including, where appropriate, third party LGBTQ+ organisations.
4. Ensure that the voices of all staff are heard throughout the organisation including union representation on organisational equality committees.
5. Address sexual orientation and gender identity issues through equality fora.
6. Ensure that derogatory language and discriminatory behaviour is challenged as a matter of course. For example, by widely publicising equality policy or developing a 'zero tolerance' approach to LGBTQ+ bullying and harassment.

What the organisation should be doing already so the branch can check and if necessary chase up

1. Develop and promote effective policies and procedures that address sexual orientation and gender identity equality.
2. Ensure that policies relating to sexual orientation and gender identity equality are easy to find and well-publicised.
3. When information is collected on learners' sexual orientation and gender identity for equality monitoring purposes, ensure that efforts are made to encourage reporting by reassuring and explaining the reasons for such data collection, and how the data will be stored.
4. Reporting on learners' sexual orientation and gender identity should remain completely voluntary.

5. Wherever equality monitoring is carried out:
 - i. include questions around sexual orientation and gender identity
 - ii. explain the purpose of the exercise
 - iii. pay attention to the needs and concerns of staff and learners who are LGBTQ+(including asking appropriate questions about sexual orientation) and be sensitive to concerns about disclosure noting that environments can be made welcoming and enabling.
 - iv. do not restrict staff and/or learners to male/female gender identities.
 - v. ensure confidentiality.
6. Build discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity and other equality issues into the content/delivery of the curriculum.
7. Equip staff with the understanding and skills to identify, challenge and deal with inappropriate behaviour wherever it occurs

How the organisation can be inclusive of LGBT+ people and what may be campaigned for?

1. Reach out to all sexual orientation and gender identity groups in consultations and surveys.
2. Take steps to enable all staff to understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity
3. Language and terminology used should be up-to-date with best practice and ideally agreed with LGBTQ+ learners.
4. Develop more LGBTQ+ societies as an important means of support for LGBTQ+ learners.
5. Develop inclusive curriculum content.
6. Ensure staff are appropriately trained to support non-binary learners and pay specific attention to the higher risk of non-binary learners dropping out of education.
7. Establish a clear first point of contact for learners to report incidents.
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