

LGBT+ Charter for Equality, Liberation and Solidarity

In recent years there have been continued challenges to LGBT+ rights and an upscaling of negative press attention to all Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and non-Binary issues. UCU is strong in our support of all LGBT+ rights backed by years of policy passed by UCU members at our annual Congress.

Through running the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) module LGBT+ Language in Use it has become clear that there are many UCU reps and members interested in doing something to support our LGBT+ members, and students. However, UCU members and reps report patchy understanding of, and action to support, LGBT+ members at branch level. This demonstrates the importance of finding constructive ways of organising and campaigning for LGBT+ rights at branch level. This is even more the case in the context of ongoing challenges faced by LGBT+ people.

This charter has been brought together using recommended actions arising out of prior UCU research, advice and guidance. All these documents can be found on the UCU webpage for the LGBT+ charter: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/LGBT+charter>

The aim of the charter is to clearly identify a number of actions that branches can take to promote LGBT+ equality and liberation.

Branches will be provided with a way of feeding into the national UCU LGBT+ support for this charter by way of a UCU LGBT+ forum open for branch LGBT+ reps or where there is no specific LGBT+ rep another rep who is leading on LGBT+ equality. This forum will enable us to establish what actions branches are taking and what questions / barriers branches have in their LGBT+ work.

1. WHAT CAN A BRANCH HAVE IN PLACE

- Equality reps, and if your branch has capacity, a rep for different equality strands including LGBT+
- The inclusion of LGBT+ issues as standing item on branch agenda





- Resources for branch members on how the branch supports LGBT+ equality and liberation
- An LGBT+ staff group and / or, a group for LGBT+ union members. The branch can check out what staff group already exists. If the branch plans to take action it could be useful to work with an existing LGBT+ group or, perhaps, set one up.
- Branch policy about their, and other UCU meetings, being places where it is safe for LGBT+ members to be open, if they so wish, and to talk about their experiences in the workplace.

2. WHAT SHOULD A BRANCH DO

- Display notices supportive of and welcoming to LGBT+ people, including for branch meetings (whether they be in person, hybrid or online), ensuring they explicitly include trans and non-binary members
- Undertake an annual survey of LGBT+ members to help identify priorities for branch action and collective bargaining on LGBT+ rights and to promote LGBT+ inclusion.
- Review branch data collection to ensure that the equality data collected by the branch is inclusive of LGBT+ people
- Develop branch policy and campaign within your institution, feed info back to UCU national e.g., through LGBT+ reps forum – campaign around it including review of all material, websites and practice for LGBT+ inclusion
- Adopt UCU's trans inclusion statement
- Liaise with local LGBT+ community to promote joint working in support of LGBT+ rights locally i.e., at local events
- Establish / strengthen relations with LGBT+ staff groups highlighting why it is advantageous for them to work with unions.
- Establish a LGBT+ forum locally to identify issues and establish reps and broader branch agenda
- Deliver / host LGBT+ training for branch officers and members e.g., UCU LGBT+ cpd
- Review, and where required, update gender identity inclusion in policies
- Organise events and actions to support national and local occasions such as LGBT+ History Month, local Pride events, Trans Awareness Week etc.
- Ensure that casework monitoring systems collect equality monitoring data by protected characteristic, particularly where casework involves allegations of bullying, harassment and victimisation.
- Promote LGBT+ issues by establishing a place for focusing on these through collective bargaining structures with management such as JCC meetings.





- Make it easy for people to update all their records. Keep this process under regular review to ensure any changes to systems do not undermine LGBT+ people. This will help prevent deadnaming¹ and misgendering.
- Encourage the employers to have an LGBT+ training events eg, UCU LGBT+ cpd.

3. CHECK

- That monitoring is anonymised and confidential. This may include writing something about disclosure where concern is raised that current practice could reveal people's sexual orientation or gender identity
- Ensure that branch policies for LGBT+ reflect UCU guidance as closely as possible. UCU LGBT+ guidance is on the charter webpage
- Review own practice. For example, review the use of personal pronouns (including ensuring people have the options to not use them. This gives those considering their gender identity time to decide when and how to make them known.)

4. COMMITMENT

- Commit to putting in UCU developed training and using UCU developed campaign materials to support LGBT+ people
- Commit to trans and non-binary inclusion in branch meeting and get management to agree this in policies and practices
- Include trans and non-binary issues and concerns in campaign materials and information
- Campaign for inclusion and against discrimination – be clear on what LGBT+ workers' rights are and on what responsibilities others have.

¹ Deadnaming is the act of referring to a trans or non-binary person by a name they used prior to transitioning, such as their birth name. Deadnaming may be unintentional, or a deliberate attempt to deny, mock or invalidate a person's gender identity.

