



12 Steps Guidance to Advancing Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality



for sexual orientation and
gender identity equality in
post-school education



Partners working together as the Forum for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality in Post-School Education at time of printing

- Association of Colleges (AoC) www.aoc.co.uk
- Association of Learning Providers (AELP) www.aelp.org.uk
- Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) www.atl.org.uk
- Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) www.ecu.ac.uk
- Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) www.hefce.ac.uk
- Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) www.lsis.org.uk
- Skills Funding Agency skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk
- National Union of Students (NUS) www.nus.org.uk
- UNISON www.unison.org.uk
- University and College Union (UCU) www.ucu.org.uk



The Forum for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality in Post-School Education

Introduction

The Forum co-ordinates activity aimed at advancing sexual orientation and gender identity equality throughout the post-school education sector. We share our expertise to produce high-quality, sector specific research and guidance, such as:

- [Guidance on trans equality in post-school education](#), and
- [Managing the interface: sexual orientation and faith](#).

The Forum brings together representatives from funding bodies, trade unions, representative groups and other stakeholders.

Why is action needed?

In 2011, [research into Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality in Adult Learning](#), carried out by the Skills Funding Agency and supported by the Forum, found that:

- Almost one in three trans learners had experienced bullying or harassment in adult learning due to their gender identity.
- Around one in six lesbian, gay and bisexual learners had experienced bullying and harassment in adult learning due to their sexual orientation.
- Only around a third felt that equality policies translate into reality.



In Higher Education, [the Equality Challenge Unit found in 2009](#) that:

- 49.5% of lesbian, gay and bisexual students reported negative treatment from fellow students due to their sexual orientation.
- 39.3% of trans staff reported negative treatment from students due to their gender identity
- 31.7% of lesbian, gay and bisexual staff reported receiving homophobic / biphobic comments from work colleagues
- 28.5% of trans students reported negative treatment from tutors / lecturers due to their gender identity

Our vision

The Forum's vision is for a sector where:

- All learners and staff (actual and potential) are treated with dignity and equal respect.
- Everyone is enabled to achieve their full potential, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity
- All organisations work to eliminate discrimination, harassment and bullying against lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.
- All organisations work to advance sexual orientation and gender identity equality.

12 Steps to Advancing Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality

The Forum recommends the following steps towards meeting this vision. You can take these steps alongside action for other protected characteristics, but sexual orientation and gender identity must be visible within whatever approach you take.

1. Publish objectives for sexual orientation and gender identity equality. as part of meeting the public sector equality duty requirements.
2. Commit publicly to tackling all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.
3. Take action to ensure all of the organisation's stakeholders understand their rights and responsibilities in regard to sexual orientation and gender identity equality.
4. Take action against homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and harassment, reflecting them in policies and procedures.
5. Respond positively to needs and concerns raised in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity by students and staff.
6. Take action to increase the visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans lives in education. Reflect diverse sexual orientations and gender identities within course content, language and visual communications, for example by celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans History Month in February.

7. Be clear about who is responsible for leading on sexual orientation and gender identity equality. Establish representation for sexual orientation and gender identity equality at all levels in the organisation including governance and leadership.
8. Ensure that staff and student inductions include relevant information about sexual orientation and gender identity equality.
9. Provide continuous professional development and training about sexual orientation and gender identity equality for all staff and learners. Include expected standards of behaviour and a summary of legislation.
10. Involve staff and students' unions in the promotion of sexual orientation and gender identity equality.
11. Fund and develop equality groups for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans staff and learners
12. Consider [or 'Give due regard to'] the impact of change and improvement programmes on equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans staff and learners.



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For more information and resources from the Forum visit the website
www.sgforum.org.uk