

Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter of The Forum for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality in Post-School Education ("The Forum"). The Forum was established in April 2007 in response to the CEL report, "[Equality and Sexual Orientation: the leadership challenge for further education](#)". The Forum brings together sector partners to co-ordinate work on sexual orientation and gender identity equality and share expertise. The members of the Forum include: Association of Colleges (AoC), Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL), Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Learning and Skills Improvement Service, Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), National Union of Students (NUS), UNISON and University and College Union (UCU).

Forum News will be published on a regular basis to keep colleagues up to date with work being undertaken by the group on sexual orientation and gender identity equality.

New Guidance on Trans Equality Launched at House of Commons

We are pleased to announce that our guidance on trans equality, aimed specifically at post-school education providers, was launched on 20 May 2008 at an official launch event at the House of Commons. The event was hosted by Lynne Jones MP, Chair Parliamentary Forum on Transsexualism and was attended by members of the Forum and colleagues within the Sector.

Press for Change, a trans equality group, was commissioned by the Forum to produce guidance specifically for the further and higher education sectors. The guide incorporates the advice issued by forum members and provides background information, practical advice and examples of good practice so that positive steps can be taken by colleges and universities to fulfil their legal obligations and provide a positive environment for trans workers and students.

A copy of the guidance can be [downloaded here](#).

Hard copies are available free of charge - order via email to UNISON at: out@unison.co.uk



Forthcoming Training and Events

- **NUS LGBT Activist Training Days**
One day network and training events for LGBT students and student officers held in six locations across the UK during November and December 2008. [Click here for further details](#).
- **AoC Training: Sexual Orientation Equality in the FE Sector - a practical workshop**
5 March '09 - [click here](#) for more information.
- **UNISON LGBT Members Conference**
14-16 November '08, Bristol - [click here for further details](#)
- **UCU Events:** for further information contact: satkin@ucu.org.uk
LGBT Members Conference - 15 November '08, London
LGBT research in the 21st century: one-day conference for academics, researchers and activists - 28 November '08, Newcastle
- **CEL/QIA leadership programme: Leading sexual orientation equality**
Offering FE and skills providers the opportunity to develop leadership skills, experience and expertise in making sexual orientation equality an integral part of their organisation culture.
December '08 to March '09, London and Manchester - [click here](#) for further details

Visible and valued: free training toolkit coming soon

A new innovative training resource has been developed to help post-school education providers to develop practical approaches to delivering sexual orientation equality. *Visible and valued* has been developed by CEL in collaboration with The Forum and is the first resource of its kind specifically for the post-school education sector.

Visible and valued includes an hour-long DVD with accompanying trainer's notes and a seven-module e-learning programme for self study. The materials use documentary and drama video, activities and exercises to provide a comprehensive guide for sexual orientation equality in a post-school education context. A taster of the DVD can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Visible and valued will be launched on 21 November 2008 at the UCU Conference Centre in central London. The launch is £60 per delegate (subsidies are available). You can book online at: www.centreforexcellence.org.uk/visible08.

For further information about *Visible and valued* please contact: equalities@centreforexcellence.org.uk

National research project: LGBT experiences in HE

The first national survey of its kind in the UK - Equality Challenge Unit has commissioned research into the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGB&T) staff and students in higher education.

The survey, conducted by Professor Gill Valentine, Professor Paul Plummer and Dr. Nichola Wood from the University of Leeds, will identify barriers or other issues specifically affecting LGB&T staff and students. Findings from the survey, due to be published in March 2009, will establish whether the higher education sector needs to take further action to engage with and support these groups. Academics, managers, representatives of the Universities and Colleges Employers Association, Universities UK, the trade unions, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Stonewall and the National Union of Students have all been involved in the production of the survey which will be distributed widely across higher education institutions.

The survey will be available to complete online at <http://www.equalsurvey.co.uk> from Tuesday 14th October and will remain live until the 14th November 2008. Please distribute details through all staff and student networks.

Useful publications

[Click here](#) for recent **UNISON publications** on bargaining for LGB and transgender workers rights; guidance on supporting trans members; and guidance on workforce monitoring on sexual orientation and gender identity.

[Click here](#) for **AoC and Unions joint guidance** for FE Colleges on sexual orientation equality in employment and managing harassment and bullying in employment.

Click on the links to download **ECU guidance**:

- Trans Staff and Students in Higher Education: Guidance 2008 - [click here](#)
- Employing people in Higher Education: Sexual Orientation - [click here](#)

[Click here](#) for **NUS publications** for officers, activists and students:

- Trans Students - dealing with trans issues and supporting trans students
- Putting the LGBT into FE - for students in FE colleges who would like to set up LGBT societies

Forum contacts and further information

The **Chair of the Forum** is Seth Atkin, UCU (satkin@ucu.org.uk). **LLUK** provides secretariat and financial support to the Forum. For further information about the Forum's work please contact Hana Ibrahim, LLUK (hanaibrahim@lluk.org.uk) or visit www.lluk.org/3487.

Forum News is published by:

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

