

Introduction

Welcome to the fourth issue of **Forum News**, which is published regularly by the **Forum for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equality in Post-School Education** (“the Forum”). This newsletter aims to provide updates on the work of the Forum and on sexual orientation and trans equality in post-school education, including news features, forthcoming events and useful publications.

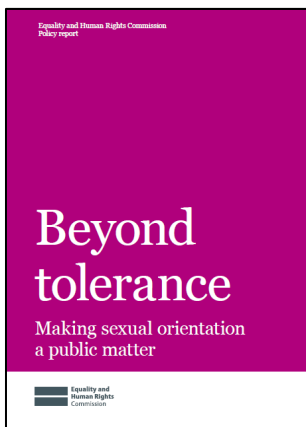
New research project explores the inter-relationship between sexual orientation and faith, religion and belief

LLUK, working closely with the Forum, is undertaking a research project in both the FE and HE sectors to explore the experiences of staff and learners and the interface between sexual orientation and faith. The project will also develop practical guidance that will enable providers to address this issue both in the workplace and in the learning environment. This project recognizes there can be potential tensions between religion/belief and sexual orientation equality. A clear picture of the problems that can arise is needed to establish and promote good practice in this area. The project aims to:

- Identify issues arising around the interface between the two equality strands;
- Identify good practice and areas of concern;
- Promote good practice and foster good relations within further and higher education and the rest of the lifelong learning sector
- Assist with the development of a strategic approach in the creation of case studies and practical examples of how to enable providers to deal with issues effectively.

Please contact Aisling Lyon (aislinglyon@lluk.org) for more information and details of how to get involved.

Beyond Tolerance: Making Sexual Orientation a Public Matter



The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has launched “Beyond tolerance: making sexual orientation a public matter”, their extensive research into the experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Britain today. Members of the Forum were in attendance at the launch event held in London on 12 October 2009. The research covers areas including crime, health, employment, education and data collection with the main report, “Beyond tolerance”, detailing what needs to be done to tackle the damaging discrimination and disadvantage LGB people face, and where organisations will need to focus in order to address the changes required. The research findings are detailed in a suite of publications available at:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/beyondtolerance

Visible and Valued Masterclasses

The LSC are funding LSIS to host a second series of one day masterclasses for sector staff to provide expert guidance on how to effectively use the Visible and Valued sexual orientation equality staff training DVD.

These masterclasses will help participants understand how to lead on implementing sexual orientation and transgender equality; train staff, governors and board members; support learners; deal with homophobic bullying and harassment; meet legal requirements and plan how to use the DVD.

Six masterclasses are being held across the country between December 2009 and February 2010 and can be booked online at www.lsis.org.uk/vvmasterclass2 or by calling 0870 060 3278. The cost for attending the masterclass is £40 per delegate.

Training and events

- **National Pre-launch of LGBT History Month 2010** - a pre-launch event for LGBT History Month, which takes place every year in February, is being held on 19 November at the British Museum in London. Timed to be part of Anti-Bullying Week, this whole day event will provide practical suggestions for how educational institutions can share LGBT History Month. A second pre-launch event is also planned for December. Further details at: www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/
- **UNISON national LGBT conference - Cardiff - 20-22 November 2009** - www.unison.org.uk/out
- **NUS LGBT Activist Training Days** - being held in November across the UK. These are low-cost training days aimed at students in NUS-affiliated unions, which provide information, network and training for students wanting to promote LGBT equality in their unions and institutions <http://www.officeronline.co.uk/lgbt/276585.aspx>
- **LLUK workshops - Data matters: shaping tomorrow's workforce - 2009-10** - series of regional workshops looking at collecting and using data to monitor workforce diversity, offering practical guidance and solutions. www.lluk.org/data-matters
- **AoC workshops on Bullying and Harassment - Nov/Dec 2009** - training for line managers, HR professionals and anyone with responsibility for managing equality in the workplace - www.aocmsevents.co.uk/bullyandhar
- **AoC Conference on Equality and Diversity in the FE Workforce - 24 February 2010** - save the date for this event which aims to support further education providers managing equality in the workplace. Visit www.aocmsevents.co.uk/EqualityandDiversity2010 for details.
- **Trans equality events** - in association with Forum members, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) is leading a project to promote gender identity equality. This will include a series of regional events and a web-based resource to help practitioners identify how the gender equality duty should be used in the context of trans equality; practical steps to achieve trans equality; how to develop a trans-positive environment and ethos; and effective practice. The project is being funded by LSIS, the LSC and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Forum News subscribers will receive further information, including dates, when available.

Useful publications

- **New LSC/LSIS guidance shows the way to improve equality and diversity practices** - guidance for FE colleges and providers, to help them to self-assess equality and diversity. <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/publications/latestdocuments/Detail.htm?id=c59ec438-c45d-4543-9946-2303285d0030>
- **NUS guidance briefing on gender-neutral toilets** http://resource.nusonline.co.uk/media/resource/2009_LGBT_GNT_briefing.pdf
- **NUS LGBT societies freshers' briefing** http://resource.nusonline.co.uk/media/resource/2009_LGBT_freshers_briefing.pdf
- **UCU resources for LGBT equality** - including guidance on trans equality, lesbian and gay rights at work, joint agreements for FE, and research carried out in HE <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2310>

Forum contacts and further information

The **Chair of the Forum** is Seth Atkin, UCU (satkin@ucu.org.uk). **Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)** provides secretariat and financial support to the Forum. For further information about the Forum's work please contact the Equality and Diversity team at LLUK at: equalityanddiversity@lluk.org or visit www.lluk.org/3487.

Forum News is published by:

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

