



## Gender-Neutral Toilets and Sign-Posting within Student's Union

### UPSU Notes:

1. Recent research has shown that 78% of transgender people in America have experienced harassment and discrimination in an educational setting.<sup>1</sup> Although a lot of work has been taken to tackle stigma and end discrimination, much work is yet to be done.
2. Many universities across the UK have gender neutral toilets.
  - a. University of York – the university has a policy that all new builds must include gender neutral toilets which has been acted on (one of the buildings didn't comply, it is being disputed whether the university or the builders are to blame).
  - b. University of Essex – has gender neutral toilets with sanitary bins in all of them ('took one day to enforce after being asked to be put in.')
  - c. Campaigns to de-gender toilets have also been successful at the Universities of Lancaster, Hull, Northampton and St Andrew's, to name a few.
3. While Gender-Neutral toilets do exist within the Student's Union, 3 to be specific, two of these are pre-existing Disabled toilets. It is of the highest importance to ensure disabled toilets are permanently accessible for those who require them. The other Gender-Neutral toilet is a cubicle next to the men's urinal room in the lower venue. The transferal of the toilets proposed in this motion to gender-neutral would alleviate issues with locating a gender-neutral toilet, and inevitably lighten the traffic through the critically important disabled toilets in the venue.

### UPSU Believes:

1. In inclusion and equal opportunities. We oppose any form of discrimination.
2. That the venue should be as accessible as possible and that we do not want to exclude anyone based on their identities.
3. If there is not an easily accessible lavatory option for non-binary students, it is a possible that discomfort or anxiety could be felt by any individual who is forced to use a toilet specifically segregated for the gender they do not identify with, or present as.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/ntds\\_full.pdf](http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_full.pdf), p. 3.

4. Transgender, genderqueer, and/or gender non-conforming people are particularly affected by bathroom segregation because of the visible gender differences that may not correlate with cultural gender norms.
5. Equal Opportunities Policy
  - ‘The Union seeks to enable all members to have equal opportunities and shall seek to protect the rights and opportunities of its members. The Union recognises that certain groups and individuals in society are discriminated against by virtue of being members of certain groups and is committed to challenging and removing discrimination and barriers. The Union will not tolerate prejudice or discriminate against its members or others.’
6. Safe Space Policy
  - ‘UPSU will provide a safe and comfortable environment for its members and will take reasonable measures to ensure this policy is enforced.’

**UPSU Resolves:**

1. Convert the signs on the lower venue male toilet cubicle in the SU to gender neutral, and add sanitary bins (if not already), on a trial basis.
2. Add clear sign-posting in the SU to these new and pre-existing gender neutral toilets (possibly at the top of the ramp down to the hive, and at the top of the venue next to the gender specific toilets).
3. Inform UPSU staff and security appropriately regarding the use of gender neutral toilets (anyone can use without a specific reason whether it is apparent or not).
4. To lobby for a policy that all new university and UPSU builds/renovations include gender neutral toilets.

**Proposed: Goda Cegialyte**

**Seconded: Victoria Jackson**

[Excerpt of the minutes of the UEC meeting 21<sup>st</sup> March](#)

Gender Neutral Toilets
<p>Goda Cegialyte – LGBT+ Forum Chair gave an overview of the motion, see appendix 1.</p> <p>Goda explained that gender-neutral toilets are accessible to all, regardless of gender, appearance or sex. The binary system of labeling excludes and discriminates and many other universities and unions have de-gendered their toilets.</p> <p>Vicky Jackson – Secretary and LGBT+ Forum Representative also added that UPSU currently has three gender-neutral toilets, two of which are also disabled toilets, and one other near the entrance to the male urinal area.</p> <p>Goda explained that the motion proposes an additional gender-neutral toilet be created in the south end of the building (nearest the Hive) to relieve the pressure on existing facilities. The motion also calls for improvements in signage and training as well as lobbying for policy.</p>

The speech against the motion was waived.

Steph Wearne – VP Education asked what, if any, consultation was done regarding the proposals.

Goda noted that both she and Vicky met with Velu Balabramanian – Director of Commercial Ops and Development and Ian Short – Facilities Manager. The meeting followed the original motion being discussed by the aforementioned staff and the Accountability Board as there was some dispute as to the content of the motion resolves and UEC voting on operational issues. After discussion the motion was amended by the proposer, to the one being discussed today.

Goda added that in the meeting, Velu and Ian agreed to a trial of the additional gender-neutral toilet, pending feedback from the Security Manager, but she was unsure if there was any feedback from them.

Gina Connelly – Chief Exec noted that there had been some feedback and there will be some cost involved but she is happy to proceed with the proposal, should it be passed by UEC.

Gina continued by explaining that, although it is hoped that a new building for UPSU would be part of the Estates Strategy, a definite time scale cannot be given. If UPSU remains in the current building in the longer term, UPSU will be approaching the university for funding to amend the layout of current facilities. Gina noted that it is not the principle of gender-neutral toilets that is in question, operational concerns are solely related to the safety of members whilst in the venue and the current layout of the building would need to change to allow for all gender-neutral toilet provision.

Davide Bertelli – VP International and Outreach noted that he has worked closely with the LGBT+ Forum, he has attended the forum and participated in several online debates regarding this matter. Davide is currently lobbying the university to extend the provision of gender-neutral toilets and he feels strongly about this issue. Davide explained that as the current motion is not as originally intended then he would abstain from voting.

Vicky noted that there is a need for provision for everyone to be able to use facilities without discrimination. Davide agreed and noted that this is not the end of the matter, it will be pursued until resolved in its entirety.

The Chair called for a vote on the motion;

For: 10

Against: 0

Abstain: 1

The motion was passed