**Constitution**

The University of Sussex Student’s Union Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, + (LGBTQ+) Group Constitution

General

1. The Group shall be called the University of Sussex Lesbian Gay, Bi, Trans and Queer Group and known as the University of Sussex LGBTQ+ Group.

2. The group shall be part of the University of Sussex Student’s Union (‘the union’)

3. The group shall adhere to the rules that exist within the Union and the University. Financial accounting, elections, general meetings, amendments to these rules and other formal business shall be conducted according to such procedures as the University and Union may from time to time lay down for student societies, except where otherwise provided by this constitution.

4. The objectives of the group shall be, within the constituency:

a. To provide a safe space for lesbian, gay, bi, trans people, queers, those questioning their sexuality and gender, or those that identify with any other non-heteronormative sexuality or gender;

b. To welcome and support the relevant constituents;

c. To provide information on issues of sexuality and sexual health through its meetings, the union and other channels;

d. To campaign for:

i. The welfare of lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer people and those questioning their sexuality and gender, or those that identify with any other non-heteronormative sexuality or gender,

ii. The equal treatment of students and employees irrespective of sexual orientation or gender status, and

iii. The eradication of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and all related oppressions, including support for the ‘Sussex Against Homophobia’ campaign.

e. To participate in such campaigns with the same aims in the wider political forum as a general meeting may determine;

f. To build and maintain links with groups with similar objectives in the local, national and international spheres;

g. To hold social activities consistent with these objectives.

5. The meetings shall be run according to the following protocol by which all members abide:

a. Confidentiality. What takes place within the meetings, including the identities and personal opinions of those present is confidential.

b. Attendee’s individual opinion is welcome but remains their own. No individual opinion may be expressed as if the opinion of the group as a whole.

c. Intimidation of any sort is not tolerated.

d. Prejudiced opinions will not be tolerated, whether on grounds of sexual orientation, sex, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, nationality, disability, political persuasion, health, HIV status, appearance, class or student status.

e. When a meeting is chaired, members must go through the chair to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak.

6. The group believes that lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people and queers have common interests and that these are best served by working together in unity.

7. The group may operate separate but cooperating sections, with all groups accountable to and represented within the group committee.

8. All areas in which the Group operates will be subject to the USSU Safe Space Policy. This includes (but is not limited to) the LGBTQ room, Facebook page, website and any other space where the LGBTQ group formally meet.

Committee

1. The group shall have a committee elected by simple majority via a secret ballot, with the following posts which will include (but will not be limited to) the noted responsibilities:

a. Chair: They shall have overall responsibility for the group and its functions, and shall also liaise with the Union and any external bodies as necessary. The Chair shall verify that the group is contributing information for Fresher’s in addition to that provided by the Union, and oversee the organisation of LGBT History Month. The position shall not be held by the same person for more than two years consecutively, and shall ensure adequate handover of duties. Candidates must have been on the committee for one full academic year to be able to run.

b. Vice-Chair: They shall be an existing member of committee and will take on the responsibilities of the Chair in the Chair's absence, and offer support where required.

c. Finance officer: Their responsibility shall be to monitor the group’s finances and to liaise with the union in the relevant ways.

d. Two Welfare officers: They shall have the responsibility of the general and specific welfare of the group’s members, as well as representing the LGBTQ community of the University. They shall hold a drop-in session each week during term of at least two hours duration; liaise with external welfare organisations; be accessible by phone and e-mail; and be willing to support LGBTQ students where necessary.

e. Communications officer: They shall perform secretarial duties, including minute taking, collection and dissemination of information, receiving mail and tending to the LGBTQ website/s.

f. Entertainments and Events officer: Their responsibility shall be the organisation of the group’s entertainment events, both internal and external.

g. Campaigns officer: They will coordinate and oversee campaigns for LGBTQ issues and rights as agreed by the group.

h. Two Open officers: They shall be available to help with all areas of the group and assist all other committee members where required. Must be adaptable and know what is going on with each part of the group to best use their time and resources to help out.

i. Post-Grad and Mature Student’s Rep: The role of the rep is to ensure that post-grad and mature students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self-define as a mature student or post-grad.

j. Trans Rep: The role of the rep is to ensure that trans identified students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self-define as trans.

k. Bi Rep: The role of the rep is to ensure that bi students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self-define as bi.

l. POC (People of Colour) Rep: The role of the rep is to ensure that POC students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self-define as a person of colour.

m. Disabled Rep. The role of the rep is to ensure that disabled students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self define as disabled.

n. Women's rep. The role of the rep is to ensure that women students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must be a self-identifying woman.

o. USSU LGBTQ representative: They shall attend all committee meetings and represent the LGBTQ students within USSU where required. They may be an elected member of committee.

**p.Aromantic Rep. The role of the rep is to ensure that Aromantic students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self-define as aromantic.**

**q.Asexual Rep. The role of the rep is to ensure that Asexual students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self-define as asexual.**

**r.Intersex rep. The role of the rep is to ensure that intersex students are represented on the committee and within the society as a whole. The elected rep must self-define as intersex.**

The ‘rep’ positions (Trans, Bi, POC, Disabled, Postgrad, Women's, Mature Student’s, **intersex, aromantic and asexual**) are to be elected first at AGM. They may then stand for any of the officer positions apart from Chair. Vice-Chair is elected last, with any elected committee member with less than two current portfolios (i.e., not someone who, e.g., is already Bi Rep and Comms Officer) being eligible to stand, unless their single portfolio is ‘Chair’.

2. The committee should ensure that the needs and issues of all the groups it represents (as previously mentioned) are represented wherever possible.

3. Other officers may be elected and may be given such titles as a general meeting may see fit. All the officers shall form the committee. The following duties shall be assigned to specific but not necessarily different people:

a. Regular meetings and publicity.

b. First contact for people coming out and welfare issues.

c. Liaison with the University, Union and Trade Unions as necessary.

d. Advance preparation of material for Fresher’s.

e. Liaison with students and staff and authorities of the constituency outside of the main campus of the University of Sussex.

f. The organisation of awareness or campaign events/days (minimum of two events per year in different terms).

g. Preparation of the Group’s entry for the Brighton Pride parade.

4. During elections all committee members are to stand down, to allow all group members to stand for a position.

5. If elected to the committee, unless expressly requested, all committee members shall understand that their names, contact details and photograph may be circulated within the group and Union, but not for general release \*[DO YOU ALL AGREE WITH THIS?]. They will also appear on the website and Facebook group.

6. By-elections for empty positions may be held as deemed necessary.

7. Committee members may re-stand for positions as outlined elsewhere in this constitution.

The Membership of the University of Sussex LGBTQ Group

1. The LGBTQ Group meetings are open to lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer people, those questioning their sexuality/gender identity, those that identify with any other non-heteronormative sexuality or gender, their partners and those members of the union and University who agree to comply with the protocol and objectives of the group.

2. The group’s constituency shall consist of members of the University of Sussex Student’s Unions.

3. Ordinary members of the union shall be eligible for ordinary membership.

4. Only ordinary members may vote in General meetings and may hold office.

5. All other students and employees of bodies within the constituency shall be eligible for associate membership if they hold associate membership of the union.

6. If the participation of associate members in a particular event would involve some identifiable marginal cost to the group, the Union, or the university, then they may take part in the event only at the discretion of the Committee. Otherwise all activities shall be open to all members.

The Group Records

1. Any records of group membership shall be used solely for the purposes of informing members of forthcoming activities, regulating General Meetings, and for auditing purposes. Only the Chair and communications officer shall have access to the records of membership.

2. The fact of a person’s membership shall not be made known without their written consent to the University, Union, to another member, or to any other person or body.

3. If any member resigns, leaves the constituency, or asks to be taken off the membership list, that person shall cease to be a member and his/her records shall be securely destroyed.

4. If the University, Union, or other component authority shall require verification of the Group’s Membership, the Chair shall agree with that authority an auditor, who shall be given temporary access to all relevant records of both parties. Under these circumstances members will be given written notice and the opportunity to have their name removed. It is suggested that the group use the Union’s Student Advice Centre Employees for this purpose.

a. The word of the auditor shall be deemed to have satisfied in full the request for verification.

b. The auditor shall not duplicate, publicise or otherwise reveal any information about the Group’s membership apart from that required by the audit.

c. The auditor shall then surrender access to the records.

Meetings

1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting during each autumn term at which the constitution shall be ratified.

2. General Meetings shall be held each term at a time and place that is convenient for its members, who shall be given seven days written notice. An ordinary member to be determined by the committee will chair the General Meetings. A member of the committee may chair the meeting if there is no such other person, but they must hand over their chairing responsibilities if and when they are standing for re-election.

3. There shall be a General Meeting each autumn term at which the chairs and other officers shall be elected. Handover will commence immediately and the committee will be formally in place one week from the date of election.

4. Guests and speakers may attend by invitation or arrangement through committee before the start of the meeting.

5. A quoracy of a general meeting shall be (committee x 2) plus 1.

6. Committee members may stand down and become ordinary members for the duration of the general meeting.

Finance

1. The Group shall apply for funding from the Union, which it shall administer according to the rules of the union.

2. The Finance officer shall be either a full-time or a part-time student of the University and member of the Union.

3. The Group may fundraise separately from the Union, all monies will be recorded and managed by the elected Finance officer according to Union policy, and all monies will be reported to the Union.

Elections

1. The chairs shall notify the Union Executive Committee of the current LGBTQ Group committee members.

2. Any committee member who does not attend committee meetings for more than three consecutive meetings without apologies will be deemed to have resigned and elections for their post will occur once suitable warning has been given to both the former officer and the ordinary members. Under no circumstances shall the committee members seek to undertake any judicial role for themselves, but a general meeting may re-elect removed officers or members.

3. Should a member of the Group “No Confidence” an officer, a proposer and seconder will be required. The officer will receive 7 days written warning to challenge the “No Confidence”. For the “No Confidence” to be successful a 2/3 majority in favour of the “No Confidence” will be required. Elections for their post will take place at the General Meeting as long as the time period has been maintained, and the officer has been invited to challenge the “No Confidence”.

4. Elected officers will be elected into post for one year only (unless leavers, see 5). Where committee members resign from their post during their term, a by-election will be held, and those then elected will complete the previous committee members term.

5. All those expecting to leave the University of Sussex in June/July as a student, and not to remain/return as a student should be expected to stand down from their position and announce this the committee prior to the last three weeks of Spring term, with the following exemptions:

a. Anyone intermitting if they will/intend to stay Sussex/within easy reach of the University of Sussex.

b. Anyone that will/intend to return to Sussex on a different course.

And:

c. Anyone intending to stand for an available position in the by-elections should be expected to be returning/remain at the University of Sussex beyond September (or intermitting and remaining within easy reach of the University of Sussex).

Constitution

1. Should the group fall inactive, it shall be the duty of the Union Welfare Officer to appoint an acting chair. Any assets shall at such times be held by the union in trust for the group’s re-establishment. For as long as the Union exists, the group shall not be terminated other than as part of the establishment of a new group with similar objectives (as previously defined).

2. This constitution may be amended at a quorate general meeting by a simple majority, which must be ratified by a 2/3 majority of those voting at a general meeting of which members have been given 7 days written notice. A copy of this constitution and any proposed amendments shall be available at the Student Union’s Reception, Student Advice Centre c/o Union Welfare Officer, Union Activities Centre c/o Clubs and Societies coordinator, and the LGBTQ room.

3. Where there is a need for an emergency amendment, the elected committee can make an amendment on behalf of the wider LGBTQ group if all committee members are in agreement, but the wider group must be notified and written objections submitted to the Chair within 7 days.

4. This constitution shall supersede all previous constitutions of the group/society.