



## UCL LGBTQ+ Equality Steering Group (LESG)

### Terms of Reference

#### Working definition of LGBTQ+

Here, LGBTQ+ is used as an abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer. It is intended as an inclusive “umbrella” abbreviation that encompasses a diverse spectrum of romantic and sexual orientations, sex characteristics and genders. It includes anyone that does not consider themselves to be heterosexual, or whose gender identity does not match their assigned sex at birth, as well as intersex individuals.

#### LESG History and Relationship to Out@UCL

Out@UCL was established in 2009 as a networking group for UCL staff who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer (LGBTQ+). It continues to exist as a thriving social network both online and offline.

After a series of early networking events by Out@UCL members, the LGBTQ+ Equality Steering Group (LESG) was established as a separate, formalised steering committee that serves UCL in an advisory capacity through the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion unit (EDI).

#### Aims

LESG aims to make LGBTQ+ equality and inclusion a reality at UCL, and is open to all staff who are interested in actively supporting this ambition, including allies.

#### Objectives

- Ensure as far as possible that matters of sexual orientation and gender identity are embedded in the UCL EDI strategy, and make recommendations to the Office of the President & Provost and to any relevant UCL committees with the aim of facilitating progress towards these ambitions.
- Promote positive attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people and coordinate UCL's involvement in awareness-raising events throughout the year, including LGBTQ History Month and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHoBiT).
- Identify, discuss and share best practice for delivering LGBTQ+ equality within the Higher Education sector, in collaboration with other universities



and external organisations, and by drawing on the latest research and evidence.

- Support staff directly, through coordination of the Out@UCL network and the supporter or allies network - Friends of Out@UCL, by facilitating networking opportunities for LGBTQ+ staff at UCL or creating and maintaining links with other relevant local networks.
- Consider the impact of UCL policies, procedures and practices as they relate to issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersectionality, and to identify any policies or practices that adversely affect LGBTQ+ staff or students.
- Liaise with and support other UCL networks and representatives including the LGBTQ Student Network and LGBT Officer. LESG will also provide a representative to the EDI Committee (usually the Chair).
- Assist EDI with the facilitation of the Equality Charters Group to ensure the LGBTQ+ Action Plan, alongside Athena Swan and the Race Equality Charter to ensure they are administered and developed.

## Membership

- At present the Steering Group is not limited to a specific number of members however it is expected that all members play an active role in the committee by taking on specific roles and responsibilities (refer to appendix 1 for specific details on roles and their respective responsibilities). This can be reviewed by the Co-Chairs at any time, providing it does not require members to leave involuntarily.
- Ex-officio representatives or honorary members who will be longstanding members and useful to the group due to their institutional knowledge, role and seniority e.g. Head of Departments and Directors of Professional Services divisions will not be expected to take on assigned roles and responsibilities.
- Members, excluding honorary members, will usually belong to the group for a term of 2 years, after which they will need to reaffirm their interest for up to another 2 years.
- A call out for new members will usually be initiated by LESG when appropriate. Perspective members can express an interest in joining by contacting the Co-Chairs, outlining their interest and contribution.
- Any part time or full time UCL staff or PhD student who identifies within the above definition of LGBTQ+ is eligible to join.
- Identified members of Friends of Out@UCL (allies) are also eligible to join the Steering Group on occasion if they feel that they can contribute to its strategy.
- The UMC LGBTQ+ Equalities and Council Champions will be a member of the group.

## Meetings

- The Steering group will aim to meet twice a term however meetings will be held flexibly and more frequently as needed, in line with the group's activities.
- Meetings, including online meetings, will be held during core hours 10.00am to 4.00pm, arranged with as much notice as possible, and will normally not last more than 60 minutes without a break. Agenda items and minutes of the previous meeting should be circulated a minimum of 5 working days in advance to allow members to provide comments in advance if they are unable to attend.
- When practically possible, there will be a representative of the EDI Team at each meeting, however they are not entitled to vote on matters.
- For quoracy, either 7 members or half of the total membership must be present.
- Where one or more members of those present at a meeting does not agree with the action recommended by the chair (including a position of no action), the chair should ask members to vote and the outcome is decided by the majority.
- Meetings to start with a note of any apologies, and review of the minutes of the previous meeting for approval and discussion of any action points. Any corrections / emendations to minutes of the previous meeting by the Co-Chairs need to be raised at the next meeting for discussion, prior to approval.

## Accountabilities and reporting

### Information to be received:

The Steering Group will receive reports from representatives of the EDI Team and Human Resources, concerning the planning and implementation of UCL's EDI strategy in relation to LGBTQ+ identities. Reporting will include:

- Data, aggregated statistics, or key findings from UCL demographic data related to gender and sexuality or surveys which record LGBTQ+ identities;
- Recommendations from external scrutineers, such as feedback on Stonewall UK Workplace Equality Index reports;
- Key matters of concern or best practice reported by Vice Deans (EDI) in relation to LGBTQ+ identities;
- Planned policy changes that are likely to be of particular relevance or impact to LGBTQ+ individuals working or studying at UCL;
- Information about external partnerships or use of the UCL estate which has been identified as likely to have an impact on LGBTQ+ individuals working or studying at UCL;



LESG may also request reports from the LGBTQ+ research network (qUCL), UCLU LGBT officer, and UCL LGBTQ+ Faculty Leads.

#### LESG reports to and seeks to influence:

EDI Committee, Equality Charters Groups and The Provost and another senior members of UCL Staff

#### LESG is accountable to:

Members who identify with LESG and/or The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team.

#### Responsibilities of all members

It is expected that members will hold values that are in general alignment with the LESG's terms of reference, and that they will uphold these values by promoting a culture of open dialogue, mutual respect and trust, in which members can be themselves without prejudice. Members will commit to undertaking any necessary training that may be identified by the Co-Chairs.

Members are expected to attend meetings, and membership will be reviewed if three meetings are missed without apologies. They are expected to keep themselves up to date around knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues and to speak up for organisational and cultural change, sharing their views and expertise to guide informed recommendations.

It is expected that members will contribute ideas and participate in activities, actions and projects in line with the LESG's objectives.

#### Chair/Co-chairs

Normally, LESG will have two Co-Chairs, who are elected by a blind ballot of the committee. When one of the positions becomes vacant, members will be invited to nominate themselves and provide a supporting statement to one of the Co-Chairs. To be eligible for election, members will usually have served the committee for a minimum term of 12 months and have been present at least 4 meetings. Where possible, the Co-Chairs will not identify as the same gender.

It is also possible for a nomination of a Co-Chair from an individual who is not a current LESG member on the basis that they are endorsed by two existing LESG who has served on the committee for a minimum term of 12 months.



Co-Chairs are normally elected by LESG for an initial term of 3 years, after which they can be re-elected for a second 3-year term. Co-Chairs can exceptionally be removed at any time by way of a vote of no confidence passed by the majority at a meeting of LESG.

#### Additional responsibilities of co-chairs

- Chairing/facilitating meetings, recruiting members, coordinating committee objectives and managing the budget in consultation with members, setting the dates of meetings and circulating the agenda and minutes.
- Ensure that the views of all members are heard and discussed in a timely and balanced manner, and that where possible all items on the agenda are given adequate time for discussion. They should ensure that members are not overloaded and that the balance of power within the leadership committee is maintained.
- Work with the UCL Equality Diversity and Inclusion Team as representatives of LESG and Out@UCL, and liaise with other UCL Equalities Working Groups and relevant external groups such as Stonewall and LGBTQ Trade Union representatives.
- Serve as members of EDI Committee.

#### Recognition

Volunteering to be a member or chair is considered an institutional citizenship role at UCL. There are several ways such contributions are recognised within the institution and all volunteers will receive information about recognition from the EDI team.

#### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team support

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team will provide a variety of support to empower EDI working groups to best represent and lead change for marginalised communities at UCL. The EDI team will maintain links between working groups to support collaboration and consideration of multiple disadvantages experienced.

#### EDI Key Contact

LESG will have nominated key contacts from the EDI team who will attend meetings. They will provide information/data, advice, strategic and project support to the working group. The nominated key contacts will make recommendations to LESG about policy and processes improvements and maintain links with organisations and other equalities working groups as appropriate.



## EDI Administrative support

Administrative support to include taking minutes at meetings, making room bookings for meetings and events, managing mailing list for LESG and Out@UCL, sharing relevant UCL staff survey results/data, managing payments and expenses.



## Roles

All of these roles (aside from co-Chair) are valid for a year, after which point you can either reaffirm your interest, step into a different role, or step down. They are all intended to be flexible and light touch.

### Co-chair (x1)

Role: This is a leadership role that ensures that LESG runs smoothly and acts as an effective lobbying group.

Example duties:

- Act as first point of contact (alongside co-chair) for staff, PG students across institution, offering info on LGBTQ+ issues.
- Work with co-chair to prepare agendas for LESG meetings.
- Moderate discussions in LESG meetings, ensuring members keep to time and that relevant actions are delegated to members.
- Work with co-chair to ensure LESG's budget is spent by encouraging members to organise funded activities.
- Act as a soundboard (on an ad-hoc basis) for other teams across UCL seeking advice about LGBTQ+ issues.
- Offer support and guidance to the LESG coordinators as and when needed.

Expectation: The role of co-Chair come with an expected commitment of 3 years.

No need for candidates to be a LESG member for 6 months if they either are a Faculty LGBTQ+ Lead or if they have an endorsement from a current LESG member.

Support available: the LESG co-chair and EDI Manager will be on hand to provide advice and support for this role. This role can be flexible depending on the co-chair's capacity, skills and expertise.

### Events Coordinator (x3)

Role: To organise community-building and networking events that bring together LGBTQ+ people and allies.

Example duties:

- Think of ideas for social and networking events for LGBTQ+ staff and allies.
  - These events can be light touch to accommodate the role holder's capacity. For example, staff lunches, lectures, museum visits, informal networking events, arts and crafts events etc.
- Promote attendance via Out@UCL or other mailing lists.
- Order catering and book rooms if required.
- Build relationships with other universities for cross-institutional events (if appropriate).



should be alcohol-free.

Support available:

- Other LESG members and your EDI representative can act as a soundboard for event ideas, assist with promotion of events and room bookings.
- We can also work with LUKI (LSE, UCL, Kings and Imperial) to run cross-institutional, thus giving Events Coordinators additional resource for their events.

### Communications Coordinator (x2)

Role: To deliver communications that raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues at UCL and build community by promoting Out@UCL events.

Example duties:

- Manage Out@UCL social media accounts, sharing relevant content, such as events, research, articles etc.
- Post content on the Out@UCL Teams site and encourage others to do the same to encourage engagement.
- Brainstorm content ideas for awareness days.
- Consider revamping [Out@UCL's webpage](#) to spotlight LESG's work.
- Provide feedback on EDI comms – this could involve:
  - Identifying LGBTQ+ content for newsletters.
  - Noting improvements that could be made to webpages and guidance documents.
  - Sharing examples of good comms from other universities.

Expectation: post in Out@UCL at least once a month; share ideas for content with EDI/VPEE for Pride Month and IDAHBaT.

Support available:

- LESG members can act as a soundboard for ideas.
- VPEE and EDI team can create written content.

### Policy and data champion (x2)

Role: to share data and policies regarding LGBTQ+ experiences (both within and outside of HE) with the EDI team to inform best practice. The role holder wouldn't be expected to conduct research but rather share interesting data and policies they've seen from other companies and institutions.

As data regarding LGBTQ+ experiences can be piecemeal and subject to challenges, providing rationale for LGBTQ+ actions can be tricky. Therefore, having these roles would maximise LESG's lobbying power.

Example duties:

- Share relevant data and research about LGBTQ+ experiences within and outside of HE with the EDI team. Suggest how this can inform actions at UCL.



- Act as a sounding board for new policies being developed at UCL.
- Identify gaps in UCL policies and guidance documents.
- Share reports and data that might help LESG build a case for new LGBTQ+ actions at UCL. This could be research from other universities.

Expectation: Read and feedback on at least 3 policy documents a year.

Support available: the EDI team will conduct the lion's share of data/policy research and would lead initiatives/actions; however, this would be a lighter-touch role where the role holder could actively share policies and data with the EDI team to steer initiatives. To support you in this role there are also various networks and mailing lists (e.g., HEEON or LUKI) where the role holder can ask other universities about what data they have and how they use that to build policies.

#### Knowledge and learning coordinator (x3)

Role: to share useful LGBTQ+ learning resources with LESG and the EDI team to improve UCL's approach to LGBTQ+ training.

Example duties:

- Identify gaps in training at UCL and suggest improvements.
- Share useful insights from training they've attended or delivered.
- Share interesting resources and trainings from other universities/organisations.
- Feedback on the development of UCL training materials.
- Consider how UCL stores its knowledge/learning materials for LGBTQ+ learning (could perhaps emulate reading lists like [the Bartlett's Race and Space](#)).
- Be open to considering co-delivering ad-hoc training sessions, either alongside the EDI team or LESG (e.g., training for Friends of Out@UCL).

Support available:

The creation of training and learning materials would rest with the EDI team, while this role would provide feedback and light-touch support.

#### Student champion (x2)

Role: to champion the student voice in LESG meetings and ensure students are considered in LESG's work as well as the EDI team's work on LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Example duties:

- Share insights regarding the LGBTQ+ student experience in LESG meetings.
- Be a point of contact for student-facing teams such as the SU and SSW.

#### Academic Research champion (x2)

Role: to share useful academic research relating to LGBTQ+ experiences with LESG and the EDI team. This enhances the academic rigour of LESG's lobbying and



Example duties:

- Share and collate academic research to help support a case for LESG activities.
- Consider how LGBTQ+ research can be shared and celebrated at UCL.
- Consider how to engage LGBTQ+ academics with LESG's work.
- Suggest ideas for supporting LGBTQ+ academics.

[Sponsor / senior champion \(x2\)](#)

Role: to ensure LGBTQ+ feedback is relayed to senior colleagues and committees.

Example duties:

- Use influence to advocate for LESG priorities. This could be by sponsoring papers or raising issues in senior committee meetings.
- Advise LESG on how to influence senior colleagues and committees to make voices heard.
- Make introductions or use their networks to raise awareness about issues affecting LGBTQ+ community at UCL.
- Fund and/or encourage others to fund ad-hoc LESG events.