



Southampton University LGBTQ+ Society Support Statement to University of Birmingham LGBTQ+ Association

CW: Conversion 'therapy', homophobia, suicide

The Southampton University LGBTQ+ Society supports the University of Birmingham LGBTQ+ Association in calling on the University of Birmingham to formally apologise, give reparations to the survivors and donate to LGBTQ+ charities and organisations that help the LGBTQ+ community. We further support Chris, and other survivors whether they have decided to speak out or not, about their traumatic experiences with this historically barbaric practice of conversion 'therapy' done by this university. A university choosing to ignore past actions that have caused so much trauma to people from minority communities, whilst claiming to support diversity and inclusion, deserves condemnation in the strongest possible terms. Institutions with this much power and history have a responsibility to acknowledge and recognise their past actions, no matter how horrifying and controversial it has been. To not properly recognise the harm they have caused to a number of LGBTQ+ individuals through this horrific 'therapy', and not issue an apology that demonstrates they understand what they have done to the brave man who spoke out, is an insult to the survivors and the community they have claimed to support. The Trevor Project in connection with the American Journal of Public Health has found that LGBTQ+ youth who have undergone conversion 'therapy' are twice as likely to attempt suicide and more than 2.5 times as likely to report multiple suicide attempts in one year. The Trevor Project also demonstrates that a number of long term side effects from conversion 'therapy' included feeling dehumanized, depression, social withdrawal, shame, guilt and suicidal thoughts amongst others. The UoB's continued denial of their part in the sessions of conversion 'therapy' further perpetuates these feelings in survivors and demonstrates the university does not care about acknowledging the harm they have caused.

We support the LGBTQ+ Association's points of actions that the University of Birmingham can take to show they are genuinely apologetic and amend their mistakes by publicly demonstrating their support for the LGBTQ+ community. We further ask other universities to stand in support with UoB's LGBTQ+ Association and to further lobby the Government to finally make conversion 'therapy' illegal in the United Kingdom.

Signed,
Southampton University LGBTQ+ Society Committee.