



# SUSU LGBT+ SOCIETY

## Statement Concerning Transphobia, UK Academics, and the Sunday Times

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2019, a letter was published in the Sunday Times that attacked transgender students in the UK, LGBT+ charity Stonewall, and any university that supports and/or advocates for trans rights. The letter was signed by thirty academics from various UK universities.

The letter claimed that Stonewall's work is "in tension with academic freedom" because the charity calls for a trans-inclusive stance in education and opposes "transphobic" teaching, creating an "intimidating atmosphere", and accused the charity of presenting "tendentious and anti-scientific claims as objective fact" with regard to transgender students and young people.

The SUSU LGBT+ society recognises the distress that these statements cause to trans students across the United Kingdom and join other university societies in condemning this letter in its entirety.

The society is pleased to note that none of the signatories of this letter represented the University of Southampton. We would also like to extend our thanks to the ten members of the University of Southampton faculty who have signed a widely-celebrated counter-letter in support of LGBT+ and transgender rights [as reported by The Independent](#).

"Universities should be seen as bastions of openness and acceptance, where people come to learn, grow, and better themselves without having to fear for their safety and hide who they are" said Kestral Gaian, President of the SUSU LGBT+ Society. "Let it be known that we offer our unwavering support and solidarity to our LGBT+ siblings across the UK, particularly at those universities that are host to one or more signatories of the original letter. It is our sincere hope that love conquers hate on your campuses. Know that we are right here fighting beside you."

Alongside SUSU and the University as a whole, the SUSU LGBT+ Society remains committed to making our campuses and our student experiences safe, accessible, and welcoming to all. If you or someone you know has been impacted by this matter, our welfare officers can be reached at [welfare.lgbt@susu.org](mailto:welfare.lgbt@susu.org) to chat confidentially and signpost where appropriate.

For all other enquiries, please contact [president.lgbt@susu.org](mailto:president.lgbt@susu.org).