

GENDER NEUTRAL TOILETS 13/02/14

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UNION NOTES:

1. Gender Neutral Toilets (GNTs) are toilets and/or bathroom facilities which do not have gendered signs and do not require individuals using them to define into a gender.
2. There is currently only one GNT across all of ARU campuses and university owned buildings, located on the Cambridge Campus within the Mumford corridor. These have proven to work effectively well.
3. In February 2013, policy was passed by Union Council for the SU to push for GNTs to be located on all campuses and buildings owned by the university. This can be viewed via the 2nd UC Video on the Video Archives.
4. In May 2013, Francesca Rust (SU President) reported that it was not possible to get them into the Young Street development plans and that the SU Officers were petitioning to get the policy implemented into Chelmsford building plans.
5. GNTs have been developed or being presented in favour for in the University of Sheffield, Sussex, Leeds, Glasgow, Warwick, and other USA institutions.

UNION BELIEVES:

1. The lack of GNTs, or none in some cases, is highly detrimental to the reputation ARU has of being a diverse and embracing community, not only for students, but also for members of staff. By maintaining this policy, it would be deserving of that reputation.
2. SU's are the frontline of any campaign for liberation and/or welfare. From an LGBT+ perspective, the use of GNTs would allow members of our community who have a gender identity different to a gendered sign to not feel pressured or uncomfortable to be who they are. It also reduces the threat of Transphobic violence due to gender identity (see additional reading).
3. From a Non-LGBT perspective, GNTs are particularly useful for parents of children who are too young to go to toilets on their own, or disabled people who do not need to use accessible toilets, but have personal assistants who do not share the same gender identity as them.

4. In no circumstances should all toilets become gender-neutral, particularly as this may disadvantage other groups due to preference, cultural, religious, or any other reason. These reasons however, should not be used to disadvantage people who would benefit from the availability of GNTs.

5. The costs of implementing GNTs can be absolutely minimal, as the only changes needed for converting are the removal of gendered signs, replacing them with gender-neutral signs, and addition of maps/signs to gender-signed toilets.

6. There are two ways in which this can be done: The Single toilet model (GNTs with their own sink/hand dryers), or the Multiple Cubicle Model (A set of toilets without gendered signage). NUS LGBT also suggests the 'Accessible' model where a disabled toilet is converted to an 'accessible' toilet whereby those who are disabled and/or those who wish to use a GNT can do so, but this would leave a precedent for Non-Disabled/Able-Bodied students using specialist facilities, and should only be considered as a last resort.

UNION RESOLVES:

1. To petition Estates and Facilities to create a policy to enforce that all university owned buildings have GNTs in each building.
2. To request that all Executive Officers of the Student Union actively encourage Estates and Facilities to develop GNTs for future building developments, and to encourage Estates and Facilities to change currently built toilets to be converted to GNTs.
3. To actively review, amend and change policy for future developments that use gendered signage, such as the changing room facilities for the gym.
4. To have a main point of contact within the Student's Union to answer any concerns about GNTs from students, media requests, or members of the public.