



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
Moray House School
of Education

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7th December 2015

Ned Sharratt
Assistant Clerk
Public Petitions Committee

Dear Mr Sharratt,

Please find a response from the Moray House School of Education.

Issues of inclusion, critical pedagogy and citizenship education feature within core Educational Studies courses which take place in Years 1-3 of the UG Programme. The UG courses are taken by both our primary education and also our physical education teacher education students. There are similar sessions in the PGDE programmes.

Within these courses we take a rights based approach and provide opportunities for student teachers to discuss and understand issues of sexual orientation, homophobia and heterocentrism. In particular, we stress the needs for teachers to be pro-active in tackling such issues. Attention is drawn to the LGBT Youth Scotland website and specifically to the Toolkit for Teachers "Dealing with Homophobia and Homophobic Bullying in Scottish Schools" and the "Shh-Campaign". More specifically, we have chosen this year to provide the EIS (2014) *LGBT Guidelines* as one of the optional policies for the students to write about in one of their assessment tasks.

I want to assure the Committee that I am personally highly committed to issues of social justice but also to explicitly tackling issues of discrimination and prejudice. I think there is always room for improvement and I have no doubt that more can be done to build staff confidence in addressing these issues. I would be very happy indeed for our School to be used as a pilot for active partnership work with agencies such as Stonewall, LGBT Youth Scotland and others to place, even more centrally, the issues of social justice and tackling discrimination in its various forms.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Rowena Arshad OBE
Head of School
Moray House School of Education