

LTB 260/20

15th May 2020

Dear Colleague,

IDAHOBIT Day

Sunday 17th May is IDAHOBIT Day and the Equality, Education & Development department are writing to Branches to make you aware of the importance of this very important occasion.

IDAHOBIT Day commemorations began in 2005 after it was internationally recognised that the level of homophobic abuse had reached very critical levels. One of the main intentions behind IDAHOBIT Day is to recognise and celebrate gender and sexual diversities around the world.

IDAHOBIT Day provides a powerful statement to demand improvements for people's quality of lives overseas and here in the UK. These human rights atrocities simply must not go unchallenged.

For many decades trade unions have been in the forefront of the battle for equality in the workplace and in society. Through campaigning, awareness raising and representing those who suffer discrimination, we can make a real difference.

The CWU has celebrated IDAHOBIT day for a number of years now and this year we have also prepared a short video with messages from a number of Regional LGBT+ Leads along with a message from Helen Cooper, who is our NEC Lead on LGBT+.

A year ago to the day the TUC launched its report into workplace sexual harassment of LGBT+ workers.

- Nearly 7 in 10 LGBT+ people have been sexually harassed at work
- More than 4 in 10 (42%) said colleagues made unwelcome comments or asked unwelcome questions about their sex life.
- More than a quarter (27%) had received unwelcome verbal sexual advances.
- Around two-thirds (66%) of LGBT+ people did not tell their employer about the harassment.
- Around (25%) of those who did not report the sexual harassment, a quarter were prevented from raising the issue by their fear of being 'outed' at work.

- LGBT+ women were particularly likely to experience sexual assault at work.
- over a third of women (35 per cent) had experienced **unwanted touching**, for example placing hands on their lower back or knee as had one in six men (16 per cent)
- over one fifth (21 per cent) had experienced **sexual assault** for example unwanted touching of the breasts, buttocks or genitals, attempts to kiss as had one in eight men (12 per cent)
- one in eight (12 per cent) LGBT+ women had been **seriously sexually assaulted or raped** at work as had one in fourteen men (7 per cent).

LGBT+ BAME and disabled women

BAME and disabled women reported even higher rates of harassment and sexual assault.

- More than half (54%) of LGBT+ BAME women have experienced unwanted touching at work, 45% reported sexual assault and over a quarter (27%) reported serious sexual assault or rape.
- Half (50%) of LGBT+ disabled women reported unwanted touching, nearly 4 in 10 (38%) reported sexual assault and almost a quarter (24%) reported serious sexual assault or rape.

Reports on the increase in LGBT+ hate Crime

- The number of transgender hate crimes recorded by police forces in England, Scotland and Wales has risen by 81% - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-48756370>
- The rate of LGBT+ hate crime per capita rose by 144% between 2013-14 and 2017-18. In the most recent year of data, police recorded 11,600 crimes, more than doubling from 4,600 during this period. - <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/14/homophobic-and-transphobic-hate-crimes-surge-in-england-and-wales>

Branches are encouraged to bring this LTB to the attention of all of their members.

Any queries on this LTB should be directed to Equality&Education@cwu.org

Yours sincerely,



Kate Hudson
Head of Equality, Education & Development