

LGBTQIA+ POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Drafted by:	Student (Melissa)	Board approval on:	November 2022
Responsible Person:	Strategic Finance Executive	Scheduled Review Date:	November 2023

INTRODUCTION

Big Yellow Umbrella (BYU) continues to promote equality and inclusivity in all its services and program activities delivered to ensure social inclusion, participation, and self-determination of all people. BYU programs and services are designed to provide fair and non-discriminatory practice to all users.

This document is to be applied to:

- The provision of all services
- Employment
- The provision of information
- Access to training
- Access to programs and events

PURPOSE

Recognising that prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping are prevalent through society and dedicated to the creation of a safe, secure space for those seeking services with us, BYU aims at promoting an inclusive environment that provides the highest quality of services to individuals regardless of their actual or perceived sexual orientation gender identity, or gender expression.

BYU has adopted the democratic values and principles of the *Practice Standards of the AASW* (2013) to ensure inclusive and non-discriminatory practice is adopted within all BYU services, programs, and events.

(Practice Standards) includes:

- Values and ethics
- Professionalism
- Culturally responsive and inclusive practice
- Knowledge for practice
- Applying knowledge to practice
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Information recording and sharing
- Professional development and supervision

DEFINITIONS

Key Terms:

- **Sex, gender, and sexual orientation** are all separate concepts.
- **Sex** refers to a person's biological and physiological characteristics. This has historically been used to categorise people. However, we now know that some people are born with natural variations to sex characteristics.
- **Gender** refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and is a part of how people understand who they are and how they interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being female or male. Some people understand their gender as a combination of these or neither.
- **Sexuality, sexual orientation, or 'attraction'** describes a person's romantic and/or sexual attraction to others. It also refers to each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional, and intimate sexual relations with others.

POLICIES

Non-discriminatory practice

Employees, volunteers, and other individuals involved in providing services to individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+, shall not discriminate against any individual in their care and shall immediately report any evidence of discrimination, physical or sexual harassment, and verbal harassment of any such identified persons to their supervisor.

BYU will take all reasonable steps within its control to meet the diverse needs of all people who identify as LGBTQIA+ seeking services and provide an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Inclusive language

In accordance with The National LGBTI Health Alliance's Inclusive Language Guide, BYU staff, volunteers and students will practice the following:

- Use inclusive and non-discriminatory language when dealing with LGBTQIA+ clients and their family members (particularly transgender clients).
- Ask individuals about their preferred pronouns (when it is safe to do so) and respect the use of pronouns (he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs)
- Address LGBTQIA+ clients using terms that are respectful and consistent with their self-understanding. If unsure, ask clients how they would like to be addressed.
- Use open and inclusive questions that are gender neutral and demonstrate acceptance (for example, 'do you have a partner? Are you in a relationship? What is your partner's name?').
- Recognise that LGBTQIA+ terminology is diverse and constantly evolving over time and across cultures.

Confidentiality and non-disclosure

In accordance with the BYU Confidentiality Policy as well as relevant legislation, employees, volunteers, and other individuals involved in the operation of BYU will never reveal sensitive information about an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity without that person's express written consent. Those in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

BYU recognises that some people may not wish to share information of one's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression with staff or other people involved with the organisation and is dedicated to respecting the confidentiality of those persons.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Operations Manager and the Strategic Finance Executive are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of all aspects of this LGBTQIA+ policy.

All staff, students and volunteers are responsible for adhering to this policy internally and externally.

The staff, students and volunteers are responsible for notifying the Chief Operations Manager and the Strategic Finance Executive of all complaints and any other updates in team meetings.

Staff are to identify and report any gaps in LGBTQIA+ inclusive practice relating to BYU service provision and report back to the Chief Operations Manager and the Strategic Finance Executive.

PROCEDURES

Committed to employees, volunteers, students, and service users, in creating an LGBTQIA+ inclusive and culturally safe organization, BYU will:

- Engage in consultation with LGBTQIA+ identifying individuals in the planning of programs, events, pamphlets, or flyers that involve their community.
- Commit to ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of personal information disclosed by LGBTQIA+ identifying service users.

- Ensure there are opportunities for people to identify as LGBTQIA+ when collecting demographic information.
- Actively participate in significant celebrations and events important to the LGBTQIA+ community (e.g., Wear it Purple Day, International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia).
- Support staff, volunteers, and students to participate in education and foster a skilled workplace that is up to date with issues affecting LGBTQIA+ people. Training delivered to other organisations and groups will include recognition of LGBTQIA+ communities.

Role of employees

- Treat all persons with dignity and respect; in doing so, contributing to a service environment that is positive and safe where everyone feels welcome.
- Avoid making assumptions about a person's sexual orientation gender identity, and/or gender expression.
- Meet staff obligations towards LGBTQIA+ clients under the Equal Opportunity Act, and federal legislation recognising same-sex couples and marriage.
- Follow BYU policies and procedures.
- Recognise the diversity of intimate and caring relationships, including same-sex partners and non-biological parents.
- Recognise and understand the difference between biological sex and gender.
- Understand the barriers that this community faces in heteronormative societies and cultures.
- Identify and challenge discriminatory beliefs and behaviours (including heterosexism, homophobia, and transphobia) about LGBTQIA+ people, both at the personal and organisational level
- Provide extra support and sensitivity to LGBTQIA+ people who have disclosed experiences of homophobic violence, particularly as many believe they will not be taken seriously or that the issue will be trivialised.
- Apply principles of recovery-oriented practice trauma-informed care, recognising the impact that trauma may have on this community.
- Acknowledge the intersection between interpersonal violence and the experiences of people who identify as LGBTQIA+

Role of managers

- Lead by example in providing a work environment that embraces inclusion, diversity, and equality.
- Create an environment where LGBTQIA+ employees and service users are embraced and celebrated.
- Deal with conflicts in a constructive manner and follow agreed BYU procedures where necessary.
- Ensure the BYU team is adequately trained in the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community and the importance of inclusion in all areas of service provision.

RELATED DOCUMENTS
AASW Practice Standards (2013)
Access and Equity Policy
Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender (2015)
Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)
Client Records Policy
Code of Conduct Policy
Confidentiality and Declaration Policy
Disclosure of Information
Fair Work Act (2009)
Privacy Policy
Risk Management Policy
Standards of Practice Guidelines Policy
The Equal Opportunity Act (1995)

The Equality Project's Australian LGBTQIA+ Policy Guide 2020
The National LGBTI Health Alliance's Inclusive Language Guide
The <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984</i> (Cth) (Sex Discrimination Act)
Trauma Informed Care Policy
Working with Children Policy

AUTHORISATION

The Board of Big Yellow Umbrella has reviewed and approved this policy.

Signature of Board Secretary: _____

Date of approval by the Board: _____

On behalf of the Big Yellow Umbrella