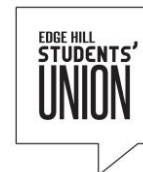


## Support the fight for marriage equality in Northern Ireland



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<b>Date Produced:</b>	28/01/18
<b>Meeting date:</b>	05/02/18
<b>Meeting of:</b>	Student Council
<b>Action:</b>	Approve
<b>Summary:</b>	<i>This is a motion of the Student Council. Updates should be reported in the Active Policy List.</i>

### This Union notes:

- That in the most recent vote, 51% of Northern Irish MLAs (Members of the Legislative Assembly) voted for marriage equality, but the DUP (Democratic Unionist Party) was able to veto it by invoking a petition of concern<sup>1</sup>
- That 70% of the Northern Irish public are in support of marriage equality<sup>2</sup>
- That Northern Ireland is the only place in the UK where same-sex marriage is still illegal
- That reduced LGBT+ rights in Northern Ireland has led to a mental health crisis in the community that is particularly severe, with 35% of LGBT+ individuals self-harming compared to 13% in rest of UK, 57% drinking to hazardous levels compared to 24% in England, and 25% attempting suicide<sup>3</sup>
- That due to our geographic location, a significant number of our students are from Northern Ireland.

### This Union believes:

- That marriage is a fundamental human right that everyone, regardless of their identity, should have access to
- That it is our duty as a Union to fight for marriage equality and LGBT+ rights in Northern Ireland, not only on behalf of our LGBT+ and Northern Irish student populations, but also as a fundamental human right
- That our previous campaigning with unions in Northern Ireland has been valuable and necessary, aiding the spirit of unionism and collectivism within which SUs were founded

### This Union resolves:

- To support the Love Equality Coalition campaign for equal marriage in Northern Ireland through an annual fundraiser during LGBT+ history month
- To support the Love Equality Coalition further by publishing a statement of support as a Union, and working with our elected officers to run an awareness-raising campaign about marriage equality in Northern Ireland
- To encourage the student LGBTQ+ society and local LGBTQ+ organisations to do the same

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-politics-34692546>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/survey-shows-70-support-for-samesex-marriages-in-northern-ireland-34842125.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/mental-health-northern-ireland-fundamental-facts>