



Union of Clare Students

Dan Wright
President

Union of Clare Students
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Motion: Establish a Gender Expression Fund

A proposal to use UCS funds to create a Gender Expression Fund to support Clare students requiring financial assistance to purchase certain items.

Date proposed: Saturday 8th June 2019

Proposer: Dan Wright

The UCS notes that:

- 1.1 The welfare of some transgender and non-binary students may depend on being perceived as the gender they identify with and feeling comfortable with their outward appearance;
- 1.2 Gender dysphoria is a significant source of distress for some transgender people and adversely affects their mental health, which may involve distress at perceived differences between their appearance and gender identity;
- 1.3 Items of clothing exist specifically to help align one's appearance with one's gender identity, with a positive effect on wellbeing and mental health;
- 1.4 These items of clothing (such as binders, packers, breast forms, and concealing underwear) are often expensive, especially since many are manufactured in the United States, thereby discouraging or being financially inaccessible people who might wish to purchase these items;
- 1.5 The concept of "passing" (being perceived as one's gender) is subject of debate within the transgender community, but many people do choose to purchase these items for a variety of reasons including safety or alleviating gender dysphoria;
- 1.6 Several Oxford JCRs have successfully established Gender Expression Funds, including Keble, Wadham, St John's, Regent's Park, Exeter, Magdalen, St Catherine's, St Hugh's, New, St Peter's, and Somerville;
- 1.7 Clare College and the UCS share a longstanding commitment to advancing the rights, safety, and wellbeing of LGBT+ students, including transgender students;
- 1.8 The UCS has previously taken valuable steps to support transgender students with respect to gender neutral constitutions and gender neutral bathrooms.

The UCS believes that:



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- 2.1 All students, regardless of income, should have equal access to the above items of clothing if they believe they will benefit from them;
- 2.2 The welfare of transgender and questioning Clare students is important and an area which the UCS should take responsibility for;
- 2.3 Establishing a Gender Expression Fund would benefit transgender students who would otherwise be financially excluded from purchasing these items despite wishing to do so;
- 2.4 The Gender Expression Fund would show transgender and questioning students that Clare is a welcoming, supportive community which embodies the values of solidarity and respect, and where one is free to explore gender identity and expression.

The UCS resolves to:

- 3.1 Provide £150 per academic year for a Gender Expression Fund to reimburse students who purchase items to make them more comfortable with their gender presentation, including but not limited to binders, packers, concealing underwear, wigs, and breast forms;
- 3.2 Mandate the UCS LGBT+ Officer to reimburse transgender, gender non-conforming, and questioning students from this fund on a case-by-case basis, with a recommended maximum of £40 per student per year, subject to increase or decrease depending on the availability of funds and individuals' circumstances;
- 3.3 Mandate the UCS LGBT+ Officer to preserve the privacy and anonymity of students requesting reimbursement from the Gender Expression Fund by sending anonymised receipts to the UCS Treasurer, who would reimburse the UCS LGBT+ Officer, who would themselves reimburse the student;
- 3.4 Discuss the provision of a Gender Expression Fund with representatives of Clare College to explore other avenues for supporting transgender, gender non-conforming, and questioning students at Clare, such as the provision of funds directly from Clare College, including for other costs like reimbursement for travel from Cambridge to Gender Identity Clinics.