Take a stand against Transphobia on our campus

What will we do:
1. Lobby the university to use any measures at their disposal to identify the perpetrators who have left these messages on campus, and to prevent people from placing further transphobic messages.
2. Ensure that where possible perpetrators face consequences under Students’ Association and University Disciplinary processes.
3. Promote the ways students can report hate messages and incidents so the Students’ Association and the University may deal with them appropriately.
4. Reiterate support and inclusion for Trans and Non-Binary students and take a consistent stand against harassment and discrimination.

Background to this:
1. Recently, stickers containing transphobic messages have been planted all over campus, including at Teviot, Potterrow, and the Library. These messages fall under the definition of hate incidents put forth by Police Scotland, as the messages are clearly motivated by hate and prejudice against Trans and non-binary people, who are a protected social group by law.
2. ‘The Students Association has a clear stance against harassment and discrimination, including that based on gender identity/gender expression.
3. According to UK charity Stonewall, “Two in five trans people (41 per cent) have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months. Three in ten non-binary people (31 per cent) have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity,” with more than half of young trans adults (18-24) having experienced a hate crime or incident.
   a) It is also severely underreported with 79% of trans people not reporting crimes to the police. Given these statistics, it is pertinent more than ever that trans students are supported and protected on campus.
   b) One in seven trans university students consider dropping out of higher education courses due to discrimination or harassment from staff or students in the last year.
   c) (See more at: https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt-in-britain-trans.pdf)
4. Students (independently and part of university societies) have been going around campus removing and covering up the discriminatory signage and have loudly condemned these actions, but the unknown perpetrators continue to place these messages on campus.
5. Given this, the issue must be taken seriously and be escalated.
Beliefs and Motivating Actions:

1. Trans and non-binary individuals face immense and increasing violence and oppression based on transphobia in the United Kingdom.
2. The Students’ Association and the University have a duty to support the wellbeing of its students, especially those who belong to a marginalised/Liberation group. They must support their trans and non-binary students by not just removing and condemning transphobic messages, but actively taking steps to reduce transphobia on campus and deliver the clear message that harassment has consequences and will not be tolerated under the Zero Tolerance policy.
3. Trans and non-binary individuals are entitled to a safe campus and have the right to live freely and safely within the university community without fear of harassment or discrimination.
4. It is paramount to ensure that university facilities and public spaces, especially on campus, are inclusive of trans and non-binary individuals, and it is made clear that this is the case.
5. Harassment of trans and non-binary individuals must not be treated as a valid stance or a valid expression of free speech on campus platforms.
6. The facilities, security measures, and teams are already in place and exist for monitoring this situation so the cost should not be high.
7. The University of Edinburgh should strive to set a clear example of tolerance and inclusivity given the diverse nature of its community.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.