



## Equal Marriage in Northern Ireland' For NUS UK and NUS Scotland

### What will we do:

1. Support the Love Equality Coalition campaign for equal marriage in Northern Ireland.
2. Support the Love Equality Coalition further by publishing a statement of support as a National Union, and running an awareness-raising campaign about marriage equality in Northern Ireland.
3. Encourage local LGBTQ+ organisations to do the same.

### Background to this:

1. 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>
2. 70% of the Northern Irish public are in support of marriage equality. <sup>2</sup>
3. Northern Ireland is the only place in the UK where same-sex marriage is still illegal.
4. 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>

<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>

### Beliefs and Motivating Actions:

1. That marriage is a fundamental human right that everyone, regardless of their identity, should have access to.
2. That it is our duty as a student movement 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 right.

Submitted by Association Executive in January 2019.