

Policy Motion (Network)

Passed by Welfare and Inclusion Council 26/04/2021

Passed by Student Council: 29/04/2021

WSU Policy Number: 2020-21_008

Policy Proposal-Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater Pledge

Proposing Students Name:	Lucy Robson
Student Number:	20001226
Seconding Students Name	Drew Humphry
Student Number:	18004087
Facts: What is the issue you're trying to address? What do we already know about this issue?	
<p>Promote access, inclusion and participation of students from Gypsy, Traveller and Roma backgrounds by signing the 'GTRSB into HE' pledge.</p> <p>According to Bucks.ac.uk – “There are very few Gypsy, Traveller and Roma (GTR) university students and graduates in the UK, with an estimated average of 200 members of the communities in higher education at any one time.”</p>	
Impacts: How does this issue affect students, and in what way? Is it negative?	
<p>Ensuring support and access to HE for members of these ethnic minority populations is a matter of social justice, impacting greater access to employment, increased social mobility, enhanced opportunity and visibility, and increased equality for members of the GTR populations.</p> <p>Whilst barriers to learning are faced by most if not all students few barriers have a more profound effect on attainment than being part of the GRT community. With the community seeing the lowest rates of academic attainment of any ethnic group in the UK.</p> <p>We must understand that progression is key to improving access to higher education. This includes increasing outreach to local schools and colleges, to ensure that progression through tertiary and further education is being sustained in our local area.</p> <p>We must tackle the disaffection faced by many GRT students; to do so we must first understand the culture clash between the British education system and the GRT community. This includes but is not limited to understanding the intersectional demands of being both a member of the GRT community and female. With signing this pledge, the university is committing to being an active agent in improving the current state of higher education. In turn they must understand the role that a Higher Education Institution plays in either perpetuating or eliminating the systemic racism faced by the GRT community within the British education system.</p>	

Diversity and exposure to different cultures has been shown to increase students' cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural communication skills. So far Worcester has worked hard to promote access, inclusion, and participation for everyone, and this is one more step to a more just and equal society.

Reacts: What would you like the Students' Union to do to address the issue? How do we need to take it forward?

- Lobby the University to take the pledge by following the instructions here: <https://bucks.ac.uk/about-us/gtrsb-into-higher-education-pledge>

The pledge -

1. Commit to working towards **creating a welcoming environment** in which GTRSB students can thrive.
 2. Establish a **named contact point** for GTRSB students and potential students.
 3. **Identify and publicise support** for GTRSB students already in place (or under development), which engage the key areas of the Pledge:
 - Data monitoring of GTRSB student and staff numbers;
 - Building a supportive and welcoming culture for GTRSB students;
 - Outreach & engagement to local GTRSB communities and
 - Inclusion, Celebration and Commemoration of GTRSB cultures and communities.
- Explore as a Union ways to promote inclusion/ celebration – Gypsy, traveller and Roma history month celebration (June)?
 - If we have any GTRSB students perhaps they would want to start a network/ society?
 - Lobby the University to work with local schools/ colleges to encourage GTRSB students into HE