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The InBetweeners

Queer and Allied Insider/Outsider Experiences and Perspectives from Higher Education in an Evolving Ireland

Abstract

The Marriage Equality Act and Gender Recognition Acts of 2015, along with other legal frameworks, have irrevocably changed the landscape for LGBTQI+ people in Ireland. Since 2000, social acceptance of LGBTQI+ people in Ireland has risen dramatically. This chapter explores the experiences of four authors working in student-centered roles in Irish higher education, their identities as LGBTQI+, and their allyship. They contemplate how their identities as LGBTQI+ enhance and influence their ability to work openly in the Irish higher education system. The four authors considered how their innate “outsiderness” has evolved into a form of “insiderness” through their time working in Irish higher education and how they and their actions are perceived within their scholarly communities. The authors also consider how their own communities have viewed them through the activities they undertake to make more inclusive, diverse, and accepting campuses for all students. The chapter was developed using auto-ethnography and a compassionate critical friends process so that all four authors could share their journeys, address commonalities and differences, and challenge their own preconceptions. Though this chapter focuses on Irish higher education, the experiences, perceptions, and realizations can be applied to a wider range of educational settings globally.



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