

# Savannah Garcia

(She/Her)

## What's your role?

Employability Skills Advisor

## When did you join the university?

January 2023

## What's a fun fact about you?

I have a pet snake called Ember.

## If you could have dinner with three LGBTQ+ icons, who would they be any why?

William Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde and Virginia Woolf – I'm a proper literature nerd.

## What's your favourite thing about being LGBTQ+?

I love the community that comes with it. I've been out since I was young and I can't imagine not having that shared experience among a group. Even in heteronormative places such as school or work, you seem to automatically gravitate towards other LGBTQ+ people and form your own little community. I love the freedom of being able to exist without gendered rules and binaries among these groups.

## What's your coming out story?

When I was 12 years old, my mum had a rare day off and picked me up from school. We were laughing and joking in the car about celebrity crushes. I decided that then was a good time so I said 'Mum, would you be okay if I was bisexual?' I still remember her answer to this day because of how hilarious it was: 'If you were a blue and purple spotty alien from outer space, I'd still love you.' It was very funny but also very emotional.

## Why is being out at work important to you?

I think it's important to be able to be who you are openly. I'm very privileged in that I've never had to hide who I am and



I'm so grateful that I work for an institution that encourages me to be proud of my identity. To me, my sexuality isn't a big deal. It's just a detail that people know about me, same as they know my name.

## What would you say to staff who may be facing difficulties because of being LGBTQ+ or having difficulties "coming out" at work?

I would suggest confiding in a trusted colleague, perhaps someone who is a member of the LGBTQ+ Staff Community. You will be able to talk through any difficulties and challenges you are facing and they can be there to offer you support and guidance. If you are facing difficulties at work due to your identity, this is something that should also be raised with your line manager as they are best placed to put in the needed support and make any changes.

## What would you like to see other colleagues doing to help make the university a better place to be LGBTQ+?

Consciously practicing allyship. This can look like a number of things from having your pronouns in your email signature and wearing a rainbow lanyard (this indicates to colleagues and students that you are a safe person to be open with) to actively getting involved in LGBTQ+ events and lobbying on our behalf. Use people's chosen names and pronouns, don't assume someone's sexuality, and call out discrimination when you see it.



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