

Tim Davie, Director-General
BBC Broadcasting House
Portland Place,
London
W1A 1AA

9th May 2025

Dear Tim,

We were appalled to hear that the BBC intends to broadcast a series, 'I Kissed A Boy', that is homophobic in the extreme.

Many gay men remember a time when homosexuals could be refused employment or sacked from their jobs. No questions asked. Harassment from the police was commonplace and physical attacks in the street were so frequent as to be almost unremarkable. We could not join the armed forces and, if we did manage to keep our sexuality secret as we served our country, we lived with the threat of jail – until 1994. We faced rejection by our families. We were criminalised. We were vilified and shunned.

It's no surprise that many gay men pretended to be heterosexual, enduring unhappy and stultifying opposite-sex relationships and marriages, in an attempt to survive a hostile world.

At first glance, your programme, 'I Kissed A Boy', seems like an entertaining way to celebrate a welcome and more modern tolerance for homosexuality and to focus on the fun of gay relationships. Until we learn that one of the participants is not a gay man but is a heterosexual woman.

The gay men in the show will be expected to pretend they are attracted to her.

The pressure on those young men to agree that this woman might be someone they would date will be immense. Any rejection of her – a rejection that would be entirely in line with their natural homosexuality – will be seized upon by activists as evidence of their bigotry and transphobia. It is unconscionable to coerce young gay men in this way.

We are appalled by the homophobic premise of this programme and horrified by the fact that young people who are exclusively same-sex attracted will feel, once again, that their natural orientation is a shameful secret that must be suppressed.

We ask that you remove this programme from your schedule. It represents a huge step backwards for the gay men you seek to shame. It is horribly regressive and homophobic and the shame, in this case, should be yours.

Yours sincerely,

LGB Alliance Policy Team