From September 2020, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in secondary schools, and Relationships Education in primary schools, will be compulsory in England. The new Statutory Guidance on RSE, published in June 2019, specifies what pupils should know by the end of their schooling about families, friendships, online relationships, intimate and sexual relationships, and issues of consent, coercion, safety and abuse. The acquisition of this knowledge is to be underpinned by ‘the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes’.

The Guidance also stipulates that all pupils must be taught LGBT content: ‘sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner’. This requirement has proved to be controversial, with well-publicised protests outside a number of Birmingham primary schools in 2019 over their positive representations of same-sex relationships. The ongoing controversy has led to criticism of the Guidance for being too vague about the timing and content of LGBT teaching.

To mark the arrival of statutory RSE, the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB) and the History of Education Society UK (HES) are hosting an international conference at the University of Birmingham. The conference will be a unique opportunity for philosophers and historians to reflect together on the pressing questions of policy and practice raised by this vital area of educational provision.

Confirmed keynote speakers

David Archard
author of *Sex Education* (Wiley, 2000)

Cris Mayo
author of *Gay Straight Alliances and Associations Among Youth in Schools* (Palgrave, 2017)

Jonathan Zimmerman
author of *Too Hot to Handle: A Global History of Sex Education* (Princeton, 2016)

Philosophical and historical papers on any aspect of relationships and sex education are invited. Submitted papers will be heard in parallel sessions. Because this is an interdisciplinary conference, papers should not assume familiarity with any particular literature. Papers by postgraduate researchers are warmly welcomed.

Submissions should take the form of a **title and an abstract of up to 300 words**, along with the author’s name, position, institutional affiliation and email address, and should be sent to m.hand@bham.ac.uk. The deadline for submissions is **Friday 3 April**. Abstracts will be reviewed and notifications of acceptance will be issued by Friday 17 April. Conference registration will open in March and bursaries for postgraduate students will be available.

If you have any questions, please contact one of the conference convenors:

- Professor Michael Hand (Vice-Chair of PESGB, University of Birmingham, m.hand@bham.ac.uk)
- Professor Stephen Parker (President of HES, University of Worcester, s.parker@worc.ac.uk)