

Stonewall

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people.

At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full.

Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

To find out more about our work, visit us at www.stonewall.org.uk

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Stonewall is proud to provide information, support and guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion; working towards a world where we're all free to be. This does not constitute legal advice, and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter.

Young Futures Aviva Transcript – Jake's Story

My name is Jake. My pronouns are he/him and I work for Aviva Investors as a Supply Governance Analyst.

My school experience I think was probably typical, but not too typical of everyone else growing up. I think I had experiences where, you know, you get microaggressions at the time I didn't necessarily know whether it was because I was gay. I didn't know that was how I identified. I didn't know until I was quite a bit older and I didn't really know what I wanted to actually do when I was growing up.

At that time, I tried to pick as broad a set of courses as possible and apply to university based off of that. I didn't get the grades that I wanted to get into the university of my choice.

When it happens on the day when you open your results envelope, it can be daunting, it can be overwhelming. But what I had to do was I just had to take a step back, sit and think: this isn't the end of what I'm doing.

So I knew that I was still good enough to go off to university. So I applied for clearing, rang up loads of universities to try and see what they would offer me and then found my university of choice at the end of it.

When I finished university, I have to say, I didn't know anything about graduate schemes. I kind of graduated, had some time to myself, and then it got to the point where if I'm being honest, I just needed money.

I sent off one of my applications to a recruiter and the first job I got went from there. I saw this job come up at Aviva. There was quite a lot of transferable skills between the two roles. I'd said that I'd always wanted to try and work within financial services if I could do so.

I thought this was the perfect opportunity. I'd researched Aviva's standing within Stonewall's Workplace Index and saw that it was quite high up. They also asked diversity-based questions with the interview process. So I was open from the beginning.

I filled those in truthfully and I managed to work my way into Aviva. DNI at Aviva is really important and core to its values. I think it's really nice to see a CEO, one who is a woman in a predominantly male industry.

It's really at the forefront of everything that Aviva's doing at the moment to try and create a more inclusive workplace. I think it's been very good to know that there's a group of people that also like me at the company.

Sometimes you can feel a bit disconnected if you are ever in a situation where you feel like you need a bit more advice or you need help, the Pride Network is there for you to educate yourself, reach out to other people, and then also educate your peers and allies.

Advice I would give my younger self, to be honest is don't be afraid. Put myself out there. When I said that was a university, one thing I didn't do was apply for jobs or apply for experience to try and build my career.

Being an LGBT person, you can be afraid to be yourself whether it is applying for jobs or whatever is just walking down the street holding your partners' hand. But moments where you can be yourself and being yourself within a company that supports you is a massive positive.