

Academy claims it 'cures' homosexuality

A Christian arts academy in Bloemfontein has come under fire for advertising that it can "cure" homosexual students, it was reported on Sunday (13 January).

The *Sunday Times* reported that the Create Training Centre's prospectus claimed it could convert gay students into heterosexuals through "rehabilitation".

Gay rights activists has slammed this as "tragic, shameful and deeply hurtful", according to the report.

Create founder Cornelius van Heyningen denied that the institution was discriminatory.

"We are catering for those who say 'I want to change as a homosexual'. That's not saying no homosexuals are allowed," he said.

He compared the academy's stance on homosexuality to a drug rehabilitation programme.

However, according to the prospectus, gay students who were unwilling to change their lifestyle would not be welcome.

Gay rights organisation OUT director Dawie Nel told the newspaper the academy's stance was unconstitutional.

"Their comments fuel violent discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people, and lead to events such as the rape of gays and lesbians to 'cure' them; or may even result in murders being committed," he said.

According to the report, the academy's claims were not legal under the terms of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2006.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge