



GLOSSARY



Everyone has the right to self-identify, and will have differing relationships with the words that they choose to identify themselves with. It is important to ask how a person identifies, and to respect their answer. This glossary is not definitive, but below are some of the most common identities and terms used, when talking about sexual orientation and gender identity.

Ally

A person who fights for, and supports others in their fight for equality, despite not being a member of the marginalised group, e.g. a heterosexual and/or cisgender person who believes in, and fights for equality, for LGBT+ people.

Asexual

A person of any gender or sexual orientation who experiences little, or no, sexual attraction to other people.

Bisexual

A person of any gender who experiences romantic and/or sexual attraction to people of their own gender, and other genders.

Biphobia

Discrimination against and /or fear or dislike of bisexual people (including those perceived to be bisexual) or bisexuality. This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes and/or through personal negative thoughts about bisexual people.

Cis(gender)

A person whose gender aligns or “matches” with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cisnormativity

An emphasis on people whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth match being “the norm”, and therefore having a valued position in society. This often highlights and reinforces expected and more traditional ways of presenting your gender e.g. the expectation for women to present as “feminine” and men to present as “masculine”.

Cross Dresser

A person who dresses in clothes that are usually associated with a different gender.

Discrimination

Treating individuals or a particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which someone might treat other people, because they hold negative views about people with certain characteristics they may have, e.g. a person's skin colour, faith, sex assigned at birth, sexual orientation, class.

Gay

A man who experiences romantic and/or sexual attraction to other men. Sometimes "gay" is used by women who are attracted to women too.

Gender Expression

Refers to how a person externally presents their gender, based on societal expectations. This may be through their choice of clothing or social behavior, and most commonly/traditionally measured on a scale of "masculinity" and "femininity", although not always.

Gender Fluid

A person who feels that their gender is not static and that it changes throughout their life, this could be on a daily / weekly / monthly basis.

Gender Identity

How a person feels about themselves inside, whether this is as a woman, a man, as both, as neither, or in another way.

Gender Neutral/Agender

A person who does not identify with any gender.

Gender Role Assigned at Birth

People are assigned a sex at birth which also predetermines a gender role e.g. someone assigned female at birth, will be expected to live, identify and outwardly present as a woman. This pressure and assumption can heighten discomfort with a person's body and sense of self if they feel their gender identity, role and sex do not align.

Heterosexism/Heteronormativity

The assumption that everyone is heterosexual or straight, and that heterosexuality is superior, with an emphasis on heterosexuality being "the norm" and therefore having a valued position in society. The media often reinforces heteronormativity through images used and portrayal of lifestyles and attitudes.

Heterosexual/Straight

A person who is attracted to people of a different gender e.g. a man who is attracted to women.

Homophobia

Discrimination against and/or fear or dislike of lesbian and gay people (including those perceived to be gay or lesbian). This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes and/or through personal negative thoughts about lesbian and gay people.

Intersex

A person is assigned intersex, often at birth, when their sex characteristics don't align with the medical definitions of "female" or "male". The external and internal body, as well as chromosomes and hormones, can all be factors when assigning sex.

Lesbian

A woman who experiences romantic and/or sexual attraction to other women.

LGBT+

An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (plus other related identities). LGBT+ is used as an umbrella expression to refer to people with minority sexual orientations and/or gender identities.

Non-binary

An umbrella term for gender identities outside of the "gender binary" of "women" and "men".

Out/Coming Out

LGBT+ people living openly, and telling people about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Pansexual

A person of any gender who experiences romantic and/or sexual attraction to people regardless of their gender identity.

Pronouns

Words used to refer to someone when their name isn't used. They usually suggest a person's gender, although some people prefer, or identify with, neutral pronouns. Common pronouns include her, she, him, he, they, them.

Queer

A complex term that has more than one meaning. Historically it was used as a negative insult, however some people feel they have "reclaimed" the word and it has a positive meaning. Some people use it as a collective term for LGBT+ people, and some to explain their gender, sexual or political identity.

Questioning

A person who is exploring their own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Sex Assigned at Birth

People are assigned a sex at birth, usually based on observation of external genitals. A person may be assigned “female”, “intersex” or “male”. However, this does not necessarily reflect how a person will identify.

Sexual Orientation

The part of your identity that describes who people experience attraction to, commonly based on gender, e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight, etc.

Stereotype

A fixed idea that people have about what someone or something is like, often based on assumption and myth.

Trans(gender)

A person whose gender identity does not align or “match” with the sex and gender role they were assigned at birth.

Transition

A term that refers to any number of changes – social and/or medical – that a person might make, such as changing their name, pronoun, and/or clothing, or undergoing a medical intervention(s) to change one or more aspects of their body.

Transphobia

Discrimination against and/or fear or dislike of people whose gender identity does not align with their sex and gender role assigned at birth, or whose gender identity or expression doesn't appear to align. This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes and/or through personal negative thoughts about trans people.

Transsexual

A non-preferred term (unless self-identifying in this way) for a person who obtains physical treatment to change their bodies with relation to their gender.



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