



GLOSSARY



Everyone has the right to self-identify, and will have differing relationships with the words that people choose to identify themselves with. It is important to ask how a person identifies, and to respect their answer. Identities can be fluid and as life goes on, people often realise new things about themselves, and so the words that someone uses at one point in their life, may not be words that they will always identify with – and that's totally ok!

This glossary is not definitive, but below are some of the most common identities and terms used, when talking about sexual orientation (who you're attracted to) and gender identity (how you feel about and see yourself).

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.

Aromantic

A person of any gender or sexual orientation who experiences little, or no, romantic attraction. Aromantic people may still experience other types of attraction, such as sexual or physical attraction.

Asexual

A person of any gender or sexual orientation who experiences little, or no, sexual attraction. Asexual people may still experience other types of attraction, such as physical or romantic attraction.

Bisexual

A person of any gender who experiences 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 of bisexuality. This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes and/or through personal negative thoughts about bisexual people.

Cross Dresser

This word is usually used by men but can be used by a person of any gender, who dresses in clothes that are usually associated with a different gender.

Cis / cisgender

A person whose gender is the same or mostly the same as they were assigned at birth.

Cisnormativity

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

Discrimination

Treating individuals or a particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way than how a person might generally treat others, because they hold negative views about people with certain characteristics – e.g. a person’s race, faith, sex assigned at birth, sexual orientation, class.

Gay

A man who is attracted to other men. Sometimes the word ‘gay’ is used by women who are attracted to women too.

Gender Expression

Refers to how a person externally presents their gender. This may be through choice of clothing, general physical appearance or social behaviour. Gender expression is 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 and knows themselves to be. This might be 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 Roles and Expectations

People are assigned a sex at birth and this often predetermines a gender role that a person is expected to fulfil e.g. someone assigned female at birth, will be expected to live, identify and outwardly present as a woman. There is also expectation to 'act' like a woman and carry out jobs that society deems appropriate for women. Gender roles and expectations are often reinforced by society, people around us and the media. People of all genders can find these expectations limiting and oppressive.

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 character's identities and attitudes.

Heterosexual/ Straight

A person who is attracted to people of a different gender e.g. a man who is only 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". A person's external and internal body, as well as chromosomes and hormones, can all be factors when assigning sex.

Lesbian

A woman who is attracted to other women.

LGBTphobia

A term for the collective discrimination against and/or fear or dislike of LGBT+ people (including those perceived to be LGBT+). This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes and/or through personal negative thoughts about LGBT+ people.

LGBT+

An umbrella expression and an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (plus other related identities).

Non-binary

An umbrella term for gender identities which are not confined by the gender binary of "women" and "men". Non-binary people may identify with no gender at all or with more than one gender.

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 is attracted to people of all genders.

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

Historically this word was used as a negative insult, however many people feel they have reclaimed the word to have a positive meaning. Some people use it as a collective term for LGBT+ people, and some use it to explain their gender, sexual or political identity. Some people still use this word as an insult, this is LGBTphobia and should be challenged.

Questioning

A person who is uncertain about and/ or 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 themselves.

Sexual Orientation

The part of a person's identity that describes who they experience attraction to, often but not always based on gender, e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight, pansexual.

Stereotype

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

Trans / Transgender

A person whose gender identity is in some way different to the gender they were assigned at birth.



the PROUD TRUST
home of LGBT+ youth | theproudtrust.org
FIND US ON FACEBOOK | @THEPROUDTRUST | 07813 981338
Charity number 1161102