

Sexuality and Gender

Definitions List

Staff at The Proud Trust feel that the definitions below most accurately represent the identities listed and are explained in the most accessible way. Everyone has the right to self-identify and will have differing relationships with these words. It is important not to doubt or question how a person identifies and respect a person's identity as they share it with or present it to you.

We are aware that this list is not definitive but feel we have included the most common identities and terms used when talking about sexual orientation and gender.

LESBIAN	A woman who experiences emotional, romantic &/or sexual attraction to other women.
GAY	A man who experiences emotional, romantic &/or sexual attraction to other men. Sometimes "gay" is used by women who are attracted to women too.
BISEXUAL	A person of any gender who experiences emotional, romantic &/or sexual attraction to people of their own gender and of another gender.



<p>PANSEXUAL</p>	<p>A person of any gender who experiences emotional, romantic &/or sexual attraction to people regardless of a person's gender identity.</p>
<p>ASEXUAL</p>	<p>A person of any gender or sexual orientation who does not experience sexual attraction.</p>
<p>HETEROSEXUAL / STRAIGHT</p>	<p>A person who is attracted to people of a different gender <i>e.g. a man who is attracted to women.</i></p>
<p>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</p>	<p>This is used to describe who people experience attraction to, commonly based on gender. The word "<i>sexuality</i>" is sometimes used instead of "<i>sexual orientation</i>".</p>
<p>SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH</p>	<p>People are assigned a sex at birth, based on sex characteristics. A person may be assigned "<i>male</i>", "<i>female</i>" or "<i>intersex</i>". However this does not necessarily reflect how a person will identify.</p>
<p>GENDER ROLE ASSIGNED AT BIRTH</p>	<p>People are assigned a sex at birth which also predetermines a gender role <i>e.g. someone assigned female at birth, will be expected to live, identify and outwardly present as a woman.</i> 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.</p>



<p>TRANS / TRANSGENDER</p>	<p>A person whose gender identity does not align with the sex and gender role they were assigned at birth</p> <p><i>e.g. a person whose sex was assigned male at birth and thus whose gender role was also prescribed and assumed male but who identifies as a woman or as gender neutral.</i></p>
<p>CIS / CISGENDER</p>	<p>A person whose gender aligns with the sex and gender role they were assigned at birth.</p> <p><i>e.g. a person who was assigned female at birth and who identifies as a woman.</i></p>
<p>TRANSITION</p>	<p>A term used to refer to the process a person undergoes when changing their physical appearance to align more with the gender they feel themselves to be. Transition also refers to the social changes a person may make</p> <p><i>e.g. changing their name, pronoun and perhaps also their clothing to align with their gender identity.</i></p>
<p>INTERSEX</p>	<p>A person is assigned intersex, often at birth, when their sex characteristics don't align with the medical definitions of "male" or "female". The external and internal body as well as chromosomes and hormones can all be factors when assigning someone as intersex.</p>
<p>GENDER IDENTITY</p>	<p>How a person feels about themselves inside, whether this is as a man, a woman, as both, as neither or in another way.</p>
<p>GENDER EXPRESSION</p>	<p>Refers to how a person externally presents their gender. This may be through their choice of clothing or social behaviour – most commonly/traditionally measured on a scale of "masculinity" and "femininity" although not always.</p>



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GENDER NEUTRAL	Someone who identifies as neither “ <i>male</i> ” or “ <i>female</i> ”.
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 but will differ for everyone.
GENDER QUEER	A person whose gender identity is neither male or female, is between or beyond genders, or is a combination of genders. Often this identity includes a political agenda to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.
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. <i>e.g. her, she, hers / him, he, his / they, them, theirs / xe, xem, xyrs.</i>
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.
HOMOPHOBIA	Discrimination against &/or fear or dislike of lesbian and gay people (inc. those perceived to be gay or lesbian) and homosexuality. This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes &/or through personal thoughts about lesbian and gay people.



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<p>BIPHOBIA</p>	<p>Discrimination against &/or fear or dislike of bisexual (inc. those perceived to be bisexual) people or bisexuality. This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes &/or through personal thoughts about bisexual people.</p>
<p>TRANSPHOBIA</p>	<p>Discrimination against &/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 <i>appear</i> to align. This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes &/or through personal thoughts about trans people.</p>
<p>STEREOTYPE</p>	<p>A fixed idea that people have about what someone or something is like, often based on assumption and myth. Stereotypes often negatively and falsely represent groups of people.</p>
<p>OUT / COMING OUT</p>	<p>LGBT people living openly and telling people about their sexual orientation &/or gender identity.</p>
<p>HETEROSEXISM/ HETERONORMATIVITY</p>	<p>The assumption that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior. An emphasis on heterosexual being "<i>the norm</i>" and valued position in society. The media often reinforces heteronormativity through images used and character's lifestyles and attitudes.</p>
<p>CISNORMATIVITY</p>	<p>An emphasis on cisgender people being "<i>the norm</i>" and valued position in society. This often highlights and reinforces expected and more traditional ways of presenting your gender <i>e.g. the expectation for women to present as "feminine" and men to present as "masculine"</i>.</p>



<p>QUEER</p>	<p>A word that has been reclaimed from its former derogatory use to describe identities that do not conform to what society expects of LGBT people, it is adopted by many as a political identity and is often used by people who challenge gender and sexual orientation stereotypes – in lifestyle, politics &/or appearance. Although it has been reclaimed, some people do still use this as an insult or to offend. It is also used by some as an umbrella term to collectively refer to the LGBT community.</p>
<p>LGBTQ</p>	<p>An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning. Sometimes the Q stands for queer. There is also sometimes an A for asexual. LGBTQ is used as an umbrella expression to refer to people with minority sexual orientations and gender identities.</p>
<p>ALLY</p>	<p>A person who fights for and supports others in their fight for equality, despite not necessarily being affected by such struggle themselves. <i>e.g. a heterosexual &/or cisgender person who believes in and fights for equality for LGBT people and to end heteronormativity, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.</i></p>

