



## Pride Month: How to be an ally.

### Understanding Sexuality



Sexuality is a person's identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are attracted to (ie. their sexual orientation).

## Misconceptions

"You can choose your sexuality"

- **Sexuality is not a choice**, it is part of who you are.
- Some people are uncertain of their sexuality and are still questioning themselves, this doesn't mean they are still "choosing", it means they are trying to find themselves and their identity.

"If a man marries a woman, he is not gay"; "If a woman has sex with a man, she is not a lesbian"

- Just because somebody may carry out sexual activity with a particular gender, does not mean they are sexually attracted towards that gender.
- Some people can go through their whole life without coming to terms with the fact they are gay. They just try to fit in with society and face immense societal pressure to do so.

## Sexualities

**Lesbian:** a woman who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to women.

**Straight:** a man who is only sexually attracted women, or, a woman who is only sexually attracted to men.

**Gay:** whilst this is sometimes used as an umbrella term used to refer to the LGBT community as a whole (and same-gender attracted people as a group), it is often understood to mean someone who is only romantically and/or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.

**Bisexual-** an umbrella term used to describe a romantic/or sexual attraction towards more than one gender.

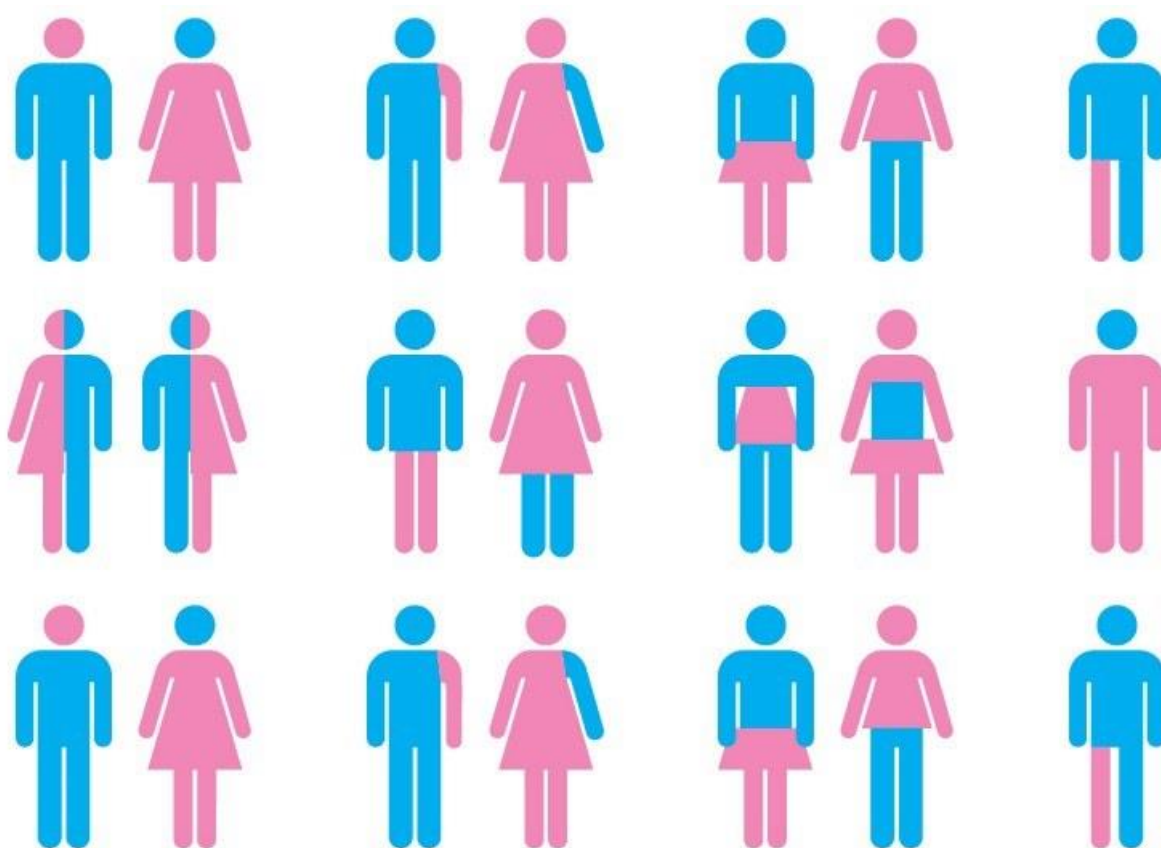
**Pansexual-** a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender.

**Queer-** term used sometimes by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender, but still express that they are LGBT.

**Ace:** an umbrella term used specifically to describe experiences of a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of sexual attraction. This encompasses asexual people.

**Questioning:** the process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

## Understanding Gender, Identity and expression



Gender is a social construct used to classify a person relating to their social being. It is fundamentally different from the sex one is assigned at birth; rather it is a set of social and psychological traits, often influenced by societal expectations. It relates to your understanding of yourself and how you wish to be perceived.

**Gender:** Innermost concept of yourself as male, female, a blend of both or neither. Your gender can be the same or different from your sex assigned at birth

**Gender expression:** how a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of social expectations of gender.

**Gender Transition:** a process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with their outward appearance. This can be social (e.g. changing your name, dressing differently, asking people to use different pronouns for you, etc) or physical (e.g. hormone therapy, gender-affirming surgeries, etc).

**Gender dysphoria:** when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity.

### Gender Identities and Terminology

**Transgender-** an umbrella term for anyone whose sex assigned at birth does not align with their gender.

**Cisgender-** someone whose gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Intersex-** a term used to describe a person who may have the biological characteristics of more than one sex. This does not determine their gender. Many intersex children are forced to undergo unnecessary medical procedures like surgery with the goal of making their biological characteristics look more like those who aren't intersex.

**Non-binary-** someone who doesn't identify with the gender binary (male and female). They exist under the "transgender" umbrella.

**Gender non-conforming-** a term sometimes used by people who don't conform with the gender norms that are expected of them. The term usually refers to gender expression or presentation (that is, how someone looks and dresses). They aren't inherently transgender, but can be.

**Dead name:** the name somebody was given at birth but they have changed to a name they are more comfortable with.

**Femme:** a term sometimes used in LGBT culture to describe someone who expresses themselves in a typically feminine way.

**Masc/butch:** a term sometimes used in LGBT culture to describe someone who expresses themselves in a typically masculine way.

Transgender people (including non-binary people) and gender non-conforming people have existed globally for as long as the concept of "gender" has existed. There are therefore, many many terms that transgender people have used and do use to describe themselves and their identities. Since gender is a social construct/concept, there isn't as set list of genders that people need to adhere to and you can't (and shouldn't) expect people to categorise themselves into boxes relating to their identities. Transgender and gender non-conforming people don't need to choose any label to define their gender if they don't want to. Every person's experiences with gender are entirely their own and it is up to them how they choose to describe that experience. Try to be respectful of this even if you don't understand someone else's identity and/or expression.

**Here are a few examples of trans and gender non-conforming people in different communities internationally:**

In South Asia, the hijra (Also known as *Aravani*, *Aruvani*, *Jogappa*, the hijra community in India prefer to call themselves *Kinnar* or *Kinner*, referring to the mythological beings that excel at song and dance. In Pakistan, they are called *Khawaja Sira*, the equivalent of transgender in the Urdu language) are referred to as a third gender, as a group of transgender women and non-binary and intersex people who were assigned male at birth. They are legally recognised in India and Pakistan. Hijra communities have been a part of the subcontinent for about as long as civilization has. With a recorded history of over 4,000 years and being mentioned in ancient texts. Hijras held important positions in court and various facets of administration during the Mughal-era India, from the 16th to 19th century. They were also considered to hold religious authority and were sought out for blessings, particularly during religious ceremonies.

Jewish law has always recognised six distinct genders, each with their own unique sets of rights, obligations, and expectations. All of these genders are richly explored in Talmudic texts compiled during the Third through Eighth Centuries of the Common Era. These genders are as follows: Male, female, androgynous (an intersex person), tumtum (a person whose gender is concealed), saris (an

anatomically male person who does not develop male sexual characteristics), and aytonit (an anatomically female person who does not develop female sexual characteristics). The Gemara on Yevamot 64a even states that Abraham and Sarah were transgender, beginning their lives as tumtumim and transitioning to male and female, respectively. Though some passages (ibid is an example) appear to imply that the tumtum's identity is a matter of sex, rather than gender, none of them do so incontrovertibly.

Two-Spirit (also two spirit or, occasionally, twospirited) is a modern, pan-Indian, umbrella term used by some Indigenous North Americans to describe Native people in their communities who fulfil a traditional third-gender ceremonial and social role in their cultures. The term was created in 1990 at the Indigenous lesbian and gay international gathering in Winnipeg, and "specifically chosen to distinguish and distance Native American/First Nations people from non-Native peoples." The primary purpose of coining a new term was to encourage the replacement of the outdated and deeply offensive, term, *berdache*, which was created by colonisers to describe and insult these people. Among the Indigenous communities that traditionally have roles for two-spirit people, specific terms in their own languages are used for the social and spiritual roles these individuals fulfil.

## Combating homophobia and transphobic concepts



**It is okay if you do not understand**, if you have not been through it yourself, and it is hard to understand a unique experience that is not your own. **But you are responsible for our own education and actions** around LGBT inclusivity, even if some things are difficult to understand. Using inclusive and respectful language in your day to day life is a really important step in allying yourself with LGBT people. It makes people feel comfortable, respected, and included.

Things to remember

- You can be accepting of LGBT people, and still be homo/transphobic
- You can identify as LGBT and still be homo/transphobic
- You can have LGBT friends and still be homo/transphobic
- You might be homophobic/transphobic without realising it because society has taught you that it is normal!

Some common misconceptions- all of these are untrue!

- "My same-sex friend is gay- this means they are attracted to me"
- "It's okay to ask a transgender person what medical procedures they have gone through"
- "Somebody is not transgender until they have had medical/surgical treatment"
- "Sexuality is a choice", "I can turn somebody gay/straight"
- "There are two genders"
- "If my child sees a same-sex couple on TV, they will turn gay"
- "My male friend is very feminine, this means they are gay"
- "My friend came out to me, this means they are comfortable with me telling people"

Always remember

- Just because somebody is out, it doesn't change who they are. They are who they have always been.
- Never tell people that somebody identifies as LGBT unless you know they are comfortable with it.
- Try not to assume somebody's sexuality.
- Try not to use somebody's dead name.
- If you are unsure which pronoun to use always use 'they/them'.

Reassessing your language

1. Say "they/them/their" if you are unsure of somebody's pronouns
2. Say "gay" not "homosexual"
3. Say "assigned female at birth" NOT "born female" or "female bodied" or "used to be female"
4. Say "a transgender person" or "a gay person" not "a transgender" or "a gay"
5. Say "all genders" not "both genders" or "opposite sexes"
6. Say "everyone", "honoured guests" or "folks" instead of "ladies and gentlemen"

## What is pride?



Pride is a celebration of LGBTQ+ communities. It is about acceptance, equality and celebrating the work of LGBT+ people, education in LGBTQ+ history, and raising awareness of the LGBTQ+ community.

**Pride is all about being proud of who you are** and calls for people to remember how damaging transphobia and homophobia was and still can be.

**Global Pride Day= June 27th**

It is celebrated in June as this was the month when the Stonewall riots took place.

**The Stonewall riots** were important protests that took place in 1969 in the US. This was after police raids on gay bars led to the physical assault of many people of the LGBT community, leading to riots and protests. These protests changed gay rights for a lot of people in America and around the world.

## How to support the LGBT community

- Protest for LGBT rights
- Report homophobia and transphobia
- Donate to LGBT charities
- **Educate yourself!**
- Be kind
- Make your workplace more inclusive
- Make your language more inclusive

- Talk about it!

- Support and listen to your LGBT friends

## Why you should support the LGBT community- Facts and figures



### LAW

- 72 countries still criminalise same-sex relationships.
- The death penalty for this is either 'allowed', or evidence of its existence occurs, in 8 of these countries.
- In more than HALF the world, LGBT people are not protected from discrimination in the workplace.
- Most governments deny trans people the right to legally change their name and gender to those that weren't assigned to them at birth.
- Between 2008 and 2014, 1612 trans people were murdered for their identity across 62 countries - equivalent to a killing every 2 days.

**These figures all prove there is still such a long way to go!**

### HATE CRIME

- The number of LGB people who have experienced a hate crime or incident in the last year because of their sexual orientation has risen by 78% since 2013!



- 4 in 5 LGBT people who have experienced a hate crime or incident DIDNT report it to the police for fear of discrimination from them.
- Half of LGBT pupils hear homophobic slurs frequently at school.
- One in 5 LGBT people were discriminated against when looking for a job last year.
- One in 8 trans people have been physically attacked by customers or colleagues in the past year.

## HEALTH

- More than 2 in 5 trans young people have attempted to take their own life. and one in 5 lesbian, gay and bi young people who aren't trans.
- Half of LGBT people said they've experienced depression in the past year, and over 70% of bi women have experienced anxiety.
- 20% of trans people have been pressured to access services to supress their gender identity by the NHS and one in 20 LGBT people have been pressured to access services to change their sexual orientation.

more figures below:

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/media/lgbt-facts-and-figures>

Some people would rather die than live their truth. This is why we celebrate pride. This is why we push for change. This is why we need you to be an ally.



This booklet was created by Jade Owen and Charlie Farrer alongside hosting a Pride Parade LGBT+ picnic in June 2021. The booklet aims to educate about the history and context of the LGBT+ community and the use of appropriate labels and pronouns, as well as provide understanding for a more accepting campus community.

Jade explains more here

“As part of the LGBT+ community, we experience homophobia and transphobia on a daily basis. My aim was to tackle this to produce a safe and inclusive environment for students. In doing polls and talking to the community I have begun to realise that a lot of people don’t mean to cause harm. They are willing to accept people’s identities but misconceptions due to misinformation in education and media lead to a lack of understanding and empathy. I created this document with the help of another society member, Charlie Farrer, to help allies to understand what it is to be part of the LGBT+ community, to provoke change for more inclusive language, and to familiarise themselves with triggering terms. This document aims to outline that everybody is responsible for inclusivity and shows them how they can change to combat homophobia and transphobia in their lives and in their future careers”.