

LGB&T Definitions

The following definitions are offered as guidance to supplement the training modules. Please note the definitions of some of these terms can vary, according to the context and source, and are used here as guidance.

Androgyne a person who does not fit neatly into typical masculine and/or feminine gender roles. People may also use the term ambigender or polygender to describe themselves. Many androgyne people identify as being "between" woman and man, or genderless. They may identify as non-gendered, genderneutral, agendered, between genders, genderqueer, multigendered, intergendered, pangender or gender fluid.

Asexual a person whose identity is non-sexually oriented. They may have 'emotional orientations' towards same-sex or opposite sex others, or not. This is a contemporary and emerging self-identification.

Biphobia a common stereotype of bisexuality is that it is 'a phase' on the way to a 'mature' lesbian, gay or straight identity. Some recent research has even attempted to prove the non-existence of bisexuality, particularly male bisexuality, although these studies have been criticised as methodologically and theoretically flawed. Bisexual women are frequently regarded as 'just being bi-curious' and trying to titillate heterosexual men: another way of denying that bisexuality is 'real'.

Bisexual a woman or man who has an emotional and/or sexual attraction toward more than one gender.

Cisgendered/Cisperson a person whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cisgenderism is a prejudice similar to racism and sexism. It denies, ignores, denigrates, or stigmatises non-cisgender, Trans/gender, forms of expression, sexual activity, behavior, relationship, or community.

Coming out refers to the experiences of some, but not all, LGB&T people as they explore/disclose their sexual orientation and/or their gender identity.

Cottaging/Cruising slang term referring to sex between men in a public lavatory a "cottage", or "cruising" to find partners for sex.

Discrimination detrimental treatment experienced on the grounds of some aspect of a person's identity or presentation.

Gay most commonly refers to men who have an emotional and/or sexual attraction to men. However, some Lesbians identify as "Gay" or "Gay Women".

GIC (Gender Identity Clinic) a specialist NHS service providing assessment for Trans people who are seeking hormone treatment and/or surgical gender reassignment procedures. They are usually run by consultant psychiatrists who may or may not have other types of NHS staff working with them.

GRS Gender Reassignment Surgery.

Hate crime a crime committed on the basis of the actual or perceived ethnicity, religion, gender identity, disability, age or sexual orientation of a person.

Heterosexism the belief that heterosexuality is the only “natural” and “normal” expression of human sexuality and that it is inherently superior (and healthier) to other types of sexuality. This often gives rise to the idea that services tailored for heterosexuals will be suitable for everyone else.

Heterosexual an individual who has an emotional and/or sexual attraction to persons of the opposite sex. Heterosexuals are sometimes referred to as “straight.”

Homophobia the response of other members of society that results in Lesbian and Gay people experiencing hatred, discrimination or inequality.

Homosexual this is the term which was mostly used by external authorities (e.g. doctors, police, newspaper writers) to refer to an individual who has a sexual and/or emotional attraction towards persons of the same sex. This term is often now rejected by LGB&T people as being too clinical and the terms “Lesbian” or “Gay” are preferred. If you are unsure how to identify a person in relation to their sexual orientation or gender identity, it is acceptable to ask which term they would prefer you to use to describe them.

Lesbian a woman who has an emotional and/or sexual attraction to other women.

LGB&T/LGBTQ/LGBTQI acronyms for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans. Increasingly including ‘Q’ for Questioning and/or Queer and ‘I’ to include Intersex.

Queer a ‘reclaimed’ word used by some people to self-identify as part of a movement that may include LGB&T, A (Asexual) and I (Intersex) too. Queer tends to be defined by what it is not – i.e. not having a prescribed view of gender identity and sexual orientation. Queer is also sometimes used to indicate a commitment to ‘non-normative’ gender and sexual fluidity (rather than to fixed categories of person). If you are unsure about how to identify someone ask them which term they prefer you to use.

Questioning usually refers to young people who may be experiencing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and/or Trans feelings or urges, but have not yet identified their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Trans* an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression diverges in some way from the sex they were assigned at birth, including those who identify as transsexual people, those who identify as non-binary gender people, and cross-dressing people.

Trans (without the asterisk) is best applied to trans men and trans women, while the asterisk makes special note in an effort to include all non-cisgender gender identities, including transgender, transsexual, transvestite, genderqueer, genderfluid, non-binary, genderless, agender, non-gendered, third gender, two-spirit, bigender, and trans man and trans woman. Sometimes referred to as 'T'.

Transphobia a reaction of fear, loathing, and discriminatory treatment of people whose identity or gender presentation (or perceived gender or gender identity) does not "match," in the societally accepted way, the sex they were assigned at birth the response of other members of society that results in Trans people experiencing hatred, discrimination or inequality.

Trans Man/FTM a person who was assigned female at birth but has a male gender identity and therefore proposes to transition, is transitioning or has transitioned to live as a man, often with the assistance of hormone treatment and perhaps various surgical procedures.

Trans Woman/MTF a person who was assigned male at birth but has a female gender identity and therefore proposes to transition, is transitioning or has transitioned to live as a woman, often with the assistance of hormone treatment and perhaps various surgical procedures.