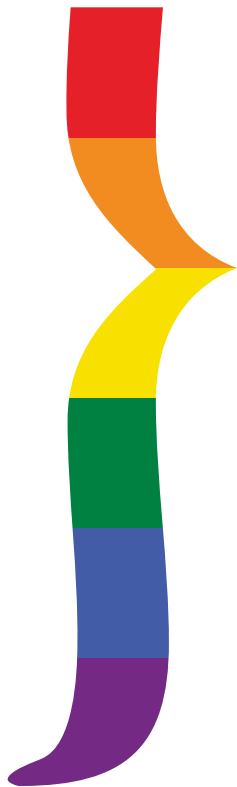


OUTCOMES
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ALLIES GUIDE

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This guide aims to give an overview of the issues surrounding LGBT+ diversity and inclusion in the workplace and tips on being an LGBT+ ally.

By providing practical advice that can be applied everyday, the guide equips colleagues with some tools and language to create a more supportive and inclusive work environment where everyone feels they can be their true selves at work.

What does LGBT+ stand for and what does the ‘+’ signify?

It’s no accident that the LGBT+ movement flies the rainbow flag. There are many different shades of sexual orientation and gender identity that fall under the LGBT+ umbrella

L = Lesbian

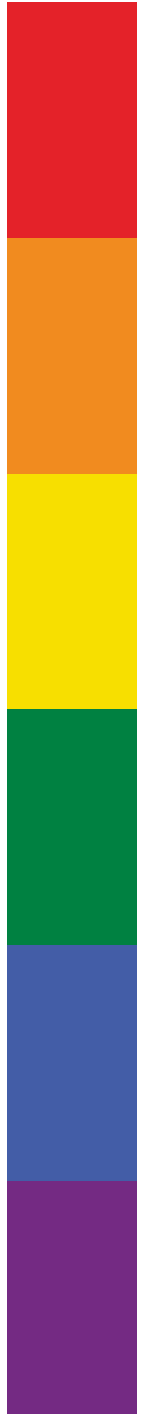
G = Gay

B = Bisexual

T = Trans

+ = a short-hand way of denoting that many other forms of sexual orientation and gender identity are included in this rainbow.

(There is a glossary of terms at the end of this guide that will help to further explain some of the language used.)





HIDDEN DIVERSITY AND “COMING OUT”

Being LGBT+ doesn't have to be obvious to others

Unlike some other forms of diversity, being LGBT+ isn't necessarily manifested in a person's appearance or behaviour. LGBT+ individuals can hide who they truly are from those around them.

Coming Out

Coming out is the process by which an LGBT+ person will reveal to people that they are LGBT+. A safe and supportive environment should be created so the individual knows that revealing this part of themselves will not be received negatively.

Coming out is not something an LGBT+ person has to face once, but may occur each time they meet new people or are in new environments, such as the workplace.

Often, it is not enough to be simply supportive and empathetic in order for someone to feel comfortable in revealing that they are LGBT+. More active and open expressions and gestures of support will prove more encouraging to anyone struggling with revealing they are LGBT+.

WHAT IS AN ALLY?

Someone who supports members of the LGBT+ community.

WHY BEING AN ALLY IS IMPORTANT

The many supporting the few

Minorities, by their very definition, are groups of people that are small in terms of numbers. However, this does not mean they are any less important and the contribution they make should be any less valued.

In a work environment where we strive for diversity of the workforce and inclusion for all, we look to the engagement of allies to support those in minority groups in order to ensure everyone feels they can be their true selves at work.

During Hermes Pride Week, we are calling on all colleagues to step up as allies for their LGBT+ colleagues – for this week and beyond.

Great strides have been made by those within the LGBT+ community to gain greater acceptance and tolerance, however none of this progress would be possible without the support of non-LGBT+ people.





SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

Why does it matter in the workplace?

Numerous studies have shown that diverse workforces and work environments that are more inclusive, including of LGBT+ employees, perform better. Providing a workplace where people feel supported and able to be themselves results in a more productive environment where individuals can get on with their jobs and not worry about hiding who they truly are.

Think about it – how many of you talk to your colleagues about what you did yesterday evening / at the weekend? How often will that include references to the person / people you were with? Invariably, you end up discussing your partner – your boyfriend, girlfriend, wife or husband – as well as your social circle. Now imagine not feeling supported or comfortable enough in the workplace to reveal that you are LGBT+.

Not only would you have to hide who you are as a person, you would also have to hide who you spend time with outside of office hours. In many circumstances, being vague and avoiding normal conversations with colleagues would be easier, and this could be misinterpreted as being “cagey”, “evasive”, “tricky to work out” etc. All of this can lead to a break down in trust on both sides.

And let’s not forget – this is an extraordinary waste of time, effort and thought for the individual to hide who they are. This is time, effort and thought that is being taken away from the job at hand.

PRACTICAL HELP

How to be an ally

- Don't just be tolerant and accepting of others and their differences – actively make it known that you **identify as an ally** and you support LGBT+ colleagues.
- **Don't subscribe to the clichés** – challenge the stereotypes of what it means to be LGBT+.
- **Challenge offensive behaviours** even if they claim to be jokes. Hurtful comments are not acceptable.
- **Challenge your own behaviours** and be aware of any biases you may have.
- Treat others as you would expect to be treated yourself – **with fairness and respect.**
- **Don't make assumptions**
- **Get involved!** Don't leave inclusion and diversity efforts for other people to do. Everybody is responsible for ensuring we create and maintain an inclusive and diverse workplace.



How to start the conversation

- Don't be afraid.
- Create an environment of **positive intent** – make it known that you are coming from the right place.
- **Don't expect to get everything right all of the time.** We all make mistakes and can use the wrong words or terminology when discussing matters to do with sexual orientation and gender identity. But don't let that put you off from getting involved in the conversation.
- **Open up the conversation for others to get involved.** The fact you are making the effort will go a long way in helping create the supportive and inclusive work environment we look to achieve.



THE LGBT+ RAINBOW

Understanding the range of sexual orientation and gender identity expressions

(BIOLOGICAL) SEX



Sex refers to biological differences between males and females, for example, chromosomes, reproductive organs and hormones.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION



Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex / gender in relation to your own

GENDER IDENTITY



Gender identity is a way to describe how you feel about your gender – whether man, woman or something different. Gender identity is different from your biological sex.

GENDER EXPRESSION



Gender expression is a person's behaviour, mannerisms, interests and appearance that are associated with gender in a particular cultural context.

TERMINOLOGY

Here's a brief guide to some of the terms you may hear when discussing LGBT+ matters. Don't be put off by the language. As long as positive intent has been established, it will matter less if you use the wrong words.

For a more comprehensive glossary of terms, please go to: www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/glossary-terms

Ally

Someone who supports members of the LGBT+ community

Bisexual or Bi

Refers to a person who has an emotional and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender

Biphobia

The fear or dislike of someone who identifies as bisexual

Cisgender or Cis

Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth

Coming out

When a person first tells someone / others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bi or trans

Gay man

Refers to a man who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men

Gender confirmation

Another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo gender confirmation usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention,

but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender

Gender identity

A person's internal sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary)

Gender queer

A person who resists the binary stereotype and challenges established gender categories

Gender stereotypes

The ways that we expect people to behave in society according to their gender, or what is commonly accepted as 'normal' for someone of that gender

Heterosexual / straight

Refers to a person who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards people of the opposite gender

Homosexual

The term used to describe someone who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards people of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used (for both men and women)

Homophobia

The fear or dislike of someone who identifies as lesbian or gay

Intersex

A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female. Intersex people can identify as male, female or non-binary

Lesbian / Gay Woman

Refers to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women

LGBT

The acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans

Non-binary

An umbrella term for a person who does not identify as male or female

Outed

When a lesbian, gay, bi or trans person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else without their consent

Sexual orientation

A person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person

Trans

An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves

using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, non-binary, genderqueer

Transgender man

A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male

Transgender woman

A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female

Transitioning

The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this. Transitioning also might involve telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents

Transphobia

The fear or dislike of someone who identifies as trans

Transsexual

This was used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone who transitioned to live in the 'opposite' gender to the one assigned at birth. This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender

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