GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

How to be an LGBTQIA+ Ally at Griffith University

Human Resources | Corporate Services

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Contents

Introduction

Griffith celebrates members of our community who are part of the LGBTQIA+ rainbow. As our understanding of identities grows and evolves, so does our language. In addition to LGBTQIA+, Griffith now also uses the terminology 'people of diverse genders, bodies and sexualities' (DGBS) to reflect this.

Being an Ally is about being an active friend or support to someone else. People who aren't part of the DGBS communities can be allies to LGBTQIA+ people, and DGBS people can be allies to each other. If we want to live in a world where people are accepted without exception, we all need to be part of the solution. Minus18's How to be a trans ally resource has a fantastic definition on what being an Ally means: *An Ally is someone who supports and advocates for the fair treatment of a community other than their own*.

Our Strategic Commitments

As a values-led University, we are committed to embracing diversity, including in recruitment, promotion and professional development, and enabling a culture that ensures that all staff and students, including LGBTQIA+ staff and students, are provided with a safe and supportive environment (Griffith University Strategic Plan, 2020-2025).

Griffith is committed to social justice and the UN Sustainable Development Goals including Reduced Inequalities and Gender Equality. Stonewall International has produced a document translating Sustainable Development Goals to LGBT inclusion (see The Sustainable Development Goals and LGBT Inclusion).

Griffith Allies

WHY BE AN ALLY?

The Griffith Ally Network comprises Griffith staff and students who support and affirm the experiences of DGBS people at Griffith. You do not have to be part of the Ally Network to be an Ally; however, joining the network and visibly supporting the inclusion of our DGBS peers goes a long way to ensure all LGBTQIA+ people feel welcome at the University.

Allies help to extend and grow an employee network, allowing for a greater, collaborative and more diverse voice for DGBS inclusion. Having a large and visible Ally Network helps LGBTQIA+ people recognise Griffith as a safe and accepting place and may encourage them to become more involved and connected with the University community.

Allies clearly promote the network as an all-inclusive network, one that is not just for people who are DGBS. This makes it far easier for those who are not 'out' at work to participate without identifying themselves as someone within the DGBS communities. It allows people to 'test the waters', meet people who are most like themselves, and determine whether or not the organisation really is accepting without committing to be out themselves.

Additionally, Allies can call out anti-LGBTQIA+ behaviour and slurs, address negative stereotypes, correct destructive myths and take a stand against jokes that make fun of LGBTQIA+ people in a way that LGBTQIA+ people cannot. An Ally's voice is a different voice taking a stand and is one that may carry more weight with some people, and one that will be privy to a lot of the comments that DGBS people may not be, just by the very nature of them being there.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD ALLY?

Every Ally will bring a different set of strengths, experiences and skills to DGBS inclusion initiatives. For some it will be their passion and enthusiasm, for others, their willingness to address comments that are homophobic, transphobic, biphobic, acephobic, etc. or slurs within the workplace, but essentially, a really great Ally is one who:

- has a level of understanding as to why LGBTQIA+ inclusion is so important to Griffith,

- has an understanding of LGBTQIA+ terminology and challenges; and a willingness to ask questions and learn,

- has a strong sense of self,

- displays a willingness to play a part, no matter how small or large, and

- has an understanding of, and a respect for an individual's confidentiality.

Please refer to the Griffith Ally Network webpage for information on how to join the Griffith Ally Network and the responsibilities Griffith Allies are expected to commit to.

Harassment, bullying and discrimination

All members of the University community are entitled to be treated with fairness and respect and experience a work and study environment free from unacceptable or unlawful behaviour, including harassment, bullying and discrimination regarding your sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status. The University is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff, students, contractors and visitors while undertaking work, study or research activities, and as such, actions that constitute assault, discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification will not be tolerated.

If you or a staff or student that you are supporting feel as though there has been discrimination, harassment or bullying, there are trained Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officers (HDCO) located on each campus who you can talk to. The role of a HDCO is to be a confidential point of contact to listen to concerns, explain University policies and procedures, and provide information on reporting options. Please refer to the Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officer Network list for information on Contact Officers who are trained LGBTQIA+ Allies.

Contact and feedback

For more information or if you have any feedback on this document, please contact the HR Inclusion and Development team.

Five key ways to be an Ally

1. EDUCATE AND EMPOWER YOURSELF

Doing some research, reading up online and learning a little more about the DGBS communities is a great place to start. Even if you're part of the community, find out about people whose sexuality or gender differs to your own. Confront your own assumptions, prejudices, and biases.

As a member of Pride in Diversity, Griffith University staff and students can access fantastic publications and resources they have developed. Other LGBTQIA+-led organisations such as Minus18, Wear It Purple, QLife and TransHub also have a great range of resources to help you get started.

Getting the language right can sometimes feel intimidating, so why not start with our Top tips for inclusive language; Frequently asked questions; and Commonly used terminology?

2. LISTEN

As Allies to each other, we must be able to listen, ask how someone is doing and be aware that other people's lives and experiences will be completely different to our own, especially in terms of discrimination and prejudice. Remember that just because someone has come out to you, they might not be out to everyone so you have no place in outing them to others – this can be dangerous. Be respectful of each other and enjoy learning about all the differences and diversity in the communities around us.

3. BE VISIBLE AND CHALLENGE

Be loud, visible and proud to be part of the change.

Some visible ways you can indicate that you are an Ally are:

- including your own pronouns in your email signature and Teams profile card,
- using the Griffith Pride Pack;
- having an Ally postcard or Pride merch in your workstation, or
- wearing a rainbow lanyard and/or personal pronoun pin.

You can also lead by example by using inclusive language.

When you hear people making negative comments or using hurtful or abusive language towards DGBS people, challenge it, if safe to do so. If it's online, you may consider reporting it (see guidance on adult cyber abuse from the eSafety Commissioner). You might not always have all the answers or know exactly what to say and that's OK. Here are some tips to think about:

- Keep calm and explain why bullying is wrong.
- Try saying something like, 'Stop, this is wrong' and explain why.
- Pretend you don't understand the 'joke' and ask the person to explain how or why it's funny.
- Make sure you stay safe and don't put yourself in danger.
- Check the person being bullied is OK.

If you see someone being bullied, being discriminated, or on the receiving end of jokes that make fun of their sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, encourage them to consult with a Griffith Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officer about reporting or support options or contact People and Wellbeing. Please refer to the Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officer Network list for information on Contact Officers who are trained LGBTQIA+ Allies.

4. INFLUENCE OTHERS

Think about the opportunities you have to share the message of support for DGBS people. Whether it's a conversation with friends, family or colleagues, organising a 'lunch and learn' at work with your team, or even by wearing a rainbow lanyard/Ally badge. Use the platforms you have to amplify the voices of DGBS communities and share other people's stories.

If you have any ideas about how to improve DGBS inclusion at Griffith, you can contact a member of the Griffith University Pride Committee.

5. REMEMBER THAT BEING AN ALLY GOES BEYOND THE DGBS COMMUNITIES

It's important to remember that people have lots of different elements to their identities – someone might be bi and also a person of colour (POC), or trans and Catholic, gay and living with a disability, non-binary and neurodiverse.

This may mean they experience multiple levels of discrimination in their life. Being an Ally is about listening to and learning from someone else's experiences and showing your support for them.

For more in-depth information about how to be a better Ally, please refer to the Pride in Diversity Engaging Allies for Change resource on our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion webpage.

Key concepts

TOP TIPS FOR INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE.

Using inclusive language makes a real difference to DGBS people. Our top three tips are:

- If someone discloses to you that they're from one of the DGBS communities, respectfully ask what terms they use to describe themselves, then use those terms.

- Don't question or make assumptions about someone's gender, sexuality or relationship. Accept and respect how people define their gender and sexuality.

- Do not use someone's gender or sexuality as an identifier or adjective, such as, 'gay colleague' or 'trans man in class'. You could instead describe someone based on other descriptors such as the colour of their clothing, hair colour, type of hairstyle or height.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE LEARNING AND TEACHING ENVIRONMENT

For Academic Staff, we encourage you to review your current teaching materials and how they are presented. You should keep an eye out for:

- Whether any gendered language is being used in your curriculum – can these be replaced with gender-neutral terms (where applicable)? For example, are there instances where you say, 'he/she' that can be replaced with 'they'?

- The gender options used in research. Best practice, if possible, is to use research that provided a comprehensive list of gender options for respondents. If you use research that was conducted based on binary gender findings, this can be acknowledged as an aspect of that research (whether it was by limitation/ease of statistical analysis or through not providing comprehensive gender options when asking about gender identity). You may like to add a disclaimer acknowledging that the research applies to those respondents who identified as male or female as per the research questions or analysis needed, but that it does not accurately reflect or represent the diversity of gender identities that exist.

As an Academic, how you lead your teaching environment can have a large impact on students' experiences of the University. Here are some tips on how you can make your teaching environment more inclusive of DGBS identities and lead by example:

- When introducing yourself to the class, include your pronouns. For example, 'Hi, everyone, my name is [NAME] and my pronouns are [HE/HIM, THEY/THEM, SHE/HER, XE/XIM, etc.].'

- Include your pronouns wherever you display your name in teaching materials, presentations, and other avenues in interactions with colleagues and students (e.g., your email signature).

- If someone uses inappropriate language in class, take the opportunity to model appropriate language use and provide an example of how someone could rephrase their language to be more inclusive in the future.

- If a student misgenders or deadnames another student, politely provide the correct pronouns, descriptor (e.g., person rather than woman or man), or name, whether the other student is in attendance or not.

- Be conscious that someone's legal name may be different from their chosen name, so be sure to use a chosen name. In Griffith systems, this will be shown as a person's 'preferred name'. If you notice a student's name or pronouns have changed, use their new name / pronouns in future.

RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILIES CAN LOOK DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE.

When you are discussing relationships, words and phrases such as 'partner', 'parents', 'relationship', 'in a relationship' as opposed to 'husband/boyfriend' or 'wife/girlfriend' are examples of inclusive language. This avoids excluding DGBS people, devaluing their relationships, or making assumptions about the people involved.

It is recommended that you avoid making the following assumptions:

- That everyone is heterosexual (straight) or that this is the norm,

- That the nature of someone's relationship is romantic or sexual,

- If someone is in a romantic or platonic life relationship, that they have one partner, or

- What the gender of someone's partner or partners is.

There are many kinds of relationships, and not everyone wants to be in a romantic relationship. Some people may live together or separately. Some people may choose to recognise their relationships formally through marriage. Relationships can involve people of the same or different genders or more than two people. People may be in a relationship that looks like a straight relationship, but that does not mean the people involved are straight. Some people may choose to share significant life events as part of a platonic relationship, such as co-parenting, buying a house together, etc.

If you need to write or talk about it, ask people how they describe their relationships and use their terminology.

There are also many kinds of families. This can include single parents, foster parents, blended families, shared parenting, and a diverse range of carers. It's best to ask someone how they describe their family arrangement and use their terms. When talking about families, it's important to remember that some trans men and gender diverse people can carry pregnancies and that people may not share the same last name as their partner or their children.

GENDER, SEX AND SEXUALITY ARE ALL SEPARATE CONCEPTS.

'Gender' is part of how you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being female or male or being a woman or a man. Some people understand their gender as a combination of these or neither.

'Gender expression', which is the way in which a person can communicate their gender identity through things such as clothing, hairstyling and personal grooming, mannerisms and behaviour. It is important to note that while someone's gender expression and how they present themselves may indicate a person's gender, that is not always the case.

'Sex' refers to a person's biological sex characteristics. This has historically been understood as either female or male. However, we know that some people are born with innate variations of sex characteristics. Intersex people are a diverse population who use a variety of different terms, some of which are listed by Intersex Human Rights Australia in their What is intersex? article. If someone tells you they have an intersex variation or that they are an intersex person, please be guided by the language they use for themself.

A person's gender does not necessarily mean they have particular sex characteristics or a particular sexuality, or vice versa.

'Sexuality' or 'sexual orientation' describes a person's physical and/or sexual attraction or lack thereof to others.

DESCRIBING DGBS COMMUNITIES.

On the advice of the Griffith Pride Committee, we are currently using the terminology 'people of diverse genders, bodies and sexualities' (DGBS), which is an encompassing term that recognises all identities without having to list them out. At Griffith, this can be used interchangeably with the more commonly known acronym, 'LGBTQIA+', which stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer / Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, with the '+' used to indicate an inclusive umbrella to encompass a range of diverse gender identities and sexualities that are recognised, but otherwise not listed. When writing about LGBTQIA+ people it is best to use the term 'communities', as there are many separate and distinct communities within these umbrella terms.

People may fit more than one of these terms. Heterosexual and cisgender people can be part of DGBS communities. For example, there are straight trans and intersex people. It is also important to note that intersex people are part of a community separate from the LGBTQA+ communities and may or may not associate with these communities depending on their gender identity or sexuality.

While LGBTQIA+ communities often work together, for example to advocate for equal rights, they are different communities with their own distinct experiences, needs and priorities. There is diversity within a community.

You may encounter other abbreviations. LGBTI is used in many government systems, LGBTIQ+ and LGBTQ+ are more broadly understood and accepted across communities. You may also encounter more specific umbrella terms, such as QTIPOC (Queer, Trans, Intersex, Persons of Colour), or broader terms such as Queer Community or Rainbow Community.

SPEAKING ABOUT SEXUALITY AND GENDER IDENTITY IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH.

Understanding language and how it's used can empower people to communicate with their loved ones and peers effectively. Cultures and languages can express gender and sexuality differently and we shouldn't assume that the LGBTQIA+ acronym is well-known or understood outside of English or western cultures. RainbowTerminology.org provides a glossary of 100+ LGBTQIA+ terms in English, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Korean, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese, providing DGBS people from these cultural backgrounds with support to confidently navigate conversations about sexuality and gender identity.

DGBS TERMINOLOGY IS DIVERSE AND CONSTANTLY EVOLVING.

Language used to describe different DGBS people and by different parts of DGBS communities changes over time and can differ across cultures and generations.

There will also be differences in how people individually use or define particular terms. You may also encounter outdated or even offensive terms in medical, psychological or legal contexts.

For example, from June 2018 the World Health Organization (WHO) declassified being transgender as a mental illness. The term 'gender dysphoria' has been replaced with 'gender incongruence' and has been placed under the broader platform of sexual health.

This guide gives general guidance based on current thinking, however, it's always best to ask people how they describe themselves and use these terms.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT, SO KEEP TRYING.

No one will get the language right 100 percent of the time for 100 percent of people.

The important thing is to keep trying and if you make a mistake, quickly apologise and continue the conversation.

Avoid asking people what terms they 'prefer'. Having a 'preference' can sound as if it's a choice and most people do not feel as if they have a choice in these matters. If you need to, you can simply ask people what terms they use.

DON'T ASK IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO.

We all have a right to privacy. We should only have to bring as much of our private selves to work as we want to and feel safe doing. Allow yourself to be led by how someone talks about themselves, their family and their relationships. Ask or be guided by them about who to share this information with.

Often, DGBS people from different cultures or faith traditions have different family or workplace traditions around disclosure or 'coming out'. Do not assume every person who may be comfortable

being 'out' in the workplace is 'out' in other settings – people have the right to disclose their sexuality or gender, for example, in their own time and on their own terms.

More recently, the term 'inviting in' has gained popularity due to the positive framing of the term. Rather than someone 'coming out' of 'the closet' or from hiding a part of themself from others, 'inviting in' indicates that the person is sharing parts of their identity with someone trusted. QLife's *Coming Out, Inviting In & Disclosure* guide for health professionals can be reviewed for more information on this concept.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS.

Discrimination is not just wrong; it is against the law.

In Queensland you must not discriminate against someone because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or lawful sexual activity (see the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991). The Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 also says that public authorities (including Universities) must act in ways that are compatible with human rights, such as taking relevant human rights into account when they are making decisions.

The Sex Discrimination Act (1984) makes if unlawful to discriminate on the basis of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status against the law. Read more on the Australian Human Rights Commission's page on Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status discrimination.

BEING LGBTQIA+ ISN'T A PREFERENCE OR LIFESTYLE CHOICE.

When we talk about gender, sex characteristics or sexuality (or even someone's pronouns), we're not talking about preferences or choices. We're just talking about how people are.

Frequently asked questions

HOW SHOULD I USE PRONOUNS?

Pronouns are one way people refer to each other and themselves. For example, most but not all men (including trans men) use the pronoun 'he'. Likewise, most but not all women (including trans women) use the pronoun 'she'. Some people use a gender-neutral pronoun such as 'they' (e.g., 'Pip drives *their* car to work. *They* don't like walking because it takes *them* too long'), others use multiple pronouns (e.g., 'Pip drives *their* car to work. *He* doesn't like walking because it takes *him* too long'), and some people may prefer to be called by just their name, rather than using pronouns at all (e.g., '*Pip* drives *Pip's* car to work. *Pip* doesn't like walking because it takes *Pip* too long').

While he/him, she/her, and they/them are commonly used pronouns, they are not the only pronouns to exist. There are an infinite number of pronouns, with new ones emerging as languages evolve.

Some people's pronouns may be context specific. For example, someone might not use their pronoun in a particular environment or around particular people because they do not feel safe or comfortable to do so.

People list their pronouns on their email signature for several reasons, including to minimise misgendering and demonstrate a commitment to inclusion as an Ally.

For example: Jane Doe, Job Title, Pronouns: She/Her

The University's email signature template instructions include information on adding your pronouns to your email signature, including why this is important.

Some people like to go a step further and provide educational information, such as: *Jane Doe, Job Title, Pronouns: She/Her* (*What is this and why is it important?*)

ARE THERE GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS IN OTHER LANGUAGES?

Many different languages have gender-neutral pronouns built into their language, just like English has 'they'. Wear It Purple's *Misgendering + Pronouns: A guide to using inclusive language when speaking languages other than English* lists gender neutral pronoun options for Arabic, Mandarin, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

HOW DO I ASK A PERSON WHAT THEIR PRONOUNS ARE?

If you're unsure of what pronouns someone uses, it is always acceptable and polite to ask them respectfully, and preferably privately. You can try asking, 'What pronouns do you use?' or 'Can you remind me what pronouns you use?', or when meeting someone for the first time, you can introduce yourself and your pronouns first, then ask for theirs. Stating your own pronouns and asking people for theirs can feel awkward at first when you're not used to it, but it's not half as awkward as making a hurtful assumption. Do not ask 'What pronouns do you prefer?', as a person's pronouns and identity are not a preference. When bringing a group of people together, you may also want to get everyone to share their names and pronouns at the start to act as both an ice breaker and to indicate the space is open to people who use pronouns you might not expect (e.g., they/them or xe/xim).

It is also important to note that someone's pronouns do not necessarily indicate their gender, but it is up to the individual whether they disclose their gender to you or not.

HOW DO I ASK FOR PRONOUNS WHEN INVITING PEOPLE FOR A JOB INTERVIEW?

Here's an example of some text you can use to make the lead up to your interviews inclusive:

'We strive to make our interviewing process as inclusive as possible for people from all backgrounds. If you feel comfortable doing so, please feel free to let me know ahead of your interview details of:

- any accommodations you need and whether you have any questions about accessibility;

- what pronoun you use (e.g., he/him, she/her, they/them); and

- what name you would like us to refer to you by.'

Griffith's Talent Acquisition team will also support this process when scheduling interviews with candidates.

WHAT IF I MAKE A MISTAKE?

People may worry that they will offend or be embarrassed if they use the wrong term, name or pronoun, particularly for trans and gender diverse people.

It's important to try to use respectful language and some mistakes are understandable, particularly when you are learning. If you make a mistake, apologise promptly and move on. Don't dwell on it, and don't give up – keep trying to get it right.

Repeated mistakes indicate a lack of respect and can be very distressing. If it continues or is deliberate, it could constitute bullying or discrimination which is unlawful.

HOW SHOULD I GREET OR WELCOME GROUPS OF PEOPLE?

You can easily include everyone and every gender by saying things like 'Welcome, everyone', 'Good morning, folks', 'Hi, all' or 'Welcome, colleagues'. These broader terms can also be useful when sending emails to large groups or departments.

WHAT SHOULD I KEEP IN MIND WHEN SPEAKING TO SOMEONE NEW?

Remember, a person's name and the sound of their voice aren't reliable indicators of their gender. Do not address someone by gendered terms such as 'ma'am' or 'sir' if you don't know their gender. Ask and call them by their name.

WHAT TERMS SHOULD I AVOID?

Derogatory terminology used to insult DGBS people or refer to something in a derogatory way, for example, 'that's so gay', perpetuates the view that any sexuality or gender identity other than heterosexual or cisgender is unacceptable. You should always avoid LGBTQIA+ terminology being used in a derogatory way, e.g., the word 'gay' when used in a negative way to refer to a situation or event unrelated to sexuality. You should not use slurs or other words you've heard being used to put down or attack DGBS people.

WHAT CAN I ASK A PERSON WHO IS DGBS?

Many people who are of diverse gender, body and/or sexuality get asked a lot of questions about LGBTQIA+ experiences, issues or terminology. While it's good to check in with a person's individual terms, they shouldn't be expected to speak for diverse communities or be responsible for your detailed education.

One guiding principle is not to ask someone a question if you would feel uncomfortable answering it yourself. Considering that DGBS people experience significant discrimination, consider that they might wish to keep personal information even more private. Questions about body parts, medical history, relationship history and sexual activity are generally intrusive, rude, and inappropriate in the workplace.

EXAMPLES

Here are some examples of negative or non-inclusive language, and what can be said instead to be inclusive.

NEGATIVE OR NON-INCLUSIVE	INCLUSIVE
Sexual preference, lifestyle	Sexuality, sexual orientation, diverse sexuality
Ladies and gentlemen	Everyone
Boyfriend/husband or girlfriend/wife	Partner
He/she, his/her	They, their
'LGBTQIA+ people when compared with their straight peers'	'LGBTQIA+ people when compared to people who are straight and/or cisgender'
Gender reassignment, sex change, sex reassignment	Gender-affirming healthcare, transition-related healthcare
'Have you had the surgery?' / 'What is your real name?'	Think: 'Would I ask a cisgender person this?'

Commonly used terminology

A-Z OF SEXUALITY

Please note: We have used 'sexuality' in this section as an umbrella term for the spectrum of diverse types of attraction that exist, recognising that some identities, such as aromantic (see below), that fall under this umbrella do not necessarily have anything to do with sexual attraction in particular.

An **Ally** is a person who considers themself a friend and active supporter of the DGBS communities. This term can be used for non-DGBS Allies as well as those within the LGBTQIA+ communities who support each other, e.g., a gay man who is an Ally to the trans and gender diverse community.

An **Allosexual** person regularly experiences sexual attraction towards others.

An **Asexual** person experiences little to no sexual attraction.

Both allosexual and asexual people can experience other forms of attraction, such as romantic and/or physical attraction.

The **Asexual spectrum**, commonly abbreviated as **acespec**, refers to sexualities that are asexual or closely related to asexuality (demisexual, greyasexual, aceflux, etc.). Being asexual, acespec or **ace** may be used as an umbrella term for someone who experiences little to no sexual attraction towards others.

An **Aromantic** person experiences little to no romantic attraction. The **Aromantic spectrum**, commonly abbreviated as **arospec**, refers to aromantic identities or identities closely associated with aromanticism (e.g., demiromantic, greyaromantic, cupioromantic, etc.). Being aromantic, arospec or **aro** may be used as an umbrella term for someone who experiences little to no romantic attraction.

Aspec or **a-spec** is a common umbrella term covering both the asexual spectrum and aromantic spectrum.

Someone who is on the asexual spectrum is not necessarily aromantic or vice versa.

A **Bisexual** person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of their own gender and other genders (this can include being attracted to non-binary people too).

Coming out or **inviting in** is the process through which a person comes to recognise and acknowledge (both to themself and to others) their sexuality and/or gender identity.

A **Gay** person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the same sex and/ or gender as themselves. This term is often used to describe men who are attracted to other men, but some women and gender diverse people may describe themselves as gay.

Heterosexual or 'straight' is a term commonly used to describe a sexuality where a woman is attracted to men or a man is attracted to women, which is often called being attracted to the 'opposite' gender.

A **Lesbian** person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to other women. Some gender diverse people also identify with this term and some lesbians are attracted to gender diverse individuals.

'**Outing**' or to be '**outed**' is when a person's sexuality or gender identity is revealed to others without their permission. Someone being outed may affect their employment, personal safety or religious or family situations.

When someone is '**out**', they are open about their sexuality and/or gender identity in their personal, public and/or professional lives.

A **Pansexual** person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of all genders, binary or non-binary.

The **'Q'** in LGBTQIA+ is often used to represent either or both, 'Queer and Questioning':

Queer is often used as an umbrella term for diverse genders or sexualities. Some people use queer to describe their own gender and/or sexuality if other terms do not fit.

Please note: The use of the term 'Queer' can differ between different groups and generations. For some people, especially older LGBTQIA+ people, 'queer' has negative connotations because of its historical use as a derogatory term/slur. The term has been reclaimed in recent years and is increasingly used, particularly by younger LGBTQIA+ people, in an empowering way or to describe themselves (e.g., the phrase, 'I am Queer' could be used to describe someone's sexual orientation).

Questioning: Rather than be locked into a certainty, some people are still exploring or questioning their gender or sexual orientation. People may not wish to have one of the other labels applied to them yet, for a variety of reasons, but may still wish to be clear, for example, that they are non-binary or non-heterosexual. It is important these individuals feel welcome and included in the acronym and community spaces.

GENDER IDENTITY

Some terms and definitions have been adapted from the Australian Government Guidelines of the Recognition of Sex and Gender, the Australian Human Rights Commission, and the Pride in Diversity/ OII Employers Guide to Intersex Inclusion, 2014.

A **Trans** (short for **transgender**) person is someone whose gender does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans can be used as an umbrella term to describe a wide range of gender identities that differ from the perceived norms aligned to biological sex (sex assigned at birth), but not everyone uses it to describe themselves. For example, a man who was assigned female at birth (AFAB for short) might refer to himself as 'a trans man', 'a man with a trans history' or just 'a man'.

Common terminology includes 'trans woman', referring to those who were assigned male at birth but whose gender identity is as a woman, and 'trans man', which refers to those who were assigned female at birth but whose gender identity is as a man. While some transgender people may refer to themselves as trans, others will not. For example, referring to themselves as female or as a woman rather than a trans woman.

Please note: It's important to use the terms someone uses to describe themselves. If you are unsure of how a person identifies, you should politely ask.

Gender diverse generally refers to a range of genders expressed in different ways for people whose gender does not conform to social expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. There are many terms used by gender diverse people to describe themselves. For example, a person who is **Non-binary** is someone whose gender is not exclusively aligned with a woman or a man; while a person who is **Agender** has no gender. There are other gender diverse identities. Language in this space is dynamic, particularly among young people, who are more likely to describe themselves as non-binary.

Gender expression refers to the way in which a person can communicate their gender identity within a given cultural context; for example, in terms of clothing, hairstyles and personal grooming, mannerisms and behaviour. Gender expression may indicate a person's gender identity but not always, and it is not required to validate their gender. Additionally, a person's gender expression may shift over both short and long periods of time depending on their identity and/or affirmation journey.

Gender expression is typically described as a spectrum between feminine and masculine.

Please note:: the University recognises that gender expression is a significant element of gender affirmation. The University supports all staff and students, including trans or gender diverse employees to dress in a manner that best reflects their gender expression and/or gender identity and does not have a formal dress code. Health and safety dress requirements (for example, personal protective equipment) will be maintained.

Gender incongruence is the preferred sexual health classification of transgender and gender diverse people by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which is the distress an individual experiences because of the discrepancies between their gender identity and sex characteristics. WHO describes gender incongruence as *'characterised by a marked and persistent incongruence between an individual's experienced gender and the assigned sex'*. It replaces the term 'gender dysphoria' which was used previously (and is still used by some trans people).

'**Sistergirl**' and '**brotherboy**' are terms used in some Indigenous Australian communities to describe transgender people and their relationships as a way of validating and strengthening their gender identities and relationships, though language can differ across locations, countries and nations. These two terms may also be used by non-trans, but traditionally non-conforming Indigenous Australians – for example, both lesbian and heterosexual Indigenous Australian women may refer to themselves as 'sistergirls', 'sisters' or 'tiddas', which is a shortened version in Aboriginal English of the word 'sisters'. Gay Indigenous Australian men may also refer to themselves as 'sisters'.

Generally, 'brotherboy' refers to an Indigenous Australian person who was assigned female at birth but is a man or has male spirit, and takes on male roles in community and society, and 'sistergirl' refers to an Indigenous Australian who was assigned male at birth but lives their life as a woman, including taking on traditional cultural female practices. These are not only gender identities but cultural identities as well.

A **cisgender** (pronounced 'sis-gender', and commonly shortened to 'cis', Latin for the 'on the same side of') person is someone whose gender aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth – someone who isn't trans or gender diverse.

Transition or **gender affirmation** refers to the process where a trans or gender diverse person takes steps to socially and/or physically feel more aligned with their gender. There is a wide range of ways this process differs between people. Some people may change how they interact with others, and others may change their appearance or seek medical assistance (through surgeries and hormones) to better express their gender.

Please note: 'Gender affirmation' is the recommended terminology unless a trans or gender diverse (TGD) person has indicated otherwise. This is to separate from the assumption that TGD people change from one gender to another or need to go through a 'transition' to live as their authentic self.

Trans and gender diverse people experience unique and disproportionate challenges and barriers. For more information on how you can be an Ally to trans and gender diverse people, please see our How to be a Trans Ally guide.

INTERSEX AND SEX CHARACTERISTICS

An intersex person has innate variations to physical or biological sex characteristics such as variations in chromosomes, hormones or anatomy. Intersex traits are a natural part of human bodily diversity. Not all intersex people use the term intersex.

Intersex people have a diversity of bodies, genders and sexualities. 1.7 percent of children born in Australia are estimated to be born with an intersex variation. There are many different intersex variations, which may or may not be evident at birth, and which have their own terms.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you want or need to understand more about DGBS communities, we encourage you to seek further information and training on inclusive language and practice. Please refer to the Diversity and Inclusion Learning Opportunities webpage.