

## Definitions

**Asexual:** A person whose attraction to others does not include, or is not solely based on, sexuality.

**Bisexual:** An individual who is attracted to the same and opposite gender.

**Cisgender/Cissexual:** An individual whose birth-assigned-sex and gender is the same as their gender identity.

**Gay:** A woman or man who is physically and emotionally attracted to someone of the same sex. In current culture, gay more commonly refers to men.

**Gender Expression:** The external attributes, behavior, appearance, dress, etc., by which a person expresses themselves and through which others perceive that person's gender.<sup>1</sup>

**Gender Identity:** Linked to a person's sense of being male or female. A person's gender identity is different from their sexual orientation and may be different from their birth-assigned sex.

**Gender Transition:** The process of aligning one's physical body and gender expression with one's gender identity. This may or may not include surgery, hormone therapy, and changes in dress, appearance, name, and pronoun usage. Also sometimes called "affirming one's gender."

**Gender Diverse/Gender Creative:** An individual whose gender expression differs from the culturally constructed male/female gender binary, or what is 'expected' of them. The phrase *gender creative* is often used in reference to children.

**Genderqueer:** Individuals whose gender identity and expression are fluid, and fall outside of the male/female gender binary. This term is also associated with challenging the gender binary and stereotypes.

**GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance):** Student organizations found in some K-12 schools and post-secondary institutions. These groups create safe and supportive places for sexual and gender minority students and their allies.

**Heterosexism:** A belief that all gender and sexual minorities are inferior.

**Homophobia:** An irrational fear or hatred of people who are, or perceived to be, gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Homophobia may be exhibited as prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, or acts of violence.

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario Human Rights Commission [www.ohrc.on.ca/en/gender-identity-and-gender-expression-brochure](http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/gender-identity-and-gender-expression-brochure).

# LGBTQ Resources

For NAIT Students & Staff

THIS IS A  
**SAFE  
SPACE** FOR NAIT'S  
**LGBTQ  
COMMUNITY**



**Homosexual:** This is an outdated term that refers to a person who is physically and emotionally attracted to someone of the same gender.

**Inclusive Language:** The use of gender non-specific language (e.g., “partner” instead of “husband/girlfriend” or “they” instead of “he/she”) to indicate consideration of sexual and gender minority individuals.

**Intersex:** A person who is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the culturally constructed categories of 'female' or 'male.' While some people's physical sex may be ambiguous at birth, others may not discover that they are intersex until later on in life.

**Lesbian:** A female who is physically and emotionally attracted to other females.

**LGBTQ/GLBT/LGBTQQIA\*:** Acronyms that represent the constellation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, two-spirit, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual identities. The asterisk represents the inclusion of additional identities not represented in the acronym. These acronyms are also synonymous with “sexual and gender minorities.”

**Outing:** Publicly disclosing another person's sexual orientation or gender identity without that person's permission or knowledge. Outing someone is disrespectful and potentially dangerous.

**Pansexual/Omnisexual:** A person who is physically and emotionally attracted to people of many different gender identities. These terms reflect an understanding of gender that reaches beyond the male/female binary.

**Queer:** Historically a negative word referring to people attracted to someone of their same sex, this term is now used in positive ways to describe identities, communities and social movements.

**Sexual Orientation:** Refers to the gender of person someone is attracted to. It is often a way to say if a person is gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, transgender/trans-identified, two-spirited, queer or questioning.

**Transgender/Trans/Trans-Identified:** A person whose gender identities or expressions differ from their birth-assigned sex or gender.

**Transsexual:** A person whose gender identity differs from their birth-assigned sex or gender, and who may undergo a gender transition that could include surgical or hormonal treatments. Unlike transgender/trans/trans-identified, transsexual is **not** an umbrella term, i.e., not all transgender individuals identify as transsexual.

**Two-Spirit:** A spiritual identity for some Aboriginal people. This term implies the embodiment of both masculine and feminine spiritual qualities within the same body, and has different meanings for different Aboriginal communities. Some Aboriginal people use this term in place of other terms listed in this resource.