



# Inclusive Glossary

We have put together a reference guide in the form of a glossary. This glossary includes the terms and language commonly used in dialogue regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. We believe that in order to gain a better insight into our community and its diversity, a knowledge of the terminology used is important. As language and words develop and evolve, so will our list, so while we present some of the current meanings and definitions of the words used, it is not a comprehensive list and will change as our language and work grows.

This glossary and its definitions provide a starting point for engaging in open and honest conversation, and is a tool meant to build a shared language of understanding.

# A

**Ableism:** The belief that disabled individuals are inferior to non-disabled individuals, leading to discrimination toward and oppression of individuals with disabilities and physical, mental and/or emotional differences.

**Advocate:** A person who actively works to end intolerance, educate others, and support social equity for a marginalized group; to actively support or plea in favour of a particular cause, the action of working to end intolerance or educate others.

**Ageism:** Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions, such as referring to someone's age in a context in which age is not relevant, based on differences in age; usually those of younger persons against older persons.

# A

**Agency:** The ability to act independently and make free choices; the ability to make conscious decisions for oneself.

**Agender:** An agender person does not conform to the social construction of gender. This identity falls under the non-binary umbrella. Agender people may use any pronouns they are comfortable with.

**Allyship:** An active verb; leveraging personal positions of power and privilege to fight oppression by respecting, working with, and empowering marginalized voices and communities; using one's own voice to project others', less represented, voices.

# A

**Androgyne / Androgynous / Androgyny:** Someone who reflects an appearance that is both masculine and feminine, or neither.

**Anti-Racism:** The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.

**Anti-Semitism:** The fear or hatred of the Jewish community, Judaism, and related symbols.

# A

**Asexual:** refers to people who do not experience sexual attraction toward others. They may experience other forms of attraction, such as romantic, sensual, or aesthetic attraction. Asexuality is a sexual orientation, not a gender identity, behaviour, or medical condition.

**Autonomy:** The condition or quality of having independence. Having the right or power to be self-governed.

**Autism:** Refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviours, speech, and nonverbal communication.

# B

**BAME:** A government official term, BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) – describes those from cultural backgrounds other than White British, which in the UK is the majority ethnic group. This term however has become controversial as some state that “not only does BAME erase identity, the defining and use of “minority” when referring to the global majority, is deeply problematic”.

**Bias:** a particular tendency, trend, inclination, feeling, or opinion, especially one that is preconceived or unreasoned.

**Biphobia:** The fear or hatred of persons who identify as bisexual.

**BIPOC:** A person or group who identifies as Black, Indigenous, or Person of Colour.

# B

**Bisexual:** often shortened as Bi, is a fluid identity that encompasses the sexual attraction between two genders and all genders, with or without preferences to gender. Bisexuality is often seen as an umbrella term.

**BLM:** Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a movement whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the governing authorities and other hate groups.

**BME:** Similar to BAME. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), is a term used in the UK to describe people of non-white descent.



# C

**Cisgender / Cis:** an adjective for someone whose gender corresponds to their assigned sex at birth.

**Classism:** to exert a negative, biased or discriminatory attitude based on distinctions made between social or economic classes.

**Colourism:** A form of prejudice, discrimination or racism where people are negative towards people who have a darker skin tone. It also includes people that treat others with a lighter-skin tone better.



# C

**Culture:** the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

**Cultural Appropriation:** The act of adopting, taking customs, practices, or traditions, usually without acknowledgement, from another culture to either mock or simplify the meaning or significance of that cultural identity marker. Also, taking/wearing something from another culture and appreciating it only when it is assumed by people with a relatively privileged status.

# D

**DEI:** Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) encompasses the symbiotic relationship, philosophy and culture of acknowledging, embracing, supporting, and accepting those of all racial, sexual, gender, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds, among other differentiators.

**Demographic:** a specific segment of a population having shared characteristics.

**Disability:** Persons with disabilities as defined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities refers exclusively to persons with long-term impairments. These conditions may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or a combination of multiple factors.

# D

**Discrimination:** the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different demographics of people, usually based on the grounds of ethnicity, age, sex, or disability.

**Diversity:** Acknowledges all the ways people differ: race, sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, and more.

# E

**Equality:** the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.

**Equity:** Is often used interchangeably with equality, but there's a core difference: Where equality is a system in which each individual is offered the same opportunities regardless of circumstance, equity distributes resources based on needs. Equity attempts to correct societal imbalances by creating more opportunities for people who have historically had less access.

# E

**ESOL:** Stands for English for Speakers of Other Languages. It's aimed at non-native English speakers, looking to take up English as a new language.

**Ethnicity:** a social group that are connected and share a common and distinctive culture, language, heritage, religion, and customs.

**Exclusionary:** having the effect of excluding or shutting out someone or something.

# F

**Femme:** A person who expresses and/or identifies with femininity.

**Feminism:** a movement that fights for the economic, social, and political equality of women.

**First Generation:** In the context of migration, first-generation pertains to a person's nationality or residency in a country who has immigrated to a new country of residence, that is, the first generation to immigrate.

**FTM:** Abbreviation for a person who was assigned female at birth (AFAB) but identifies as male and transitioned to a masculine appearance that is consistent with their gender identity. This term is problematic to some people who identify as trans, as they feel they were never female and because X to Y terms can put too much focus on traditional means of physical transition.

# G

**Gaslighting:** A form of intimidation or psychological abuse, sometimes called Ambient Abuse where false information is presented to the victim, making them doubt their own memory, perception and quite often, their sanity.

**Genderism:** The belief that there are only two genders and that gender is automatically linked to and individual's sex assigned at birth.

**Gender Expression:** the way in which a person expresses their gender identity, typically through their appearance, dress, and behaviour.



# G

**Gender-fluid:** is a gender identity which refers to a gender which varies over time. This can be occasionally, every month, every week, every day, to even every few moments a day depending on the person. Sometimes it is consistent and sometimes it is not.

**Gender Identity:** Gender is the way someone identifies internally and how they choose to express themselves externally.

**Gender-neutral:** It's defined as a gender that is neutral and/or a gender that is directly in the middle between man and woman.

# G

**Gender-nonconforming:** describes anyone whose appearance and behaviour does not reflect the gender roles expected of them. Many transgender people, especially those who identify as non-binary and/or genderqueer, are seen as gender non-conforming. However, this term can also be applied to those with a cisgender gender identity who do not fit societal stereotypes of that gender.

**Gender Pronouns:** Pronouns are part of someone's gender expression, and people can have multiple sets of pronouns for themselves (such as he/him/his and they/them/theirs).

**Genderqueer:** is an umbrella term with a similar meaning to non-binary. It can be used to describe binary cisgender and transgender people within the LGBT+ community who feel that they have a queer or non-normative experience with their gender.

# H

**Heterosexism:** The assumption that all people are heterosexual and that heterosexuality is the norm.

**Homophobia:** is the fear, hatred, discomfort with, or mistrust of people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual. It's often based in irrational fear and misunderstanding.

# I

**Identity:** The sense of self; something that describes an individual entity by its or their properties.

**Implicit Bias:** a form of bias that occurs automatically and unintentionally, that nevertheless affects judgments, decisions, and behaviours towards a particular group.

**Inclusion:** Is about diversity in practice. It's the act of welcoming, supporting, respecting, and valuing all individuals and groups.

# I

**Indigenous peoples:** refers to the people who originally lived in a place, rather than people who moved there from somewhere else. Indigenous Peoples have a special relationship with the land on which they have lived for generations, sometimes for tens of thousands of years. They possess crucial knowledge about how to manage natural resources sustainably and act as guardians or custodians of the land for the next generation. Indigenous peoples are also known as First Peoples, Aboriginal Peoples, or Native Peoples.

**Internalized Racism:** can be defined as the tendency of some individuals belonging to historically oppressed ethnic groups to regularly invalidate, demean, and/or suppress their own and other marginalised groups' heritage, identity, self-worth, and human rights. Often, those with degrees of internalized racism are consciously or unconsciously socialised into believing that being a member of their own cultural group is somehow "lesser," "inferior," "shameful," "undesirable," or "unacceptable" in relation to the "mainstream" dominant culture.

# I

**Intersectionality:** the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

**Intersex:** An intersex person has sex characteristics such as sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, and/or chromosome patterns that do not fit the typical definition of male or female. This may be apparent at birth or become so later in life e.g. puberty.

**Islamophobia:** Is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.

# J

**Justice:** Is the mission of equity, in which an equitable system works so well it eventually eliminates the systemic problems driving the need for the latter. In other words, everything is fairly and evenly distributed to people no matter their race, gender, physical ability, or other personal circumstances.



L

**LGBTQIA+:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual. The plus sign at the end of LGBTQIA+ can include members of other communities, including allies — people who support and rally the LGBTQIA+ cause even though they don't identify within the community itself.

# M

**Marginalized:** refers to the act of treating a person or group as though they are insignificant by isolating and/or disempowering them. The term marginalized describes the person or group that is treated insignificantly, pushed to the margins of society and rendered powerless.

Marginalization is the result of discrimination.

**Minority:** The word is sometimes used as a blanket term for people from underrepresented groups including Black British, Hispanics/Latinos, Asians, Travellers, and so on. People of colour comprise a majority of the global population. Instead say, people from an underrepresented or minoritized background or specify a specific ethnic group.

# M

**Monoculturalism:** The policy or process of supporting, advocating, or allowing the expression of the culture of a single social or ethnic group.

**MTF:** Abbreviation for a person who was assigned male at birth (AMAB) but identifies as female and transitioned to a feminine appearance that is consistent with their gender identity.

**Multiculturalism:** describes the manner in which a given society deals with cultural diversity. It expresses the view that society is enriched by preserving, respecting, and even encouraging cultural diversity.

# N

**Neurodivergent:** refers to the idea that differences in the human brain are natural and normal and, in many cases, can lead to meaningful and positive insights and abilities.

**Neurodiversity:** describes the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one "right" way of thinking, learning, and behaving, and differences are not viewed as deficits. Neurodiversity refers to the diversity of all people, but it is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), as well as other neurological or developmental conditions such as ADHD or learning disabilities.

# O

**Oppression:** is the unfair or cruel use of power to control another person or group. The term is often used in a political context to refer to the oppression of minority groups.

**Otherness:** is an “us vs. them” way of thinking about human connections and relationships. Othering is a phenomenon in which some individuals or groups are defined and labelled as not fitting in within the norms of a social group. It is an effect that influences how people perceive and treat those who are viewed as being part of the in-group versus those who are seen as being part of the out-group. Othering also involves attributing negative characteristics to people or groups that differentiate them from the perceived normative social group.

# P

**People of Colour (POC):** is a term primarily used to describe any person who is not white. It does not solely refer to one specific ethnicity or race rather, it encompasses all non-white groups and emphasizes the common experiences of systemic racism.

**People of the Global Majority (PGM):** refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities', who represent over 80% of the world's population. This wording points out the demographic inaccuracy of the euphemism "minority" in the term BAME, and can feel more empowering and inclusive for people. Also known as Global Majority.

# P

**Prejudice:** Preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

**Privilege:** refers to certain social advantages, benefits, or degrees of prestige and respect that an individual has by virtue of belonging to certain social identity groups. Within Western societies, these privileged social identities—of people who have historically occupied positions of dominance over others—include whites, males, heterosexuals, Christians, and the wealthy, among others.



# Q

**Queer:** a self-affirming umbrella term, being reclaimed by non-heterosexuals as a word used to describe themselves.

**Questioning:** Refers to people who are uncertain about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

# R

**Race:** is defined as “a category of humankind that shares certain distinctive physical traits”. “Race” is usually associated with biology and linked with physical characteristics such as skin colour.

**Racism:** is where someone treats another person differently because their skin colour is not the same as theirs, they speak a different language or have different religious beliefs, for example.

# S

**Sexism:** means discrimination based on sex or gender, or the belief that because men are superior to women, discrimination is justified. Such a belief can be conscious or unconscious.

**Sexual Orientation:** is about who you're attracted to and who you feel drawn to romantically, emotionally, and sexually.

**Social Justice:** Justice is the concept of fairness. Social justice is fairness as it manifests in society. That includes fairness in healthcare, employment, housing, and more. The emphasis has been on the breaking of barriers for social mobility, the creation of safety nets, and economic justice. Social justice depends on four essential goals: human rights, access, participation, and equity. Social justice can't be achieved without these four principles.

# S

**Socioeconomic Status (SES):** is an economic and social combined total measure of a person's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation; however, SES is more commonly used to depict an economic difference in society as a whole. Socioeconomic status is typically broken into three levels (high, middle, and low) to describe the three places a family or an individual may fall in relation to others.

**Stereotype:** is a preconceived idea or set of ideas that individuals apply to groups of people, places, or situations. Stereotypes can often lead to prejudice, because they lead people to make generalized assumptions about people without having access to very much information. However, there are some cases where stereotypes can be useful from an evolutionary perspective when they help people avoid danger and understand social situations.

# S

**Systemic Racism:** describes how longstanding institutions and laws support attitudes of superiority or inferiority between racialized groups. It denies the continued existence of racial inequality while contributing to discrimination through favouritism for the dominant racial group. It is racism that is woven into the fabric of our society and unfairly elevates one racial group over everyone else, whether it is obvious or not.

# T

**Tokenism:** is about including someone in a group purely for the sake of sounding or looking diverse. Tokenism is not genuine—it's keeping up appearances. Simply it gives the appearance of equality without achieving it.

**Transgender:** is an umbrella term for anyone whose internal experience of gender does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender people may experience discomfort or distress due to their gender not aligning with their sex, and therefore wish to transition to being the gender they identify with.

**Travellers:** Gypsy Roma and Traveller people are a minoritized ethnic group that have contributed to British society for centuries. Their distinctive way of life and traditions manifest themselves in nomadism, the centrality of their extended family, unique languages and entrepreneurial economy.

# U

**Unconscious Biases:** are prejudices and stereotypes individuals have about certain groups of people that they aren't consciously aware of having. These biases may exist toward people of various races, ethnic groups, gender identities, sexual orientations, physical abilities and more.



# V

**Victimisation:** If you're treated badly because you complain about discrimination or you help someone who has been discriminated against, this is called victimisation.

# W

**White Privilege:** is a concept that highlights the unfair societal advantages that white people have over non-white people.

**White Supremacy:** it is a universal operating system that relies on patterns and practices to consistently disadvantage people of colour. It permeates our institutional and cultural assumptions, and it assigns value, morality, goodness and humanity to the white group, while casting people and communities of colour as worthless, immoral, bad, inhuman or "undeserving."

**White Washing:** refers to casting white actors as characters who are non-white or of indeterminate race. It can also refer to preferring white actors, directors, cinematographers, and so on, over equally qualified people of colour. Whitewashing and the lack of diverse representation can cause demoralization, exacerbate feelings of imposter syndrome, and worsen low mood and anxiety symptoms.

# X

**Xenophobia:** is a broad term that may be applied to any fear of someone who is different from us. Hostility towards outsiders is often a reaction to fear. It typically involves the belief that there is a conflict between an individual's ingroup and an outgroup.

# Thank you!

If there is a term / language that you feel should be referenced in the glossary, please feel free to send it to us for consideration.

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