



LGBTQ+ 101



Content warnings

Homophobia, transphobia, harassment and discrimination, erasure, misgendering,
coming out, mental health, suicidal behaviour, substance misuse.

Please feel free to look away from the presentation at any point if you need to.



Purpose

- Learn about what it means to be LGBTQ+ and common issues faced by the community.
- Find out more about how you can support your LGBTQ+ friends.
- Get information on LGBTQ+ resources, societies, and welfare within Oxford!
- Not a debate on LGBTQ+ rights or the validity of identities.



What does LGBTQ+ mean?

Lesbian

Gay

Asexual

Bisexual/biromantic

Transgender

Aromantic

Demisexual/demiromantic

Questioning

Non-binary

Intersex

Pansexual/panromantic

Queer



What is gender?

- A personal sense of one's **identity**.
- Doesn't necessarily align with someone's **sex**.
- **Sex** is assigned at birth on the basis of **physical characteristics**.
- Someone whose gender is different from their sex is called **transgender**, or trans.
- Someone whose gender is the same as their sex is called **cisgender**, or cis.
- Gender isn't a **binary**, and every gender deserves respect!



Being transgender

- Many trans people **change their name and pronouns** to better align with their gender.
- Many trans people undergo **medical transitioning** to feel more comfortable in their body.
- **Questioning** your gender and **coming out** as trans can be a scary process.
- Being trans can come with a lot of daily difficulties and anxieties.
- **Having supportive friends makes a massive difference.**



Pronouns

- Not limited to **he/him** and **she/her**.
- **They/them** is a common pronoun used by many non-binary people.
- If someone tells you they want to start using different pronouns, make an effort to respect that!
- Calling someone by the wrong pronouns is called **misgendering**, and can be upsetting for trans people.
- If you don't know someone's pronouns, **don't just assume, but ask!**



Respecting people's gender

- **Don't assume** someone's gender based on their looks.
- If someone tells you they're trans, respect that they've disclosed **personal information** to you.
- **Don't tell other people** that someone is trans without their **permission**.
- Use the pronouns they ask you to use, and introduce yourself with your own pronouns.
- If you're not sure about something, **ask!** Asking is far less offensive than assuming.
 - NB. Sometimes it's better to ask in private than in front of other people.



Attraction

- **Orientation** describes what genders, if any, you're attracted to.
- **Sexual** and **romantic** orientation are different and may not always align.
- Some people experience neither.
- Some people go through a period of **questioning**.
- Not a **choice**.
- Not a **phase**.



Coming out

- This is when someone **tells you they are LGBTQ+**.
- It should be a **choice** - never force someone to come out.
 - Never out someone (without their permission) to someone they may not be out to
- It's **not gossip**.
- Acknowledge that you've been entrusted with **personal information**.
- Recognise that they **haven't changed** as a person.
- Be careful about tagging people in LGBTQ+ posts on social media (especially on fb)



Discrimination in the UK

- **1 in 5** LGBTQ+ people have experienced a **hate crime** or incident due to their orientation and/or gender in the last 12 months.
- **Over 1/3** of LGBTQ+ people say they don't feel comfortable walking down the street while holding their partner's hand.
- Lack of societal acceptance can lead to LGBTQ+ people experiencing **mental health issues**, and **increased substance misuse** and substance dependence than cis/heterosexual people.
- **1/3** of LGBTQ+ students have been the target of **negative comments or conduct** from other students in the last year because they are LGBTQ+.



LGBTQ+ discrimination

Heteronormativity:

- The assumption that everyone is heterosexual, and that being straight is 'normal' or 'natural'.

Cisnormativity:

- The assumption that everyone is cisgender, and that being transgender is abnormal and inferior.

Microaggressions:

- Everyday comments which further marginalise people of minority identities.



Privilege

- The **absence of oppression** due to social and institutional structures which favour certain characteristics or identities.
- Being cis/straight means you experience certain privileges.
- It does **not** mean you've had an **easy life**.
- Having privilege isn't something you need to feel **guilty** about, but it's good to be **aware** of it and use it to help those less privileged.



What is an ally?

- An **ally** supports LGBTQ+ people and the LGBTQ+ community.
- Isn't necessarily LGBTQ+ themselves.
- Allyship is an **active practice** which requires learning, listening, and acting.



How can you be a better ally?

- **Listen** to LGBTQ+ people.
- **Acknowledge** your privilege.
- **Educate** yourself.
- Be **kind**.
- **Speak up** for LGBTQ+ people, but **don't speak over** them.
- Be careful about **tagging** people in LGBTQ+ content on social media.



Calling out

- **Calling out** is holding someone accountable for what they say or do and its impact on other people.
- Part of being an **ally**.
- Makes the people around you acknowledge their own **biases**.
- If you do not feel comfortable calling someone out, you could:
 - Refuse to laugh along
 - Support those who speak up
 - Speak to people after the situation



What should I do if I get called out?

- **Listen.**
- **Acknowledge** that you might have offended someone.
- Understand that it's **not a personal attack.**
- Avoid making it a big deal or **being overly apologetic.**
- Recognise that your **intent** is less important than the **impact.**



LGBTQ+ spaces in Oxford

- These spaces give LGBTQ+ people a **safe place** to explore their identities and meet other people in the community.
 - OU LGBTQ+ Society
 - Rainbow Peers
 - Queer Week
 - Oxford SU LGBTQ+ Campaign
 - Your college LGBTQ+ rep(s)
 - Queerfest (?)
- Open to people who are **questioning**.
- If you're a cis straight person, be **respectful** that these spaces are **primarily for LGBTQ+ people**.



Scenario 1

You buy a new jacket and when your friend Stephen sees it he says “that’s so gay”. Stephen later uses a homophobic slur casually as an insult. When you point out that this word is homophobic and can be offensive, he says “my gay friend says it’s fine, and anyway, I’m an ally.”

What do you do?



Scenario 2

You are speaking to a friend from your college, Ben, when he brings up Ella, who is asexual. He says “That’s not really an identity. She just needs to meet the right guy”.

What do you do?



Scenario 3

Aditya is non-binary and uses they/them pronouns. While you are speaking about them to your friend Ryan, Ryan points out that you have just misgendered Aditya accidentally. How do you respond?



Scenario 4

You hear your friend that's a straight man talking about finding two women kissing in a club hot. What is the problem with this and how do you address this with him?



Scenario 5

Your friend is setting up a event for women; when you discuss this with her, she suggests that she would be uncomfortable with trans women at this event. What is wrong with this statement and what would you say?



Questions?