



mygwork

LGBTQ+ Student & Graduate Survey 2024

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In partnership with  HigherEd

Foreward

Our latest survey of over 2,000 students and recent graduates around the world, revealed that over a third (36%) identify as LGBTQ+. Additionally, those identifying as asexual, pansexual and queer, collectively represent around a third of all LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates. The primary objective of this research was to assess the inclusivity of their academic or workplace experiences and understand their expectations from potential employers.

The research goes beyond highlighting industries perceived as more LGBTQ+ friendly. It provides insights into the criteria that LGBTQ+ students and graduates seek in inclusive employers and the essential benefits necessary to attract and retain them. A notable finding was the significant proportion of young individuals that identify as LGBTQ+ or are exploring their gender identity. While 59% identified as straight, a substantial 36% of the respondents identified as LGBTQ+.

Consistent with the research that we carried out last year on LGBTQ+ students and graduates, the majority of LGBTQ+ students and graduates expressed their desire to be open at work, emphasizing the significance of an environment enabling authenticity and pride. Moreover, three-quarters indicated their reluctance to join a company where they couldn't be open about their identities.

However, concerns regarding discrimination emerged prominently. Around half of LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates reported witnessing or experiencing discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity, with higher occurrences among those from marginalized ethnic or racial backgrounds compared to their White peers. A significant majority – 8 out of 10 – expressed concerns that their sexual orientation/gender identity could hinder their progress to senior leadership positions, attributing this to discrimination, bias, and limited access to developmental opportunities.

The presence of visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies in leadership positions emerged as a critical factor influencing their job decisions. In fact, the majority of LGBTQ+ students and graduates indicated that seeing LGBTQ+ role models in senior positions would positively sway their choice to accept a job offer. Additionally, active corporate allyship held substantial weight, with 8 out of 10 respondents saying they would avoid joining companies that recently withdrew support for the LGBTQ+ community.

These students and graduates also revealed the signposts they use to assess an employer's LGBTQ+ inclusivity credentials and shared their expectations regarding workplace benefits from future employers. This comprehensive report serves as a valuable guide for organizations aiming to cultivate inclusive environments supportive of the LGBTQ+ workforce. We believe these insights will prove instrumental in shaping workplaces that embrace diversity and inclusivity for all.

*Adrien & Pierre
Gaubert*

Co-founders of myGwork



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Headline findings

myGwork, the global business platform for LGBTQ+ professionals, recently conducted its second annual survey of LGBTQ+ Gen Z and Gen Y. Over 2,000 students and recent graduates from around the world participated in the survey to share their perceptions and experiences of inclusion at their place of study/work.

The research explored the importance of being out at work, perceived workplace challenges and barriers to leadership, their thoughts on whether they thought their place of study/work are inclusive enough, how well organizations are embracing the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace, as well as their expectations from future employers. Here are just a few of the highlights:

LGBTQ+ Student & Graduate Survey 2024



of LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates said universities/business schools are not offering training/workshops, or policies to promote allyship and create a better understanding of LGBTQ+ inclusion.



Over a third (36%) of all students and recent graduates worldwide identify as LGBTQ+.



of LGBTQ+ students and graduates expressed reservations about working for a company where they couldn't be out at work.



of LGBTQ+ students said that their university/business school careers center is not doing enough to match LGBTQ+ students to inclusive employers.



OUT OF



LGBTQ+ students and graduates believe being out at work will make it more challenging for them to reach senior leadership positions.

LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates indicated that seeing more visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies in senior leadership roles would influence their decision to accept a job offer or not.

LGBTQ+ students across all groups said they would avoid applying for a role at a company that has recently withdrawn its support for the LGBTQ+ community.



of all LGBTQ+ students and graduates worldwide have witnessed discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity at their place of work/study.

LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates of color witnessed more discrimination than their White peers



They also personally experienced more discrimination



Being out at work is important for more than 7 out of 10 of all LGBTQ+ students and graduates.

Source: myGwork Research

About the survey

Over 2,000 students and recent graduates from around the world participated in the myGwork survey to share their perceptions and experiences of inclusion at their place of study/work. The findings revealed that more than a third (36%) of students and recent graduates that responded to the survey identify as LGBTQ+.

Intersectionality: race, age & ability

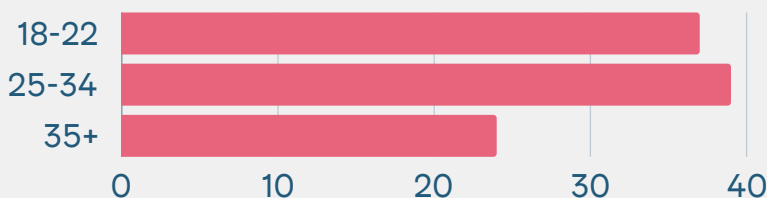
Approximately half of the students (1,000+) from around the world, including countries like the UK, US, Canada, Australia, and Asia, responded to the English language survey, and the other half (1,000+) from countries such as Spain and those in the Latam region responded to the survey in Spanish.

The students were from different cultural backgrounds, abilities, intersectional experiences and ages. In terms of age, the majority were between the ages of 25 and 34 (39%), followed by the 18-22 age bracket (37%), with the remaining aged 35+ (24%).

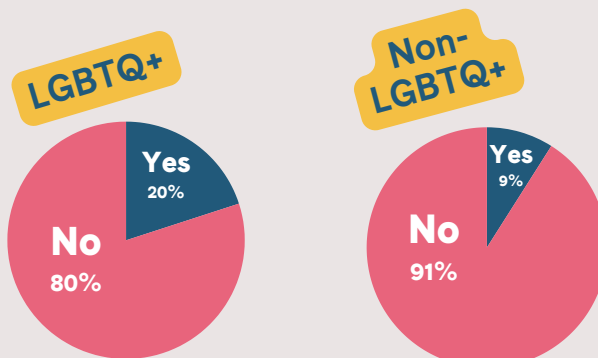
Of those who responded to the survey in English, approximately 46% identified as White, 11% as Black/African, 28% as Asian, 4% as Arab, 7% as mixed (two or more cultures), and 3% in the group preferred not to reveal their heritage. Of those who responded in Spanish, 47% identified as White, followed by 31% Mestizo, 5% Black/African, 3% Indigenous, and 3% Arabic; in this group, a much higher number – 11% – preferred not to disclose their heritage.

Additionally, more than double the amount of LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates (20%) said they have a disability/learning difficulty compared to non-LGBTQ+ respondents (9%).

Student age groups



Do you consider yourself to have a disability/learning difficulty?



LGBTQ+ Identity

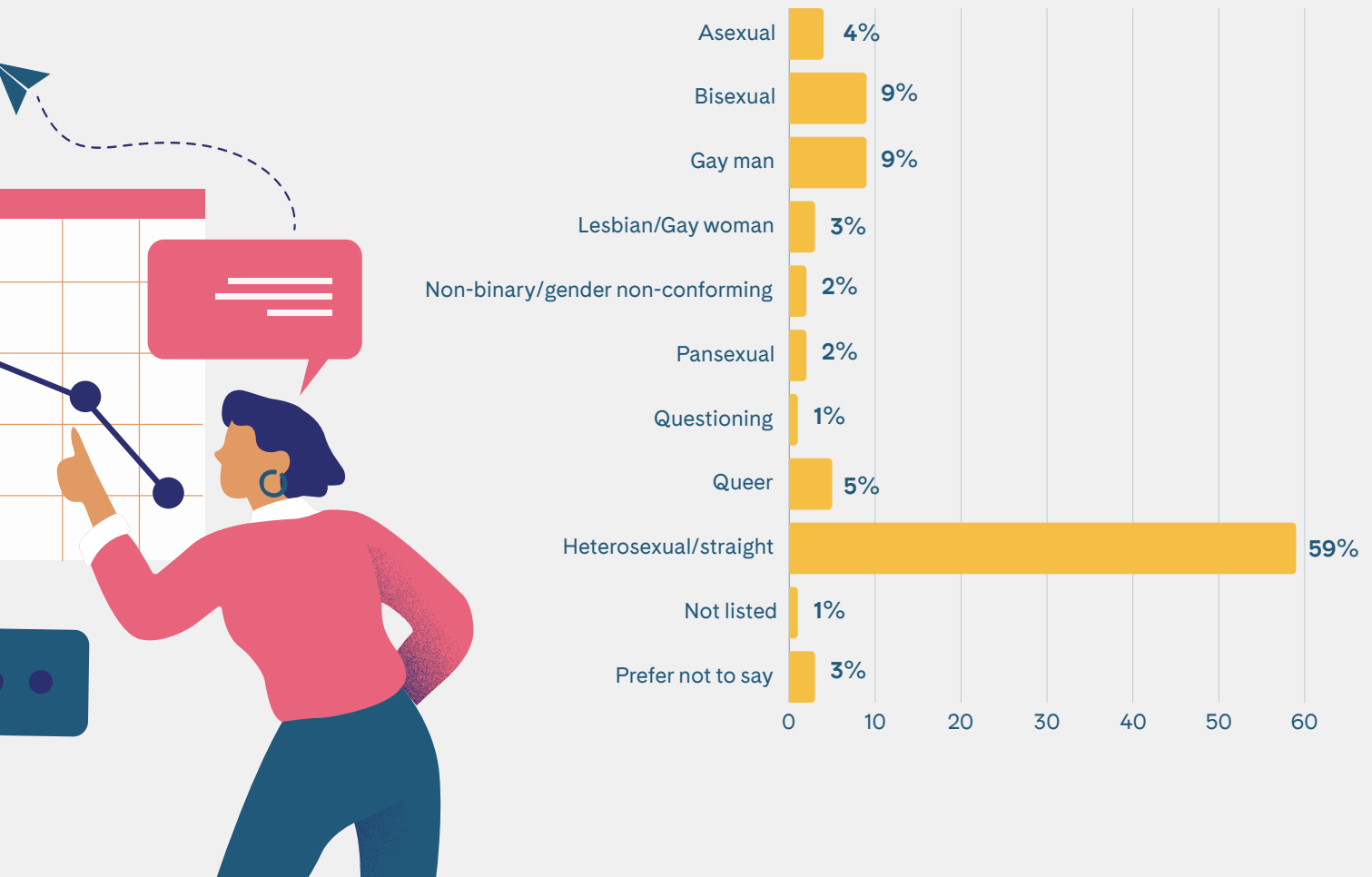
myGwork's survey revealed that more than a third of students and graduates (36%) that responded to the survey, identify as LGBTQ+. The data shows that an increasing number of students identify as LGBTQ+, with 9% identifying as bisexual, 9% as a gay man, 5% queer, 4% asexual, 3% lesbian/gay woman, 2% non-binary/gender non-conforming, and 2% pansexual – as shown in the chart below.

Categories such as asexual, pansexual, and queer, collectively represent 13% of LGBTQ+ students and graduates, which reflects a growing recognition and acceptance of diverse sexual identities.

One percent of students are currently questioning their sexual orientation, and another 1% suggested their sexual orientation doesn't fit into the predefined options, highlighting other preferred labels such as two-spirit. Additionally, 3% preferred not to disclose this information.

These findings emphasize the fluidity and personal nature of sexual identity, as some individuals may still be exploring their identity or are choosing not to share this information. The data also underscores the evolving nature of language and identity, encouraging inclusivity and discussions about sexual orientation.

How do today's students and recent graduates identify?



Gender identity & representation matters

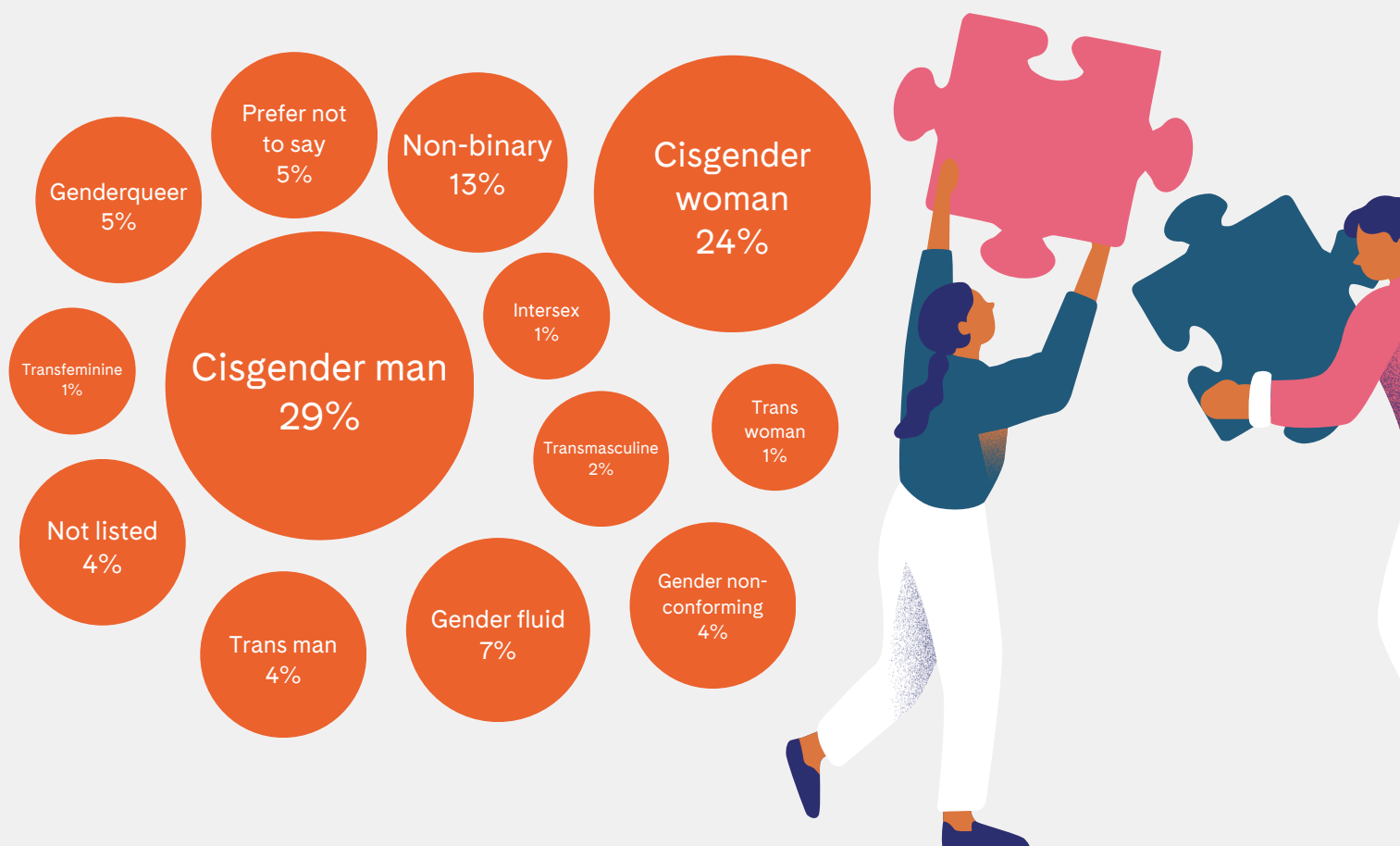
More than half of the students and recent graduates surveyed (53%) identify as cisgender, with 29% identifying as cisgender men and 24% as cisgender women.

The data, however, revealed significant non-cisgender representation, with a substantial percentage of respondents identifying with gender identities that differ from their assigned gender at birth. This includes 13% who identify as non-binary, 7% as gender fluid, 5% as genderqueer, and 4% as gender non-conforming. These numbers highlight the diversity of gender identities beyond the binary.

Eight percent of the LGBTQ+ respondents identified as transgender – 4% as trans men, 2% as transmasculine, 1% as trans women, and 1% as transfeminine.

Four percent chose 'not listed', indicating that there are individuals whose gender identity does not fit into the predefined survey options. Additionally, 5% preferred not to disclose their gender identity, emphasizing their desire for privacy around their gender identity.

The overall diversity in gender identities represented in the survey suggests a growing recognition and acceptance of a spectrum of gender experiences beyond the traditional binary understanding. This underscores the importance of acknowledging and respecting the complexity of gender experiences and identities.



Job search

When we looked at the number of LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates who are currently job-seeking, the data showed that 6 out of 10 graduates have already graduated. A slightly higher number of those that responded to the survey in English (65%) looking for work, compared to Spanish-speaking respondents (60%).

Sixteen percent of students had graduated in 2023, but almost half (46%) of those not yet graduated expect to graduate in 2024, 21% in 2025, and 11% in 2026, with the remainder graduating in 2027 or after.

The findings also revealed that LGBTQ+ students and graduates looking for work or seeking internships are seeking job opportunities across a wide array of sectors, including law, manufacturing, information and communication, education, health and social work activities, and others.

The top 10 sectors for LGBTQ+ student/graduate job seekers



LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates also use a diverse range of sources to find a role at an LGBTQ+-inclusive company, indicating that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to job hunting. However, the results highlighted that the top two platforms used by LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates for their career search with inclusive employers are LinkedIn (23%), followed by myGwork (13%).

Approximately 10% said they look for jobs on diversity-specific websites, while 9% seek jobs on industry-specific websites. In fact, 13% said they rely on personal networks, which highlights the importance of personal connections in finding LGBTQ+-inclusive opportunities. Only 5% said they relied on recruitment agencies.

Where do LGBTQ+ students/graduates look for LGBTQ+-inclusive jobs?



Most & least LGBTQ+ friendly sectors

myGwork's survey findings revealed that some sectors are more appealing for the younger LGBTQ+ job seekers. Sectors attracting the highest percentage of LGBTQ+ student/graduate job seekers include:

- **Consulting and professional services (13.04%)**
- **Financial & insurance activities (11.05%)**
- **Administrative & support services (9.13%)**

Sectors with lower representation, include armed forces, agriculture, forestry & fishing, mining, and industrial/energy sectors. This is not surprising, as these are also considered to be the least LGBTQ+ friendly as highlighted in the chart below.

While there are similarities in the perceptions of LGBTQ+ inclusivity between English and Spanish-speaking respondents, there are also some notable differences. The armed forces, for example, are perceived as less LGBTQ+-friendly by all respondents.

However, a higher percentage of students and graduates responding to the survey in Spanish (24%) are relatively more concerned about LGBTQ+ inclusivity in the armed forces, compared to those that responded in English (17%). English-speaking respondents (12%) expressed more concern about LGBTQ+ inclusivity in law, legal services, and policing, whereas this was not the case for those that responded in Spanish (0%).

All LGBTQ+ respondents perceive national and local government sectors as less LGBTQ+-friendly sectors. In fact, a slightly higher number of the Spanish-speaking respondents (13%) perceive the sector to be less LGBTQ+-friendly compared to those responding in English (10%).

These variations may be influenced by cultural, regional, or linguistic factors, highlighting the importance of considering different perspectives from all communities when addressing LGBTQ+ inclusivity in various sectors.

The 5 most LGBTQ+ friendly sectors



The 5 least LGBTQ+ friendly sectors

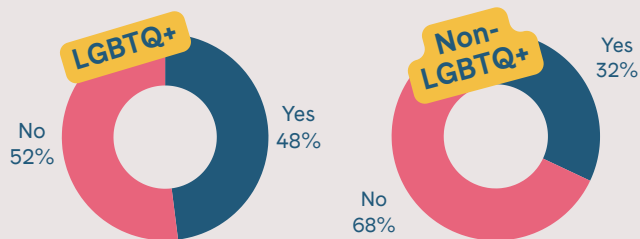


LGBTQ+ discrimination

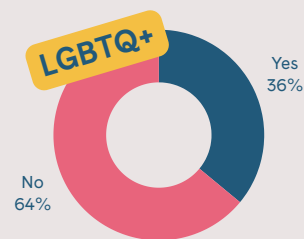
Discrimination remains a huge concern for LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates. Almost half (48%) of all LGBTQ+ students and graduates witnessed discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity at their place of study or work, compared to just 32% of responding non-LGBTQ+ students/graduates. Additionally, 36% of all LGBTQ+ have personally experienced discrimination (homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, etc).

Moreover, a higher number of LGBTQ+ students and graduates from marginalized ethnicity and racial groups said they witnessed more discrimination based on both their sexual orientation and gender identity (52%), compared to LGBTQ+ students and graduates of White ethnicity (42%). LGBTQ+ students/graduates of color also personally experienced more discrimination – 40% compared to 30% of White LGBTQ+ students/graduates.

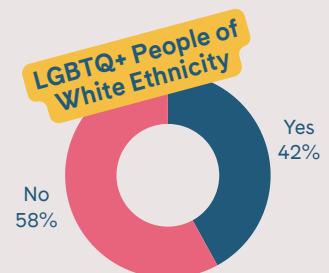
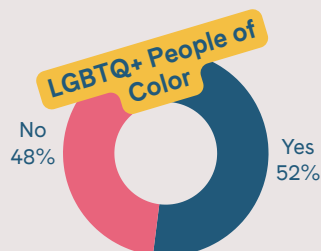
Have you ever witnessed discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity at your place of study/work?



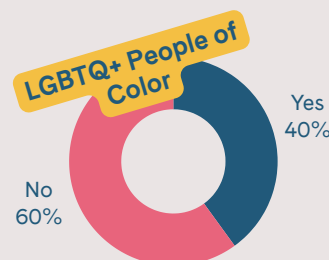
Have you personally ever experienced discrimination (biphobia, homophobia, transphobia etc) at your place of study/work?



Have you ever witnessed discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity at your place of study/work?



Have you personally ever experienced discrimination (biphobia, homophobia, transphobia, etc) at your place of study/work?



Being out at work

The majority of LGBTQ+ students and graduates (75%) express reservations about working for a company where they couldn't be out at work. Being out at work is highly important for more than 7 out of 10 of all LGBTQ+ students and graduates, which suggests that a significant portion of individuals value workplace inclusivity and authenticity.

They are also more likely to be out at work from day one if they knew their employer is inclusive, highlighting that employers should recognize the importance of fostering an inclusive environment to attract and retain this valuable talent.

That said, compensation and career objectives play a significant role in whether a LGBTQ+ student/graduate would accept a role at an organization, even where they couldn't be out at work.

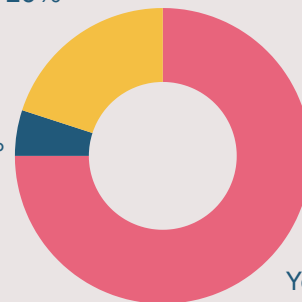
Interestingly, 24% of LGBTQ+ students and graduates said that their decision to accept a role would be influenced by the package offered, 32% said it would depend on how important the role was to their career objectives, and 6% were unsure.

Are you more likely to be out at work from day one if you knew that your organization is truly inclusive?

Don't know
20%

No
5%

Yes
75%



Would you consider working for a company where you couldn't be out at work?

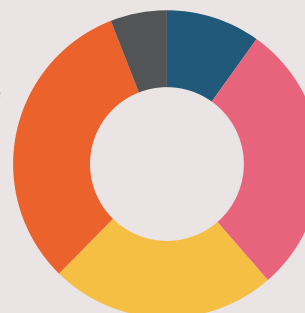
Don't know
6%

Yes
10%

Depends on importance of role
32%

Depends on package offered
24%

No
29%

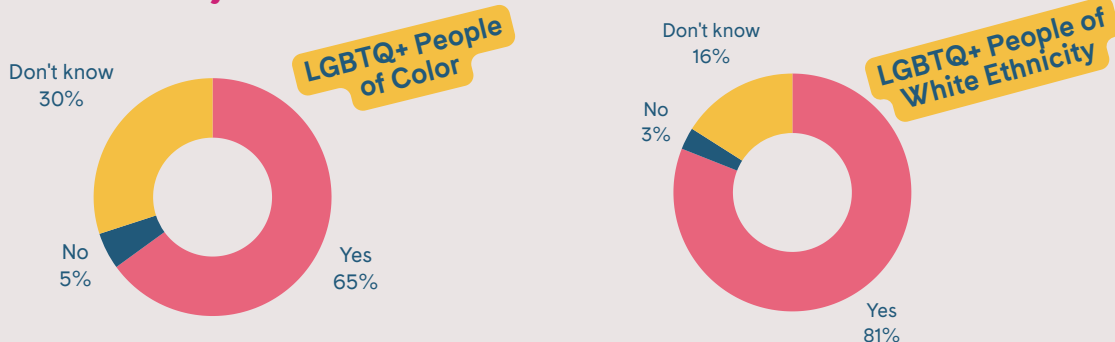


Being out at work for people of color

More LGBTQ+ students/graduates of White ethnicity (81%) said they are more likely to be out at work from day one if they knew their employer is inclusive, compared to 65% of LGBTQ+ students and graduates of color.

This could potentially be as a result of discrimination they have already faced as a person of color. Having more intersectional experiences usually results in experiencing discrimination on several levels. So, for example, a Black/Asian trans person of color with a disability is likely to experience more discrimination because they belong to several marginalized groups, which could partly explain why people of color, or those with more than one intersectional experience, are more likely to remain in the closet.

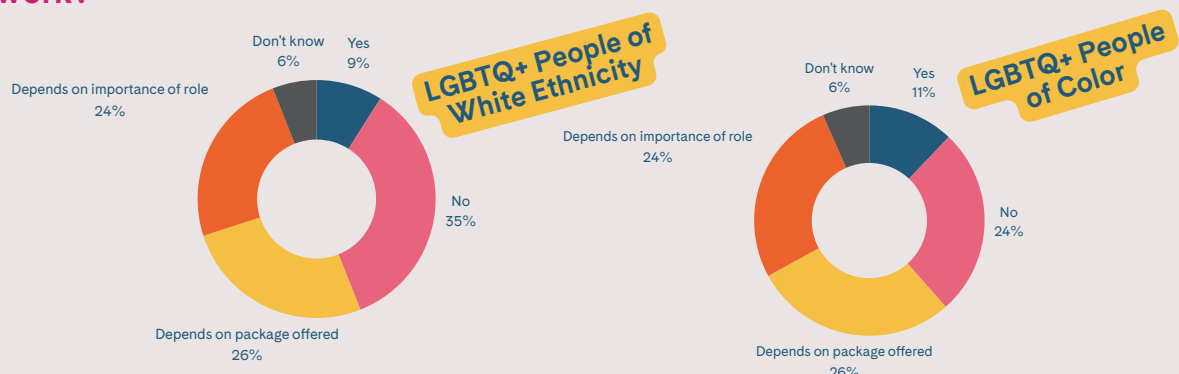
Are you more likely to be out at work from day one if you knew that your organization is truly inclusive?



More LGBTQ+ students/graduates of White ethnicity said they would not consider working for a company where they couldn't be out at work (35%), compared to 24% of LGBTQ+ students/graduates of color. However, around a quarter of all LGBTQ+ students would be prepared to work for a company where they couldn't be out at work if the right role/package is offered.

The survey suggests that over a quarter of all LGBTQ+ students (26%) regardless of race, could be enticed to work for a company if the right financial package/benefits were offered, even if it meant hiding their true authentic self and potentially returning to the closet.

Would you consider working for a company where you couldn't be out at work?



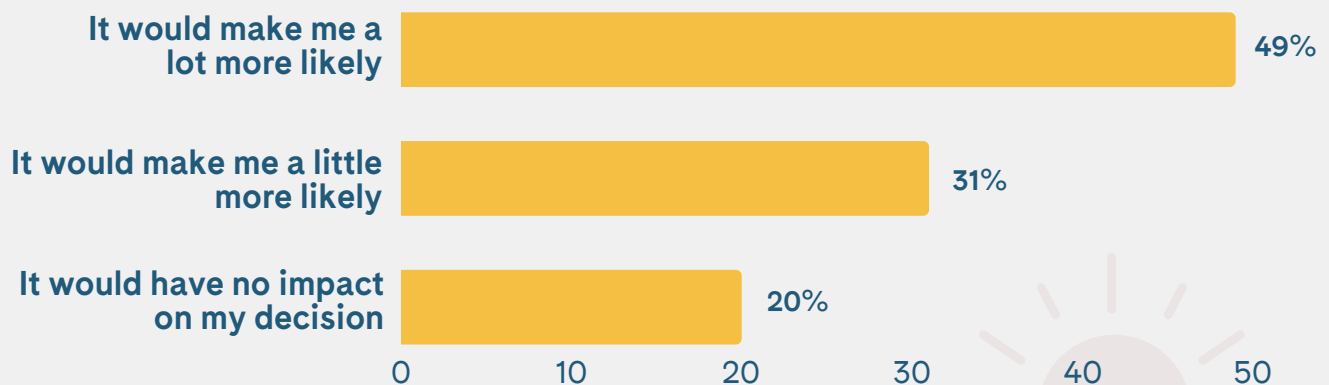
Visible LGBTQ+ role models & allies

Visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies in senior positions could mean the difference between LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates accepting a job offer or not, according to the myGwork survey. The data suggests that the impact of visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies is perceived to be highly important to younger LGBTQ+ job seekers, with a higher percentage stating it would influence their decision to accept a job offer compared to non-LGBTQ individuals.

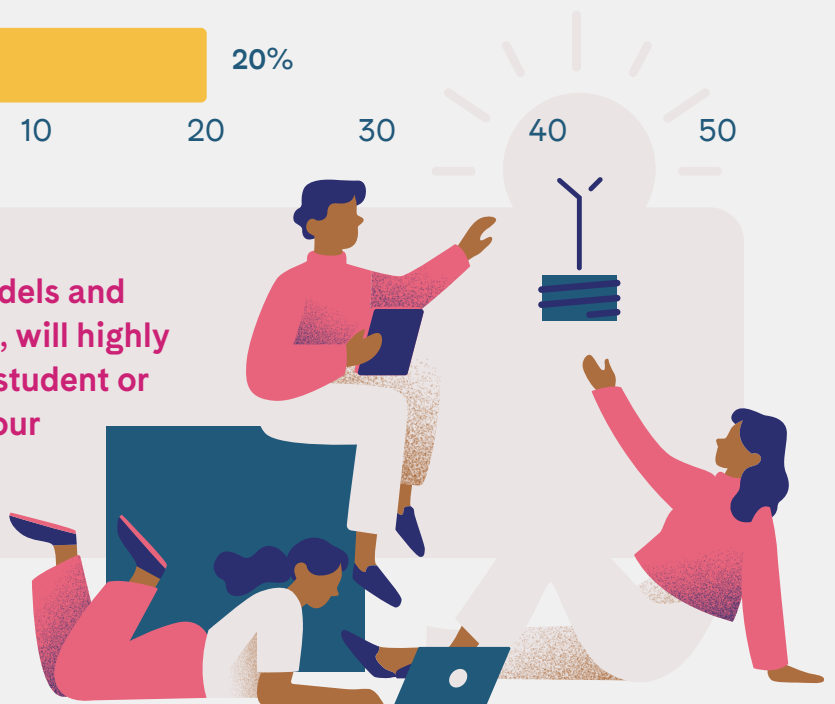
The majority of LGBTQ+ students and recent graduates indicated that seeing more visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies would positively influence their decision to accept a job offer. Almost half (49%) said it would make them a lot more likely, with almost a third (31%) saying it would make them a little more likely.

The data also showed that students of color attach slightly higher importance to having visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies in leadership roles (8 on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is low and 10 is high) compared to their White peers (7).

Would seeing more visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies influence your decision to accept a job offer?



Seeing visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies, especially in senior roles, will highly influence whether an LGBTQ+ student or graduate accepts a role with your organization.

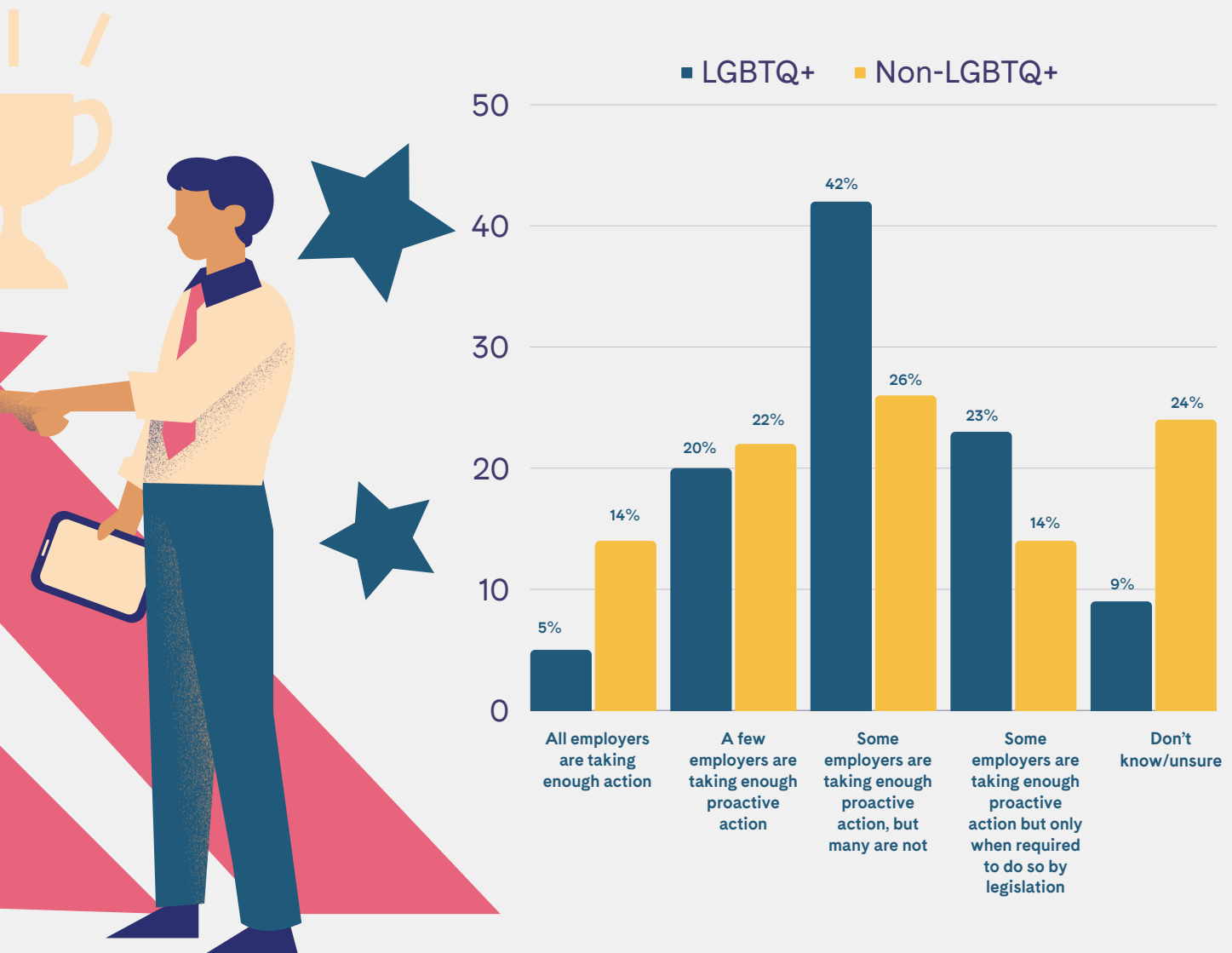


Employer allyship matters

The research highlighted that employer allyship matters to the future workforce. However, very few students believe that organizations are taking enough proactive action to be LGBTQ+ inclusive, and the figures are much lower for LGBTQ+ students 5%, compared to non-LGBTQ+ (14%).

Most students across the board (LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+) believe many companies are not taking enough action, despite the fact that many have started to improve workplace inclusion. Additionally, 8 out of 10 (77%) LGBTQ+ students across all groups said they would avoid applying for a role at a company that has recently withdrawn its support for the LGBTQ+ community. This indicates that employers need to think carefully about the communities they support, and the impact on recruitment of withdrawing support in the event of any backlash.

Are employers are taking enough proactive action to be LGBTQ+ inclusive?

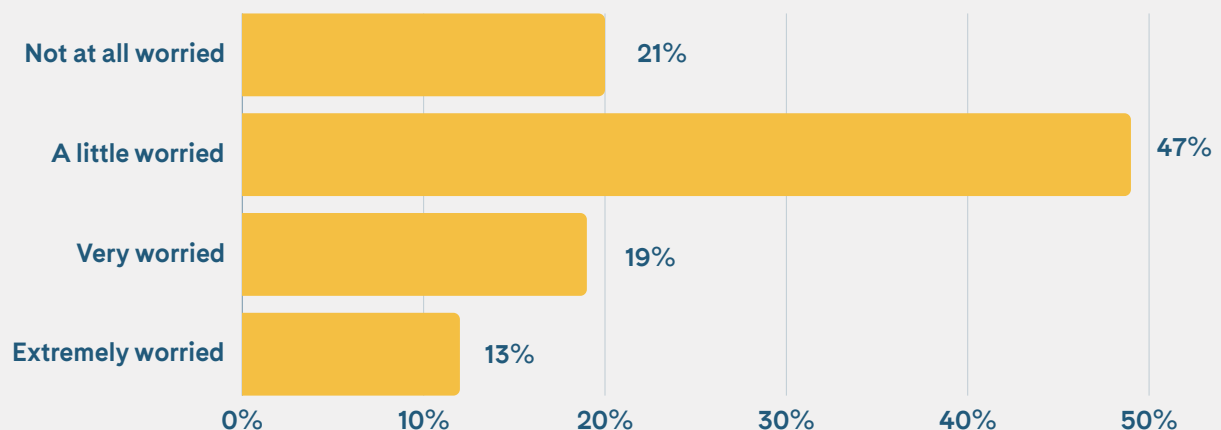


Workplace challenges and barriers for LGBTQ+ students and graduates

LGBTQ+ students and graduates of all backgrounds highly value working in safe and inclusive environments where they can work with pride, scoring this aspect an 8 out of 10 (where 1 is low and 10 is high). However, many say they are worried about being out at work in case it harms their chances of career progression. The main concerns about being out at work include being discriminated against, bias, limited opportunities for training and development, as well as limited access to opportunities for promotion and progress.

In fact, when we asked LGBTQ+ students and graduates whether they thought being LGBTQ+ would make it more challenging for them to reach senior leadership positions, 8 out of 10 (79%) were worried with varying degrees of concern – 47% are a little worried, 19% are very worried, and 13% are extremely worried. Only 21% said they are not worried at all.

Are you worried that being LGBTQ+ will make it more challenging for you to reach senior leadership positions?



The Top 4 Concerns of Coming Out at Work

1. Being discriminated against
2. Bias
3. Limited opportunities for training and development
4. Limited access to opportunities for progress

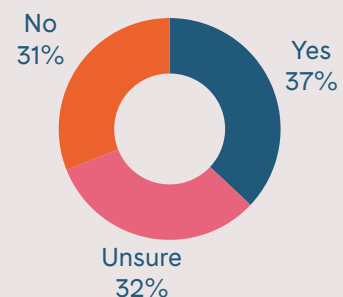
The role of universities & business schools in inclusion

Overall, the statistics show that universities and business schools could do more to improve inclusion and belonging. When rating universities/business schools on their inclusion and acceptance credentials, LGBTQ+ students only scored them 6.5 on a scale of 1-10 (where 1 is low and 10 is high). Interestingly, White LGBTQ+ students had a relatively positive perception of inclusivity and acceptance at their place of study, scoring them a 7 out of 10, compared to LGBTQ+ students of color (6 out of 10).

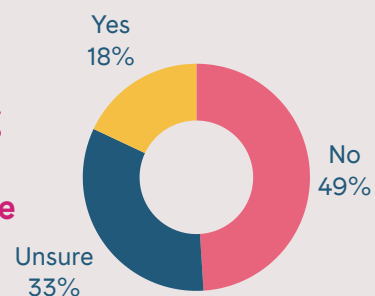
Almost a third (31%) said universities/business schools are not offering training/workshops, or policies to promote allyship and create a better understanding of LGBTQ+ inclusion. Additionally, 37% said they were, with the remaining third (32%) saying they were unsure. In fact, 84% said they would like to see more LGBTQ+-related workshops/education/training incorporated into the university curriculum or classroom discussions.

Half (49%) of LGBTQ+ students said that their university/business school careers center is not doing enough to match LGBTQ+ students to inclusive companies; 33% were unsure, and only 18% said yes.

Do you think universities/business schools have training/policies to promote allyship and create a better understanding of LGBTQ+ inclusion?



Is your university/business school careers center doing enough to match LGBTQ+ students to roles at inclusive employers?



Conclusion & key take-aways

If organizations want to attract talented and valuable LGBTQ+ talent and retain them, they need to work much harder. That means making sure employers actually live up to their diversity, inclusion and belonging credentials.

Those organizations that have LGBTQ+ role models and allies in senior positions are on the right path. Those who don't have their work cut out to prove that LGBTQ+ professionals are welcome in their organization, as well as ensuring access to training for development and opportunities to progress into senior leadership roles.

LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion matters to all students and graduates, but especially LGBTQ+ students. Most savvy students and graduates already look out for certain signposts to check whether workplaces live up to their diversity and inclusion credentials and will do the research to find out just how LGBTQ+-inclusive they really are.

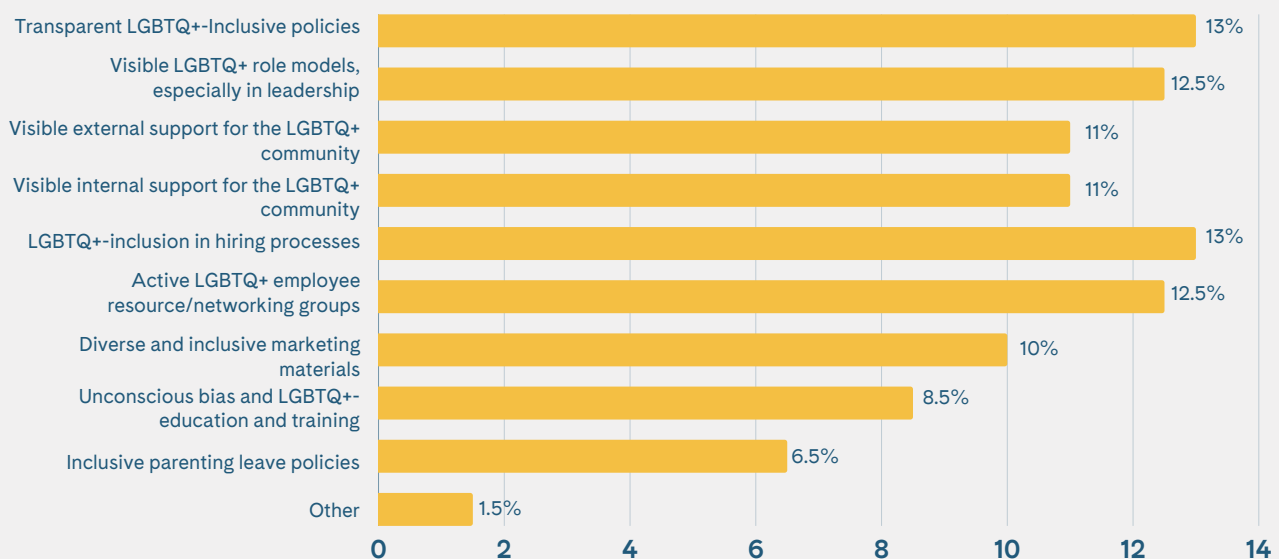
The top three signposts they look out for include whether or not they have transparent LGBTQ+-inclusive policies (e.g. trans-inclusive health insurance and transitioning at work policies); visible LGBTQ+ role models, especially in leadership positions; and visible external support for the LGBTQ+ community, through marking relevant LGBTQ+ awareness diversity days/months and active participation in Pride.

Policies that go above and beyond the usual diversity and inclusion benefits that actually include all the LGBTQ+ communities, offering relevant benefits, alongside having visible LGBTQ+ role models and allies, especially in senior roles, will highly influence this talent pool to accept a job with your organization and hopefully stay for the long term.

The younger generations highly value and expect benefits like flexibility and hybrid working, regardless of their sexual orientation. In fact, the majority of students (52%) preferred a hybrid arrangement. Almost a quarter (22%) of all students said they value coming into the office and would be happy to come every day of the week, compared to another quarter (22%) who prefer working from home.

Ongoing training and development, alongside other relevant benefits and facilities for the LGBTQ+ community, such as gender-neutral facilities and inclusive parenting policies, will go a long way to not only attract but also retain this valuable future talent pool. It's not just employers that need to offer better inclusion training and policies. A third of LGBTQ+ students highlighted that universities/business schools are not offering training, or policies to promote allyship and create a better understanding of LGBTQ+ inclusion, which indicates they too must work harder to create more inclusive environments. Additionally, they need to work harder at matching LGBTQ+ graduates with inclusive opportunities.

What signposts do you look for to check if a recruiting organization is LGBTQ+-friendly?



Conclusion and key take-aways

Top 10 things organizations can do to make LGBTQ+ graduates feel more included at work:



1. Offer flexible and remote work



2. Offer inclusive parenting leave policies



3. Ensure accessibility for all and provide any required adjustments



4. Offer relevant benefits for the LGBTQ+ community



5. Offer wellbeing and mental health support



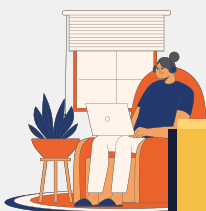
6. Offer gender-neutral facilities



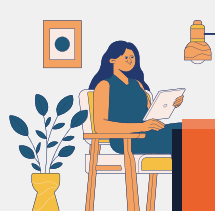
7. Offer ongoing training and development



8. Involve all employees in company goals



9. Organize inclusive company socials



10. Provide mentoring opportunities

Glossary of terms



Ally

A person who actively supports the rights of a minority or marginalized group without being a member of it. Allies to the LGBTQ+ community are supportive of achieving fair treatment of the community within society.

Bisexual

A person who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to both men and women or to more than one sex or gender. Bi is used as a shortened term.

Cisgender

A person who identifies with the sex/gender registered to them at birth. A person who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a boy/man, or someone who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a girl/woman.

Gay

A person who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to their own sex or gender exclusively.

Gender non-conforming

People who do not conform to the gender expression, behaviours, roles, presentation or expectations that society deems as the norm for their gender. People of any gender identity can be gender non-conforming.

Intersex

A person who has both male and female sex characteristics or biological traits. These characteristics can include genitalia, chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs.

Lesbian

A term used to describe women or non-binary people who are sexually and/or romantically attracted exclusively to other women. The term can also be defined as people who are exclusively attracted to those who do not identify as male.

Non-binary

A person whose gender identity can't be described as exclusively male or female. A non-binary person can identify as neither male or female, or as both male and female, or anywhere in between.

Pansexuality

Sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction towards people regardless of their sex or gender identity. Coming under the bisexuality umbrella, pansexual people assert that gender and sex are not determining factors in their experience of sexual or romantic attraction.

Queer

Someone whose identity is not cisgender and/or heterosexual. Often used as an umbrella term for those who identify within the LGBTQ+ community.

Questioning

A person who is in the process of discovering their own sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression.

Straight

Heterosexual people, more commonly referred to as straight, experience exclusive sexual and/or romantic attraction towards people of the opposite sex/gender to themselves.

Transgender

A person who does not identify with the sex/gender assigned to them at birth. This includes those whose gender identity or gender expression does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth.

Transmasculine

Sometimes shortened to transmasc is a broader term for all trans individuals with predominantly masculine identities or gender expression and includes trans men as well as non-binary people who were assigned female at birth and may have an identity that is partially masculine.

Transfeminine

Also referred to as transfemme, it is a broader umbrella term for trans individuals with a predominantly feminine identity or gender expression. This includes trans women and assigned male at birth non-binary people, who may have an identity that is partially feminine.



mygwork

The LGBTQ+
Business Community

For more information contact us:
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