



BCF
British Coatings
Federation

The BCF has created a Diversity & Inclusion Glossary to make talking about Diversity easier. We've included the terms we think are most commonly used and most useful to understand – and we'll regularly update it to make it as relevant as possible.

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A

AAPI

AAPI is an acronym for Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders. Other similar acronyms are APA which means Asian-Pacific American and API which means Asian-Pacific Islander. These acronyms replace a derogatory term, "Oriental" in the 1960s

Ableism

Ableism means the practices or dominant attitudes by a society that devalue or limit the potential for people with disabilities. Ableism is the act of giving inferior value or worth to people who have different types of disabilities (physical, emotional, developmental, or psychiatric)

Ace

Ace is an umbrella term used to describe a variation in levels of romantic and/or sexual attraction, including a lack of attraction.

Accessibility

The design, development or state of physical or digital environments, resources and services that are easy to reach, enter, use, see, etc. for all users.

AFAB/AMAB

Assigned Female/Male At Birth, refers to intersex people born with ambiguous genitals. Its also used by trans and non-binary people.

Affinity bias

The tendency to connect with people who look and seem most like ourselves

Affinity groups

A group of people who share the same interest or purpose such as gender, age, religion, race or sexual orientation.

The Diversity & Inclusion Glossary

Affirmative action

Affirmative Action is the practice of favoring groups of people who have been discriminated against in the past.

Ageism

Stereotyping and discriminating against individuals on the basis of their age.

Ally

Ally is a term used for people who support a social group other than their own, by acknowledging disadvantage and oppression and taking action on the behalf of others.

Allyship

Allyship is using your position of privilege to make a more inclusive workplace.

Antisemitism

Hostility, prejudice, or discrimination towards people in a Semitic group (people who identify as Hebrew, people who are from Israel, or people who are from countries where Amharic, Arabic, or Aramaic are spoken. Most commonly used when referring to the prejudice or discrimination against people who practice Judaism or identify as Jewish.

Androgyny

Androgyny is a term for a person identifying or expressing gender outside of the gender binary.

Asexual

An "asexual person" is used to describe people who do not experience sexual attraction.

Aromantic

Aromantic people have little or no romantic attraction to others. They may or may not feel sexual attraction.

Assimilation

The process by which a minority or marginalized group sacrifices their own culture or belief systems to integrate socially, culturally, and/or politically into the larger, dominant culture and society to be accepted.

B

BAME

BAME meaning "Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic" is an acronym used mostly in the United Kingdom to identify Black and Asian people.

Behavioural diversity

Behavioural Diversity relates to personal experiences that help shape our world view to be more openminded and accepting of others who are different

Bi

An attraction towards more than one gender. Bi people may also describe themselves as bisexual, pansexual, bi-curious, queer, and other non-monosexual identities.

Bi-cultural

Bicultural identity is the condition of being oneself regarding the combination of two cultures.

Biphobia

Biphobia means to have an irrational fear, hatred, or intolerance for people who identify as bisexual.

Biracial

Biracial is a term for mixed race. Biracial is used to describe a person who identifies as being of two races, or whose parents are from two different race groups

Bisexual

An attraction towards more than one gender. People may also describe themselves as bi, queer, and other non-monosexual identities. See also Pansexual.

Biromantic Asexual

A person who is romantically attracted to multiple genders.

Biromantic Demisexual

A person who is sexually attracted to multiple genders, when they are romantically attracted to a person.

Black

A broad term for all people with ethnic origins in the African continent. Less commonly this term is used to refer to all people around the world who are not of white European descent. Note that we encourage capitalizing Black (when you're talking about race) – this is consistent with usage for other ethnic groups like Asian, Arab, Latinx. In the US, the term Black or Black American is typically preferred over African-American for two reasons: it better describes folks who are many generations removed from African ancestors and don't identify with Africa, and the term African-American has been criticized by some for being an overly politically correct alternative or even a euphemism for Black.

Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter (BLM), international social movement, formed in the United States in 2013, dedicated to fighting racism and anti-Black violence, especially in the form of police brutality.

Butch

Refers to a person with an overtly/stereotypically masculine or masculine-acting woman.



Cisgender or Cis

Refers to a person whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Often used by the allies, who by using this term recognize that trans people exist and matter.

Classism

Classism is a term that means to have prejudicial thoughts or to discriminate against a person or group based on differences in socioeconomic status and income level.

Cognitive diversity

Cognitive diversity accounts for differences in our perspective and the way we process information.

Confirmation bias

Seeking out or only noticing information that reinforces our existing beliefs.

Conscious prejudice

Preconceived, usually negative, feelings towards people based solely on their group membership, like religion, race, ethnicity or age.

Cover

An action where an individual intentionally downplays or omits disclosure of known stigmatized identity to fit in with the dominant culture.

Cultural appropriation

When a person, group, or organization from a dominant culture takes aspects of a minority culture (usually ignoring the cultural significance or meaning) and uses it for exploitative reasons or personal gain.

Culture fit

Individual attitudes, values, behaviours, and beliefs being in line with the core values and culture of an organization.

D

Deadnaming

Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name, often associated with trans people who have changed their name.

Demisexual

A sexual orientation where people experience sexual attraction only to people they are emotionally close to.

Discrimination

Different from prejudice, discrimination is the behaviour or action (usually negative) against a certain individual or group based on their shared characteristics.

Diversity

Embracing and taking into account the differences between individuals and groups of people.

Dyslexia

Dyslexia is when a person has difficulty reading. People with dyslexia may also have difficulty with comprehension, spelling, and writing.

Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia is when a person has difficulty with movement and coordination. Many people with Dyspraxia also have ADHD or other sensory processing issues.

E

Emotional tax

The combination of being on guard to protect against bias, feeling different at work because of gender, race, and/or ethnicity, and the associated effects on health, well-being, and ability to thrive at work.

Equality

Treating everyone the same way while assuming that everyone starts out on equal footing with equal opportunities.

Ethnic groups

The fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a shared cultural tradition

Ethnic Minorities

Used in the UK when referring to all ethnic groups except the "White British Group. Ethnic minorities include White minorities, such as Gypsy, Roma, and Irish Traveller groups."

Ethnocentrism

The tendency to believe that your own ethnic group is centrally important and measure all others using the standards and customs of your own.

F

Femme

Femme is a gender identity where a person has an awareness of cultural standards of femininity and actively carries out a feminine appearance or role.

First Nations

First Nations is a term used to describe indigenous people from Canada who are not Inuit or Métis. Many First Nations people prefer to define or identify themselves by their specific tribal affiliations.

FTM

FTM is an acronym for the Female-to-Male Spectrum. FTM is used by people who are assigned female at birth but identify with or express their gender as a male part of the time.

G

Gay

An identity term used to describe a male-identified person who is attracted to other male-identified people in a romantic, sexual, and/or emotional sense. Also an umbrella term used to refer to people who experience same-sex or same-gender attraction.

Gender

Gender is a social and cultural construct of "female" and "male". Although our sense of gender can align with our assigned sex, it goes well beyond chromosomes.

Gender Dysphoria

Gender Dysphoria is a phrase used to describe a feeling of discomfort that occurs in people whose gender identity differs from their birth assigned sex.

Gender expression

How a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.

Gender Fluid

A person who is gender fluid changes their gender over time or may switch between dressing as male or female day-to-day.

Gender identity

Gender identity is personal: it's how we see and define ourselves.

Gender Neutral

Gender Neutral, or Gender Neutrality, means that policies, language, and other social institutions should avoid distinguishing roles based on sex or gender in order to avoid discrimination.

Gender privilege

Gender privilege usually refers to male privilege, meaning a set of unearned advantages granted to men on the basis of their gender.

Genderqueer

Someone who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders.

Gender Spectrum

Gender Spectrum refers to the idea that there are many different genders, besides male and female.

Greygender

A person with strong ambivalence about their gender identity and expression.

Greysexual

A person who has a limited feeling of sexual attraction.

H

Hepeating

A situation where a man appropriates or repeats a woman's comments or ideas and then is praised for them being his own.

Heteroflexible

A person who identifies as straight but may have occasional homosexual activity. This is not bisexuality because a straight person doesn't experience same-sex attraction.

Heteronormativity

The social and institutional systems that favor heterosexuality, based on the assumption that everyone is or should be straight.

Heterosexual privilege

Heterosexual or 'straight' privilege refers to advantages granted to someone solely because of their heterosexual orientation.

Heterosexism

Heterosexism is a term used to describe the belief that heterosexuality is superior or "normal" compared to other forms of sexuality or sexual orientation.

Heterosexual

An identity term for a female-identified person who is attracted to male-identified people or a male-identified person who is attracted to female-identified people.

Homophobia

A strong dislike or fear of homosexual people.

Homosexual

Refers to a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex.

I

Inclusion

Inclusion is the result of welcoming, respecting, supporting, involving, valuing and empowering those around you equally.

Inclusive Language

Inclusive Language refers to the use of gender non-specific language to avoid assumptions around sexual orientation and gender identity.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality means to intertwine social identities like gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity which causes unique opportunities, barriers, experiences, or social inequality.

Intersex

The term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological characteristics do not fit within traditional societal assumptions about what it means to be male or female.

Institutional racism

Rules, policies, and treatment within an institution (school, hospital, courthouse, etc.) that discriminate.

Islamophobia

The fear or hatred of Muslims and Islam.

L

Lesbian

Refers to a woman who is attracted to women. NB: some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian.

Lesbophobia

Lesbophobia is an irrational fear or hatred of, and discrimination against lesbians or lesbian behavior.

LGBTQ+/LGBTQI

The acronym for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, questioning (or queer), intersex + other gender variants. This is the most inclusive, all-encompassing term for the gay community, including those with non-cis gender identities.

LGBTQIA

LGBTQIA is an acronym and refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual or allied.

M

Mansplain

Mansplain is a word used to describe when are men explaining something to a person in a condescending or patronizing manner, typically a woman.

Misogyny

Hatred, contempt, and prejudice against women.

Multiracial, mixed heritage, dual heritage, mixed-race, mixed-ethnicity – or simply “mixed”

Terms describing a person who has parentage or ancestors from more than one ethnic and/or racial group. Some people can get confused between interracial and biracial. An individual can be described as biracial if their heritage is mixed; interracial, on the other hand, is used to describe relationships or interactions between individuals from different racial groups.

Minority

Minority is a term often used to describe racially, ethnically, or culturally distinct groups that are usually subordinate to more dominant groups.

Misgender

To refer to someone using a word (especially a pronoun or form of address) that does not correctly reflect the gender with which they identify.

N

Neurodiverse

Neurodiversity describes the spread of neurological differences (learning and developmental difficulties, ADHD and Autism are examples).

Neopronoun

a form of gender-neutral third-person pronoun used in place of he, she, it and they. It is used by some non-binary people. Examples: xe/xem/xyr, ze/hir/hirs, and ey/em/eir.

Non-Binary

Refers to a person who doesn't identify as only male or only female, or who identifies as both.

O

Oppression

Being unjustly treated either at an individual or systematic level.

Outing

The act of revealing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity to an individual or group without the person's consent or approval.

Outgroup bias

The tendency to view people from outside our own group as less similar and, as a result, have negative biases against them.

P

Pansexual or Pan

Refers to a person who is attracted to all genders or is attracted to others, regardless of their gender. The key difference between bisexual and pansexual is that bisexual means attraction to more than one gender, but not necessarily all. 'Pan' is Greek for all.

People of color (POC)

An all-encompassing term for non-white people.

Prejudice

Refers to the (conscious or unconscious, positive or negative) attitudes and feelings one has towards an individual or group of individuals based on certain traits.

Privilege

One or a set of unearned benefits given to people owing to their membership in a specific social group relating to aspects of their identity. Those aspects can include race, gender, sexual orientation, ability and religion, as well as privilege related to wealth and class.

Polyamory

The consensual practice of intimate relationships with multiple partners. All parties may be involved with each other or only with a specific person.

Polygender

A person with several gender identities.

Pronouns

Words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation – for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender-neutral language and use pronouns such as they/their and ze/zir.

Q

Queer

A term to refer to people who don't identify with traditional categories of gender identity and/or sexual orientation. Note that it may be viewed to be derogatory by some, though it has gone through a recent phase of reclamation.

QPOC

QPOC is an acronym for Queer People of Color used in the UK and Canada. Another similar acronym is QTIPOC which stands for Queer, Transgender, and Intersex People of Color.

Questioning

Refers to anyone who is questioning their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

R

Racism

Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.

S

Scoliosesexual

A person who is attracted to people who are transgender or nonbinary.

Sex

Sex, as it relates to diversity, means the biological classification of male or female based on the physical and biological features of a person. A person's sex may vary from their gender identity.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is interpersonal: it's who we're romantically, emotionally, and/or physically attracted to.

Socioeconomic privilege

One or a set of advantages held by a person or group because of their experience and their individual or family's social and economic status.

Stereotypes

Stereotypes are cognitive representations of how members of a group are similar to one another and different from other groups. Importantly, people can be aware of the stereotypes they hold.

Stereotype threat

A situational predicament in which people are or feel themselves to be at risk of conforming to stereotypes about their social group.

Straight

Also known as heterosexual, straight refers to a person who is emotionally, romantically, and/or physically attracted to someone of the opposite sex.

Systemic racism

Historical and ongoing regulations, policies, practices, and cultural norms across institutions and society that uphold racism and disenfranchise minorities.

T

Third Gender

Third Gender refers to a category of people who do not identify as male or female, but rather as neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders.

Trans or transgender

Refers to a person whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may also describe themselves as gender-queer (GQ), gender-fluid, non-binary, gender-variant, crossdresser, genderless, agender, nongender, third gender, two-spirit, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois. NB: some people use the term transsexual, which is old medical terminology but trans or transgender is typically preferred.

Transitioning

The steps a trans person takes to live in the gender with which they identify. For some, it could involve medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this. This is also called gender affirmation.

Transphobia

The fear or dislike of people or an individual based on the fact they are trans, including the denial/refusal to accept their gender identity.

Two-spirit

Traditionally in some Indigenous cultures, two-spirit refers to people who embody the male and female gender. In recent years two-spirit refers to Indigenous people who are also a part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Transsexual

This was used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

U

Unconscious bias

Deep-seated assumptions we make about people who are different than us without even realizing it. Also called implicit bias.

Underrepresented groups

Refers to a group whose members are disadvantaged and subjected to unequal treatment by the dominant group, and who may regard themselves as recipients of collective discrimination.

W

White fragility

A term coined by author Robin Diawngelo that refers to the discomfort and defensiveness some white people may experience when confronted with information that highlights racial inequity and injustice in our society.

White Privilege

White Privilege represents the unearned set of advantages, privileges, or benefits given to people based solely on being white.

White Supremacy

White Supremacy refers to the exploitation or oppression of nations or people of color by white people for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, privilege, and power.

Workplace Inclusion

Workplace inclusion is an intentional effort to create an atmosphere of belonging where all parties can contribute and thrive regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation.

X

Xenophobia

Dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries.

Z

Zero sum game

The idea that if one person gains something, another person loses something. When doing D&I work, sometimes dominant groups believe that an organisation helps make underrepresented groups feel more included, they lose power, influence, and clout.