



# SOGIESC 101

A Quick Guide on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity,  
Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics!



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# INTRODUCTION



SOGIESC is an acronym for Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics.

The term SOGIESC applies and is relevant to everyone and is not limited to the LGBTIQ+ community only. “People with diverse SOGIESC” is an umbrella term for the people whose sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and sex characteristics place them outside culturally mainstream categories.

## ***LGBTIQ+***

An acronym for:

L: Lesbian

G: Gay

B: Bisexual

T: Transgender

I: Intersex

Q: Queer

The plus (+) sign represents “people with diverse SOGIESC” who use other terms to identify themselves. Sometimes additional characters may be added in context, such as A for “agender”, “asexual”, or “ally”, 2S for “two-spirited”, or P for “pansexual”.

The letter order varies from place to place, is not static, and can continue to change and evolve over time.

*\*Note: To be as inclusive and accurate as possible, one must use the terms with careful consideration for the individuals or population being referenced.*

# ALLY

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Is a person who is *associated with helping*.

This term has been adopted specifically to refer to a person who supports one or more marginalized groups.

An ally in the LGBTIQ+ context is a person who works both to support and facilitate the development of everyone around issues of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and to improve the experience of LGBTIQ+ people.

Allies recognize that though they're not a member of the underinvested and oppressed communities they support, they can make a concerted effort to better understand the struggles.

Because an ally might have more privilege and recognizes said privilege, they are powerful voices alongside oppressed ones.





# SEXUAL ORIENTATION

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The capacity for romantic, emotional or and/or physical feelings felt by a person for someone else. (Capacity for attraction)

## ***Types of attraction:***

Is made up of : Hetero-, Homo-, Bi-, Pan-, Asexual and many more.

### ***Gay***



Men whose attraction is to men.

Conventionally used for men who are attracted to men but is also used for women who are attracted to other women as an umbrella term of sorts.

### ***Lesbian***



Women whose attraction is to women.

### ***Bi/Bisexual***



A person who has the capacity for attraction to people of more than one gender not necessarily pertaining to only men and women

# SEXUAL ORIENTATION



## *Queer*

Was traditionally a negative term used to degrade people of diverse SOGIESC but has been reclaimed and is now considered inclusive of all diverse SOGIESC/LGBTIQ+.

Is often used by people who feel as though they do not conform to a society's economic, social and political norms based on their SOGIESC. The current word for queer in Dzongkha is “madow.” However, the word does not accurately represent or translate the “queer” that we are referencing.

## *What is an umbrella term?*

An umbrella term is a word or phrase that encompasses a variety of different concepts, often within a specific field or domain.

The use of umbrella terms can help to simplify language and increase inclusivity by providing a collective term for groups of people who may have diverse experiences and identities.

## *Slurs*

are words that are insulting and used to degrade a person.

There are many slurs used against LGBTIQ+ people, but as mentioned above some have been reclaimed.

# SEXUAL ORIENTATION

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*Attraction can be of many types:*

**Sexual:** is the desire for intimate sexual contact with others of the same or different genders.

**Physical:** is the desire for physical contact/connection but not in a sexual or romantic manner.

**Emotional:** is the desire for closeness or connection that may or may not include any physical contact.

**Romantic:** involves a combination of physical, sexual, and emotional feelings towards someone.

**Aesthetic:** involves the feeling of admiration for a person's appearance without any physical, sexual or romantic desire towards them.



# GENDER IDENTITY

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Is each person's internal and individual experience of gender felt by them which may or may not correspond with their sex assigned at birth or the gender attributed to them by society.

It may include the personal sense of the body, which may or may not involve a desire for modification of appearance or function of the body by medical, surgical or other means.

## *Cisgender*

Term used by people whose gender identities do not differ from the sex that was assigned at birth.

## *Trans*

Term used by people whose gender identity differs from what was typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Trans is an “*umbrella term*” that describes an internal sense of gender that differs from the sex assigned at birth and the gender attributed to the individual by society.

# GENDER IDENTITY

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## ***Hormone Replacement Therapy***



The body produces hormones during puberty that help define secondary sexual characteristics. Trans people use hormones to help them fully transition.

In most cases trans men take testosterone and trans women take estrogen. These hormones help bring about secondary sexual characteristics in trans people to help them transition fully.

## ***Gender reassignment surgery***

A more permanent method to transition is going through gender reassignment surgery where doctors perform surgical procedures to help transition the patient's physical appearance and sexual characteristics to resemble those associated with their identified gender.

***Top surgery:*** Removal of the mammary glands.

***Bottom surgery:*** Pertains to the removal and or reconstruction of the genitals to help affirm their transition.

*\*Note:*

*There are many factors that need to be considered as transitioning is a risky process to go through. Using hormones carry many risks such as low or high blood pressure, blood clots, stroke, heart disease, cancer, dehydration, liver damage, etc.*

*Surgery is permanent and can come with many complications such as internal bleeding, hematoma, nerve injury, infection, etc*

# GENDER IDENTITY



Transgender folks need to understand these risks to fully transition. Both their mental health and physical health are to be evaluated as the process can be hazardous and is permanent.

## ***De- transitioning***

Is the reversal of the transgender identification or gender transition (internal/ physical gender expression).

## ***Non-Binary***

People are usually categorized into the two binaries that are “male” and “female”. However, people who do not conform to this binary are called non-binary.

## ***Agender***

Terms used by people who do not consider themselves having a gender.

## ***Gender Fluid***

Term used by people that refer to change over time or in different situations in a person’s gender expression or gender identity, or both.

That change might be in identity, but not expression, or in expression, but not identity. Or sometimes both expression and identity might change together.



# PRONOUNS



Are a part of someone's gender expression and people can have multiple sets of pronouns for themselves that help them express themselves to the fullest.

## ***Example:***

*He/Him (Kho)*

*She/Her (Mo)*

*They/Them (Khong \*note: some people can find it restrictive in Dzongkha)*

*\*Note:*

*Neo pronouns:*

*Are words that are created to serve as a pronoun without expressing gender but these are currently not referenced much in Bhutan's context.*

## ***Pronoun etiquette***

- Always ask for someone's pronouns.
- Do not assume someone else's pronouns.
- If you misgender someone, apologize and correct yourself.

## ***Misgendering***

Occurs when you intentionally or unintentionally refer to (someone, especially a transgender person) using a word, especially a pronoun or form of address, that does not reflect their gender identity. (Oxford Dictionary, 2022)

# GENDER EXPRESSION

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The usage of a range of cues, such as names, pronouns, behavior, clothing, voice, mannerism and/or bodily characteristics, to express your gender.

However, gender expression does not have to be an accurate reflection of gender identity.

People with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics do not necessarily have a diverse gender expression.

Likewise, people who do not have a diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics may have a diverse gender expression.

## *Types of expression*

- Masculine
- Feminine
- Androgynous

# SEX CHARACTERISTICS

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Each person's physical features relating to sex, including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, genitals and secondary biological features emerging from puberty.

## ***Intersex***

Intersex people are born with sex characteristics that don't fit typical definitions of male and female bodies.

Intersex is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations.

Some of these variations may be apparent before or at birth, while others are not apparent until after puberty or later, or may not be physically apparent at all.

## ***Chromosomes***

*XY* and *XX* are the usual biological male and female chromosomes respectively.

However there are times where there are extra chromosomes and that affects the body:

- *XXX*
- *XXY*

# COMING OUT

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*Coming out* is a process of understanding, accepting, and valuing your sexual orientation/identity.

It involves both exploring your identity and sharing your identity with others. Coming out can be a gradual process or one that is spontaneous.

The first step usually involves coming out to yourself, often with a realization that the feelings you've had for some time make sense if you can define them as related to being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or queer.



## IN - RELATION TO BHUTAN

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### *Important dates*

- ***February 17th, 2021***



### *Decriminalization:*

Is the process or act of ceasing to treat something as illegal or as a criminal offense.

The Bhutanese parliament approved the bill to decriminalize homosexuality on February 17th, 2021. Sections 213 and 214 of the penal code criminalized “unnatural sex.”

With the passing of the bill, the amendment of the code was made to scrap the provision.

- ***The Month of June***

### *Pride Month*

- ***May 17th***

IDAHO TB (International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia)

- ***March 31st***

International Transgender Day of Visibility

- ***October 11th***

National Coming Out Day

More dates at [https://www.cod.edu/student\\_life/resources/lgbtq/awareness.aspx](https://www.cod.edu/student_life/resources/lgbtq/awareness.aspx)

## IN-RELATION TO BHUTAN

### *Local/ Regional Offensive Slurs to Avoid*

Following are slurs that have been often used to mock/insult/bully/harass the LGBTIQ+ community, which must not be used:

*Pholey moley*

*Phomin momin*

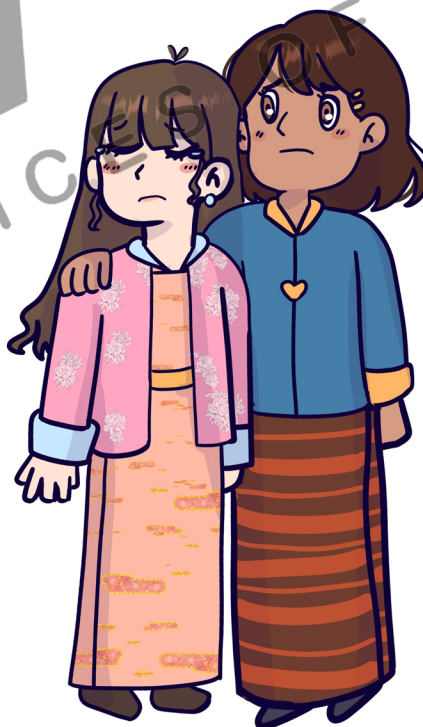
*Manning* means intersex but can also be used as a slur.

*Kinner* are intersex people but is a term taken from India.

*Hijara* is a slur used against trans people (context taken from India)

*Chaka*

*Maja*





## VIDEO LINKS

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Additional video links with personal stories from the LGBTIQ+ community in Bhutan that can supplement the training.

*Story of Aum Penjor:* <http://bit.ly/3IHFTDE>

*Queer Talks Season 1:* <http://bit.ly/3X7UqNi>

*Queer Talks Season 2:* <http://bit.ly/3Qz7AAt>

*Queer Talks Season 3:* <http://bit.ly/3QAYSSf>

## RESOURCES

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The gender bread person can be shown as an illustration to educate the audience on SOGIESC using simple visuals and can also be used as an exercise to assess how much people understood about SOGIESC.

It can be done at the start of the session and at the end as a test or just at the end to clear up any misunderstandings.

*Gender bread person:* <http://bit.ly/3ZwvnFf>

*Gender bread person worksheet:* <http://bit.ly/3ZtjER>

## CONTACT

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