

Fact Sheet: Gender Inclusive Language

Inclusive language respects and includes all communities that is free from words, phrases that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of particular people or groups. Inclusive language enables everyone to feel that they are being reflected in what is being said. Gender inclusive language is language that avoids bias toward a particular sex or social gender.

Humber College is committed to ensuring that principles of equity and diversity are instilled as values throughout Humber's culture. Increasing, the use of inclusive language in all communications throughout the College can enhance inclusion in Humber's learning, working and living environments. The following fact sheet provides information on some of the ways we can use gender-inclusive language.

Sex

A person's biological sex i.e. male, female, trans*. The term 'sex' refers to a person's biological characteristics. A person's sex is usually described as being male or female. Some people may not be exclusively male or female. Some people identify as neither male nor female.

Gender

Refers to the attitudes, feelings and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person's biological sex. Behavior that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviors that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non- conformity (APA, 2012).

Gender Identity

Is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation.

Gender Expression

Is how a person publicly presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender.

Intersex

Is a term for a combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and genitals that differs from the two expected patterns of male or female.

Trans or transgender

Is an umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, trans woman (male-to-female), trans man (female-to-male), transsexual, cross-dresser, gender non-conforming, gender variant or gender queer.

Provided below are some examples of gender inclusive terms or phrasing

Use	Instead of
Their	His/Her
They, Them	He/She
Humankind	Mankind
Staffing the office	Manning the office
Ancestors	Forefathers
Spouse, Partner, Lover, Significant other	Husband, Wife, Boyfriend, Girlfriend

Avoid terms that show gender biases in the profession:

Use	Instead of
Cleaner, Police officer, Chair	Cleaning lady, Policeman, Chairman
Nurse, Lawyer, Doctor	Male nurse, Woman lawyer, Female doctor

Sources:

1. Definitions Related to Sexual Orientation and Gender. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/sexuality-definitions.pdf>
2. Department of Education: Guidelines for Inclusive Language. Retrieved from <https://documentcentre.education.tas.gov.au/Documents/Guidelines-for-Inclusive-Language.pdf>
3. It's Pronounced Metrosexual: A Comprehensive List of LGTBQ Vocabulary Definitions. Retrieved from: <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2013/01/a-comprehensive-list-of-lgbtq-term-definitions/>
4. Ontario Human Rights Commission: Gender Identity and Gender Expression (brochure). <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/gender-identity-and-gender-expression-brochure>
5. PFlag Canada Durham Region Glossary of Terms. Retrieved from: <https://pflagdurhamregion.com/glossary/>
6. Words Matter: Guidelines on Using Inclusive Language in the Workplace. Retrieved from: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/careers/all-employees/working-with-others/words-matter.pdf>