

# WHAT IS QUEER?

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Queer is an umbrella term for people who are not heterosexual and/or do not conform to gender norms. For example trans people, bisexual people and homosexual people.

## WHAT IS SEXUAL ORIENTATION?

Sexual orientation is about who you might have a crush on, fall in love with and be attracted to. Some people can be attracted to people of another gender or to people of the same gender, some people are attracted to men and women, some might not even think about the gender of the person they are attracted to. Some don't feel attraction towards others at all. Sexual orientation is not necessarily set in stone, it can vary from person to person, and for some it can change over time.

- Heterosexuality(straight)** being attracted to people of a different gender
- Homosexuality(lesbian, gay)** being attracted to people of the same gender
- Pansexuality** being attracted to people regardless of their gender
- Asexuality** having little or no sexual attraction towards other people
- Bisexuality** being attracted to two genders

People who aren't straight (e.g. homo-, bi- and pansexual people) face a lot of prejudice. It is important to think about the words you use and not to use sexual orientation to make fun of people or demean those who are different. We live in a very straight world where most people assume everyone is heterosexual, which means that queer people constantly have to come out of the closet. Be open to diversity, don't assume that everyone is straight and remember that people come in all colours of the rainbow!

## WHAT IS GENDER IDENTITY?

Gender identity is about one's own sense and feelings of gender. Gender identity is not about genitals, biology or appearance, but rather about how we experience our gender. Some people feel they are male, others female, some people feel they are a mix of both and others feel they are neither. Some people have operations or take hormones to change their bodies in line with their gender identity, whereas others don't.

**Cisgender** a person whose gender identity and/or sex characteristics correlate to their assigned gender(is neither trans nor intersex)

**Trans woman(Male To Female/MTF)** a woman who was assigned male at birth

**Trans man(Female To Male/FTM)** a man who was assigned female at birth

**Gender reassignment** a process some people go through to change their bodies in line with their gender identity

**Transgender** an umbrella term which includes all those that sit outside the realm of 'traditional' ideas of gender, which includes trans men, trans women, people who go through gender reassignment, people who choose not to, people who do not wish to identify as male or female and people who wish to identify as both.

Trans people experience a lot of prejudice. It is good to simply ask if you are unsure about names and pronouns. Trans people, however, get a lot of inappropriate questions, don't assume that trans people will want to discuss their gender, bodies or gender past. Be open to the fact that gender isn't just male or female, there is no single gender recipe and there is no right or wrong when it comes to gender!

## WHAT IS INTERSEX?

When a child is born, usually the first question asked is "is it a boy or a girl?" When it comes to intersex individuals, the answer may not be obvious. Intersex is a term that is used for people whose biological sex cannot be clearly categorised as either male or female. Intersex individuals should have full control over any medical procedures they may wish to undergo and should not be subjected to medically unnecessary gender normalising procedures. It is important that intersex individuals get to determine their own sex and gender, just like everyone else.

## SHE, HE, THEY...?

Some people prefer to be called he, others prefer she but there are also people who prefer neither female nor male pronouns. In that case the gender neutral pronoun they might come in handy, for e.g.: They laughed/I called them/Their bag is heavy.

However, there are many different gender neutral pronouns available so it is always best to respect people's own preferences.



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For more information and support:

**Samtökin 78 (National Queer Organisation)**

[www.samtokin78.is](http://www.samtokin78.is) | [skrifstofa@samtokin78.is](mailto:skrifstofa@samtokin78.is) | 5527878

**Hin – LGBTQ in Northern Iceland** [hinsegin@hinsegin.net](mailto:hinsegin@hinsegin.net)

**Intersex Iceland** [www.intersex.is](http://www.intersex.is) | [intersex@samtokin78](mailto:intersex@samtokin78)

**Q Queer Student Association** [www.queer.is](http://www.queer.is) | [queer@queer.is](mailto:queer@queer.is)

**Trans Iceland:** [www.trans.samtokin78.is](http://www.trans.samtokin78.is) | [transiceland@gmail.com](mailto:transiceland@gmail.com)

**Youth Group of Samtökin 78** [unglidar@samtokin78.is](mailto:unglidar@samtokin78.is)

Free counselling is available through Samtökin 78.  
The organisations can also be found on Facebook.



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