

Definitions

Equality and Equity: **Equality** is providing the same level of **opportunity** and assistance to all segments of society, such as races and genders. **Equity** is providing various levels of support and assistance depending on specific needs or abilities (for example, see: <https://www.ywcalgary.ca/news/equity-v-s-equality-whats-difference/>)

Sex: The classification of people as male, female or intersex. Sex is usually assigned at birth and is based on an assessment of a person's reproductive system, hormones, chromosomes and other physical characteristics, most notably by external genitalia.

Gender: A composite of socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and/or attributes that a given society considers appropriate for members of a given sex; for example, concepts such as masculinity and femininity in a specific culture in time. One may identify as being a man, woman, or another gender. Traditionally gender has been considered as a binary but is now considered to be a spectrum (see Gender Binary, below). It involves gender assignment (the gender designation of someone at birth), gender roles (the expectations imposed on someone based on their gender), gender attribution (how others perceive someone's gender), and gender identity (how someone defines their own gender). Fundamentally different from the sex one is assigned at birth.

Gender expression: The way an individual communicates their gender identity to others. This may be done through behaviour, body language, voice, emphasis or deemphasis of bodily characteristics, choice of clothing, hairstyle, and wearing make-up and/or accessories. The traits and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity are culturally specific and change over time.

Gender identity: 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. Gender identity is independent of sex-assignment. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation. Gender also refers to a variety of social and behavioural characteristics (e.g. appearance, mannerisms). There are lots of words people may use to talk about their gender identity and expression

Cisgender: A term for people whose gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at/from birth. For example, someone who identifies as a woman and was assigned female at birth is a cisgender woman; similarly, a man who is male-assigned at birth. Cisgender is the opposite of the word transgender.

Trans, transgender: An umbrella term that refers to someone whose gender identity is different than their gender assumed at birth usually based on their anatomy/sex. The term describes people with diverse gender identities and gender expressions that do not conform to stereotypical ideas about what it means to be a girl/woman or boy/man in society.

Gender Non-Conforming (GNC): Refers to people who do not follow other people's ideas or stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the female or male sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender binary: A social system whereby people are thought to have either one of two genders: man or woman. These genders are expected to correspond to sex assigned at birth: male or female. In the gender binary system, there is no room for diversity outside of man or woman, for living between genders or for crossing the binary. The gender binary system is rigid and restrictive for many people who

feel that the sex they were assigned at birth does not match up with their gender or that their gender is fluid and not fixed.

Non-binary person: A person who identifies between or outside of the gender binary by experiencing their gender as neither exclusively man nor woman.

Genderqueer person: A person who does not identify as a man or woman or subscribe to conventional gender distinctions. A person whose gender identity and/or expression may not correspond with social and cultural gender expectations. Individuals who identify as genderqueer may move between genders, identify with multiple genders, or reject the gender binary or gender altogether.

Gender fluid person: A person whose gender identity shifts between different genders (or no gender). A person whose gender identity is experienced as being on a spectrum and that varies over time.

Queer: A term becoming more widely used among LGBTQI2S+ communities because of its inclusiveness. 'Queer' can be used to refer to the spectrum of non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender people and provides convenient shorthand for 'LGBTQ.' It is important to note that this is a reclaimed term that was once and is still used as a hate term and thus some people feel uncomfortable with it. Not all trans people see trans identities as being part of the term 'queer,' and it is important to acknowledge the different histories of queer.

Two-spirit: An English umbrella term used by some Indigenous people rather than, or in addition to, identifying as LGBTQ. This term affirms the interrelatedness of all aspects of identity - including gender, sexuality, community, culture, and spirituality. The term is used by many Indigenous communities on Turtle Island (typically known as Canada & US) to describe people with diverse gender identities, gender expressions, gender roles, and sexual orientations. Two-Spirit people have been and are viewed differently across different Indigenous nations. Two-Spirit people were included and respected in most Indigenous communities, sometimes considered sacred and highly-revered. They often took on important roles as healers, mediators, and warriors. One of the devastating impacts of colonization was the attempted erasure of Two-Spirit people from Indigenous societies, due to the homophobic, transphobic and misogynistic values brought over and enforced by European settlers, which still effect many nations today. Despite this, Two-Spirit people have survived and their presence continues to grow in size and visibility, reclaiming traditional roles in their communities, and strengthening their relationships with their cultures and families. Not all people who are Indigenous and gender/sexually diverse will name themselves as Two-Spirit and this is their self-determination. Two-Spirit is something embodied exclusively by Indigenous people and is not to be taken on by non-Indigenous people.

Sexual orientation: Sexual orientation describes human sexuality, from gay and lesbian to bisexual and heterosexual orientations. A person's gender identity is fundamentally different from and not related to their sexual orientation. For example, because a person identifies as trans does not predict or reveal anything about their sexual orientation. A trans person may identify as gay, lesbian, queer, straight, bisexual, or another sexual orientation.

QTBIPOC: Queer and trans Black, Indigenous, and people of colour

Gender Inclusive Language: Shift to the use of "people," "everyone," or "folks" and avoid use of the phrases of "men and women," "ladies and gentlemen", "you guys" or "guys." The phrase "men and women" excludes nonbinary people, and "Guys" is not gender inclusive – people, everyone, or folks, are

gender neutral and thereby inclusive. It is best to ask those you are meeting for the first time: “What name do you go by?” and/or “what are your pronouns”? Consider introducing yourself first, by name and pronouns used. Avoid “Mr.”, “Mrs.”, etc.

Sources for this resource, as well as online resources that provide up-to-date terminology include:

- Egale: <http://egale.ca>
- Canadian Women & Sport: <https://womenandsport.ca>
- QMUNITY: <https://qmunity.ca>
- ViaSport:
https://www.viasport.ca/sites/default/files/LGBTQI2S_Creating_Inclusive_Environments.pdf
- BC Centre for Disease Control: <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/Language-guide.pdf>
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project website: <https://srlp.org/resources/fact-sheet-transgender-gender-nonconforming-youth-school/>
- University of Pittsburgh: Gender Inclusive Guidelines: <http://www.gsws.pitt.edu/node/1432>
- United Nations: Gender Inclusive Guidelines: <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/>
 - <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>
 - <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/toolbox.shtml>