### **DCU LGBTQ+ Terminology**

#### **Allies**

Persons that seek to advance the social and legal equality of those with differing identities, sexualities and experiences. This can include intra-queer (see queer as below) allyship and inter-queer allyship. Intra-queer allyship refers to cisgender (see cis below) and straight allies advocating for LGBTQ+ people. Inter-queer allyship refers to individuals of the LGBTQ+ community advocating for those in the community with sexualities/identities that differ from the individual's personal sexuality/identity. For example, cisgender gay men advocating for the rights of trans women and lesbian women advocating for the rights of bisexual men, so on, so forth. People who identify as cisgender (see cis below) and straight, and believe in social and legal equality for LGBTQ+ people.

#### **Asexual**

Asexual is an umbrella term for those that tend to not have any innate desire or interest in entering into sexual relationships with other people. Sometimes referred to as 'Ace', this identity solely concerns an individual's sexual identity (as on the scale of asexual-sexual) and is separate and typically unrelated to romantic relationships. Asexual persons may develop romantic relationships including: homoromantic, heteroromantic, biromantic and panromantic.

#### **Pansexual**

Someone attracted to more than one gender. Refers to those" that form sexual and romantic relationships on bases of personality rather than gender identity. Pansexual, with “pan” deriving from the Greek for “all”, refers to those who do not adhere to binary gender in terms of their sexual and romantic relationships.

#### **Bisexual**

Bisexual, linguistically, implies recognition of binary gender, and therefore can mean an individual who is attracted to men and women, but those who identify as bisexual are not necessarily only attracted to traditional gender expression.

#### **Cis**

Cisgender (or cis) refers to those that identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. Gender assignment describes the process by which physicians and individuals prescribe one particular gender to a person based on the appearance of their genitals and/or genetic markers.

#### **Coming Out**

This is the process of revealing your sexual orientation and/or gender identity to individuals in your life; often incorrectly thought to be a one-time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process.

#### **Crossdressers and Transvestites**

A transvestite or crossdressing person is someone who at times wears clothing, jewellery and/or make-up not traditionally or stereotypically associated with their assigned sex. There is generally no intention or desire to change their gender identity or assigned sex, and has no relation to sexual orientation. Crossdressing is not necessarily synonymous with drag, of which is more concerned with performance and entertainment. There are also negative connotations with the use of transvestites and can be met with distaste when used.

#### **Discrimination**

Discrimination means making a distinction in favour of, or against, a person based on the group, class, or category to which a person belongs.

#### **Gay**

This term refers to someone who is attracted to people of the same gender. It is mainly used to describe men but can also be used to describe women.

#### **Gender**

This term refers to expectations and stereotypes about behaviours, actions and roles linked to being a “man” or “woman.” Social norms related to gender vary across cultures and can shift over time.

#### **Gender/Sex Affirmation Surgery**

Also called gender confirmation surgery or gender reassignment surgery, refers to surgical interventions undertaken by some people as part of the transitioning process. It is a process that is undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reaffirmation of a person’s sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex. Surgical interventions are not a necessity for the transition process.

#### **Gender Binary**

This term refers to the predominant social system whereby people are thought to be one of two genders: male or female. This system is restrictive for many people who feel that their natal sex (sex they were labelled with at birth) does not match up with their gender or that their gender is fluid and not fixed. Gender binaries are thought to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive.

#### **Gender Expression**

This term refers to how a person represents or expresses their gender identity to others, such as through behaviour, clothing, hairstyles, voice or body characteristics.

#### **Gender Identity**

Gender identity refers to a person's self-descriptor that they believe to capture their gender. Gender identities include male,female, non-binary, transman, transwoman and so on. Gender identity is distinct from a person's sexual orientation.

#### **Gender Norms**

Gender norms define what society considers male and female behaviour, and it leads to the formation of gender roles, which are the roles males and females are often expected to take in society.

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#### **Gender Recognition Certificate**

A certificate issued under the Gender Recognition Act 2015 which enables trans people’s preferred gender to be legally recognised from age sixteen.

#### **Heteronormativity**

Refers to heterosexual identities being considered the norm and the exclusion of any other sexual orientation or gender identity. One way that it is demonstrated is by the lack of representation of LGBTQ+ people and relationships in the media.

#### **Heterosexual (Straight)**

Someone who is attracted to people of the opposite gender.

#### **Homophobia / Transphobia & Biphobia**

Homophobia encompasses a range of negative attitudes and feelings toward homosexuality or people who are identified or perceived as being lesbian and/or gay. Biphobia describes negative attitudes towards bisexual people. Transphobia relates to prejudice directed specifically at those who don’t adhere to gender norms and people who are trans.

#### **Intersex**

Intersex refers to a number of different variations in a person’s sex characteristics that do not match strict medical definitions of male or female. These characteristics may be chromosomal, hormonal and/or anatomical and may be present to differing degrees. The most thorough existing research finds intersex people to constitute an estimated 1.7% of the population, which makes being intersex about as common as having red hair. Intersex people are typically coercively assigned as male or female at birth. Some intersex people identify with their assigned sex, while others do not. Some choose to identify as intersex. Intersex people, like the general population, may or may not identity as trans. Trans people undergoing transition are not considered to have an intersex condition as a result of their transition.

#### **Lesbian**

A woman who is attracted to other women.

#### **Non Binary**

Non-binary is an umbrella term for gender identities that fall outside the gender binary of male or female. This includes individuals whose gender identity is neither exclusively male nor female, a combination of male and female or between or beyond genders. Similar to the usage of transgender, people under the non-binary umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms e.g. gender fluid, bigender and gender neutral. The term is not a synonym for trans and should only be used if someone self-identifies as non-binary and/or genderqueer.

#### **Outing**

When someone reveals another person’s sexual orientation or gender identity to an individual or group, often without the person’s consent or approval.

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#### **Prejudice**

Prejudice is defined as a preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

#### **Pride**

Pride is a annual protest/parade in celebration of LGBTQ+ identities held around the world. It also refers to a sense of satisfaction and admiration for one's LGBTQ+ identity. In Ireland, most large cities and towns have their own Pride Festival. The largest Pride in Ireland take place in Dublin.

#### **Queer**

Queer is an umbrella term used to encompass all variants of gender/sexuality beyond heteronormative and cisgender norms. It is a self-defining term that should not be prescribed to an individual. Queer has historically negative connotations and can be met with controversy within the LGBTQ+ community. It should only ever be used as an adjective, not a noun. E.G., Dean is a queer person, not Dean is a queer.

#### **Rainbow**The rainbow has been used to symbolically represent the LGBTQ+ community since 1978, typically in flag form, after its creation by Gilbert Baker. The varying colours in the flag represent the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community and each colour also has its own meaning. Red corresponds to life, orange means healing, yellow represents sunlight, green means nature, indigo stands for serenity and violet represents spirit.

#### **Sex**

This term refers to the designation of a person at birth as male or female usually based on the appearance of their anatomy or biology.

#### **Sexual Orientation**

The attraction felt between people.

#### **Transgender (Trans)**

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, gender non-conforming, non-binary or genderqueer. Trans is shorthand for ‘transgender’, however, ‘transgender’ should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. For instance ‘transgender people’ is appropriate but ‘transgenders’ or ‘Mary is a transgender’ could be viewed as disrespectful.

#### **Transition**

Transitioning is a process through which some trans people begin to live as the gender with which they identify, rather than the one assigned at birth. Transitioning might include social, physical or legal changes such as coming out to family, friends, co-workers and others; changing one’s appearance; changing one’s name, pronoun and sex designation on legal documents (e.g. driving licence or passport); and medical intervention (e.g. through hormones or surgery).

A medical transition may include hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery and/or other components and is generally conducted under medical supervision based on a set of standards developed by medical professionals.

#### **Transsexual**

This is a term for people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex at birth and who seek to transition. The term may not be acceptable to many members of the trans community since it has clinical or medical overtones. The term ‘transsexual’ is contentious and many trans people reject the term, given it can be incorrectly interpreted as focusing on sexuality or sexual behaviour rather than gender identity.

#### **Derogatory or offensive language**

The following terms are generally considered to be offensive to trans people:

* Sex change
* Sex swap
* Tranny
* Transgenders
* Pre-op
* Post-op
* Shemale
* HeShe
* Transsexual (when used as a noun e.g. ‘a transsexual’)
* Transgender (when used as a noun e.g. ‘a transgender’)
* Gender-bender (specifically when used in relation to a transitioning person as opposed to an individual who plays with their gender presentation)
* Hermaphrodite (this term is widely held to be offensive – the term now in use is ‘intersex people’)
* Lady Boy

#### **Inaccurate usage**

* + - Transgendered – not a synonym for transgender (similar to ‘woman-ed’ or ‘Catholic-ed’)
		- Transsexuality – the correct medical term, where appropriate, is ‘transsexualism’
		- Gender identity confusion
		- Born a man
		- Born a woman
		- Trapped in the wrong body (some trans people find this phrase apt, many others feel it over-simplifies a more nuanced experience)