

Equal Opportunities Form - Definitions

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual	Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women or to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men
Gay	Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality - some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term
Lesbian	Refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.
Bisexual	Is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, queer, and some other non-monosexual and non-monoromantic identities
Asexual	A person who does not experience sexual attraction. Some asexual people experience romantic attraction, while others do not. Asexual people who experience romantic attraction might also use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with asexual to describe the direction of their romantic attraction.

Disability

Disability is the loss or limitation of opportunities for people who have physical, health related, sensory or intellectual impairments to partake in the ordinary life of their communities on an equal level with others due to physical, structural and social barriers.

Under the definition used in the Equality Act 2010, you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

Gender Identity

Gender identity is how an individual presents themselves and how they wish to be perceived by others. It is not always consistent with the sex that someone has been assigned at birth.

Non-binary is an umbrella term that refers to someone who does not identify within the gender binary of 'male' or 'female' exclusively. This can include people who identify as agender (no gender), bigender (more than one gender) or who may only partially identify with a gender (also known as demi-gender), or may identify in any other way that does not fit the category of 'male' or 'female'.

Gender fluid is also an umbrella term, which usually refers to someone whose gender identity varies and changes. This can encompass any of the above noted, e.g. someone who identifies as female some of the time, or agender at other times.

Asylum Seeker

An asylum-seeker is an individual who has fled the country they reside or were currently in due to human rights violations or fear of persecution. Seeking asylum is a human right. Asylum-seekers are different from 'refugees' or 'migrants', although often these terms are used interchangeably, as they have not yet been legally recognised with refugee status and are awaiting a decision on their claim from the country, they seek asylum in.

Race

Race is a categorisation that is based on, mainly, physical attributes or traits. Assigning race is often done so by the colour of a person's skin but other factors concerning appearance can be attributed to the defining of a person's race, such as hair texture. It's widely accepted that race is a social construct. However, racial identity and shared experiences of racism can be an important basis for solidarity, community and collective organising amongst marginalised racial groups.

Ethnicity

A person's ethnicity is defined by the ethnic group that they identify with based on shared attributes that distinguish them from other ethnicities. Examples of identifying factors of a person's ethnic grouping include cultural heritage, language or dialect, history and society, other factors that could be considered when identifying ethnicity are religion, ritual or dress.

Carer

A carer is a person of any age who provides care, unpaid, for another person who cannot cope without their support. This can be for a variety of reasons, such as disability, and can be long or short-term. A carer can be a family member, neighbour, friend or a partner. A carer can have a range of responsibilities dependent on the person's needs.