

# HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE LGBT+ ALLY

The UK has made great strides towards being more inclusive of LGBT+ people, which makes it easy to forget that the LGBT+ community still face challenges in the workplace.

## Practical actions you can take

**Use inclusive language.** For example, don't assume that all your colleagues are straight and cisgender (e.g. "do you have a wife, John?" or assuming someone should be referred to as "he" or "she" based on appearance).

**Speak up** if you hear others make negative comments or jokes, letting them know why you find their words or actions inappropriate. It is easier for you to

do so than for the people who are actually targeted.

**Visibly show your support for the firm's LGBT+ and Allies Network, PRISM,** by getting involved in the events and activities and encourage others to do the same. The views of everyone at the firm are critical to help us share information in a way that is accessible and interesting.

## Key facts

According to Stonewall's UK-wide survey



Over 1/3 of LGBT+ staff still hide their identity at work for fear of discrimination

Nearly 2/5th of bi staff aren't out to anyone at work



The figure rises to 42% for Black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT+ staff and 51% for trans staff



1/5th of LGBT+ staff reported recent negative comments or conduct from colleagues because of their identity

## Our approach - key principles

**Be open-minded and listen** to LGBT+ people about LGBT+ issues. Be supportive, and remember that even when someone has come out to you, they are not necessarily ready for others to know.

Make the time to **educate yourself** by doing some online research rather than asking others potentially intrusive questions about their personal lives – some LGBT+ people are happy to answer these kinds of questions, but it's best not to assume everyone is. Stonewall's glossary is a good place to start.

It's important to remember that people have lots of **different elements to their identities** beyond their gender identity and sexual orientation, including background, faith, ethnicity, and mental and physical health. Discrimination can happen on multiple levels and is experienced differently by individuals.

## You can be an ally to bi colleagues by:

**Not making assumptions** about someone's sexual orientation, for instance, thinking that someone is either straight, gay or lesbian based on the gender of their partner;

**Being careful** about confidentiality, disclosure, and "outing" someone as bi;

**Being aware** that certain questions that you may want to ask out of curiosity could be biphobic in nature;

**Understanding** that many issues bi people face, including those with pan or queer identities, are different to those in the lesbian, gay, trans and non-binary communities; and

**Challenging** biphobic comments or behaviour (e.g. "they're just indecisive" or "need to pick a side").

## You can be an ally to trans and non-binary colleagues by:

**Not making assumptions** about someone's gender identity or the pronouns they use based on their appearance;

**Being careful** about confidentiality, disclosure, and "outing" someone as trans or non-binary (e.g. sharing documentation with a person's name or picture which doesn't match their identity or expression);

**Respecting** the terms an individual uses to describe their gender identity; and

**Challenging** transphobic or other inappropriate comments or behaviour (e.g. repeatedly refusing to call someone by their chosen pronoun or name).