



inclusion and  
wellbeing.

glossary of terms.

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For more information visit our [inclusion and wellbeing hub](#).



## what this is

- A list of terms and words that are commonly used within the diversity, inclusion and wellbeing landscape. These are taken from best practice guides and from the views of those with lived experiences.
- While familiarising yourself with these words is important, it's equally important to understand what terms and language individuals you're engaging with prefer.
- It will help guide you with language that most people understand and find acceptable but there will always be occasions when an individual prefers an alternative term.



## what this isn't

- There is no single comprehensive list that covers every single term and as language and our understanding of language evolves, these lists will change.
- It's not a prescriptive list of things you can and cannot say, because there is always context and personal preferences that need to be applied to any conversation.
- It's not permission to describe someone by their characteristic. Most people prefer to be introduced by their name.



## What if I make a mistake?

- Everyone, even with the best intent, makes mistakes. Even if you know all the words in this glossary and even if you apply them soundly to the relevant circumstance and context, there will still be room to make mistakes.
- The best thing you can do is to acknowledge the mistake and apologise. Try and understand what term or language the individual prefers and then remember this for next time.
- If you're unsure what word or term to use then ask.



# general terms.



**Diversity** is about differences. Each one of us is different, and at Randstad we value and respect background, education, nationality, generation, age, working style, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, skills and any other protected characteristic.

**Wellbeing** has a number of dimensions, including physical, mental and emotional health, satisfaction, purpose and feelings of happiness. It is not just about physical fitness or being active, it is also about positive mindset and personal resilience, strong connections, working well in a balanced way and financial stability.

**Inclusion** is about getting the best out of these differences to achieve better outcomes. It is diversity in action. For Randstad, it is creating an environment where all of our people feel, and are, valued – where they are able to bring their different perspectives and whole selves to work, contributing their personal best in every encounter. In this way, each person can do their part to deliver better outcomes.

**Culture** describes the ways of life, beliefs, values and attitudes which connect a group of people.

**Engagement** is a broad term, intended to cover the whole range of ways in which we interact with our employees, our clients and our communities, often forming some kind of communication relationship.

**Disadvantaged** refers to those put in an unfavourable position, hindered or harmed.



# age.



The time since an individual's birth date, usually measured in years.

**Child/children** - usually referring to those under the age of 18

**Teenager** - usually referring those aged 13-18

**Adult** - usually referring to those who are 18 years old and over

**Young person** - usually referring to those up to the age of 25 but not including children

**Older worker** - usually referring to those over the age of 50

**Generation** - referring to a group of people who were born or are living at the same time

**Baby Boomers** - usually referring to those born in the 1940 and 1950s

**Generation X** - those born between the early 1960s and the early 1980s

**Generation Y** - Also known as Millennials, born between about 1980 and 2000

**Generation Z** - usually referring to those born in the late 1990s and 2010s



# disability.

A physical or mental condition that affects an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day tasks.

Long term health condition - a condition which is long-lasting, usually over 12 months.

Mental illness - refers to a wide range of mental health conditions that affect mood, thinking and behaviour

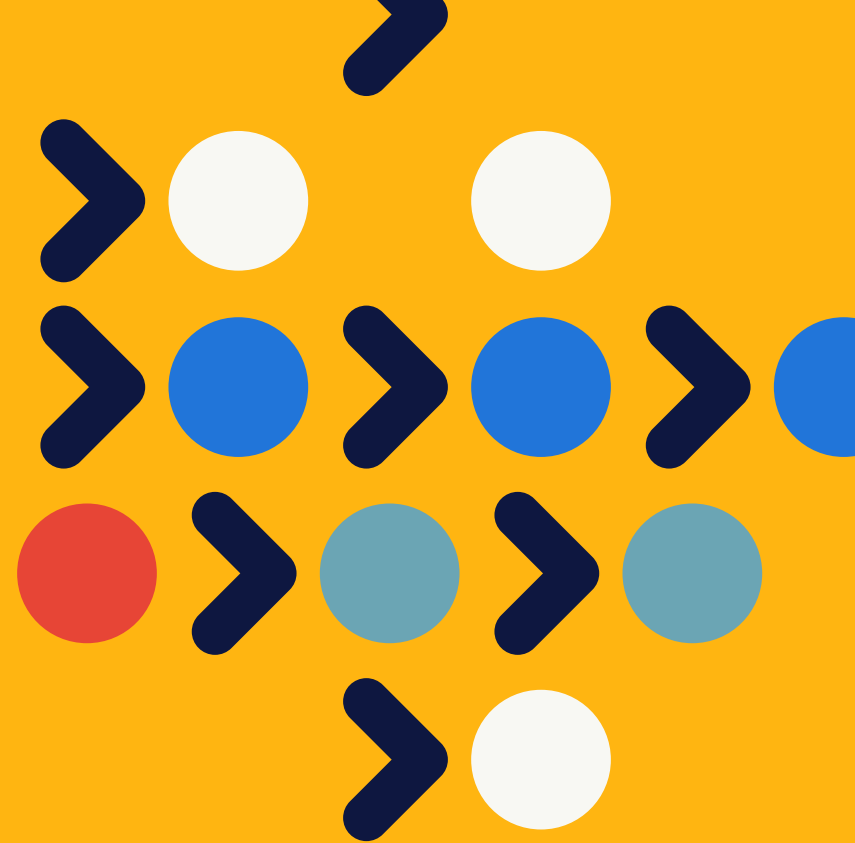
Neurodiversity - a relatively new term that refers to people who have dyslexia, autism, ADHD, dyspraxia and other neurological conditions.

Accessibility - refers to the ease at which a person can use a function, such as a service, building, process. It often refers to steps taken to make it easier for disabled people to use facilities.

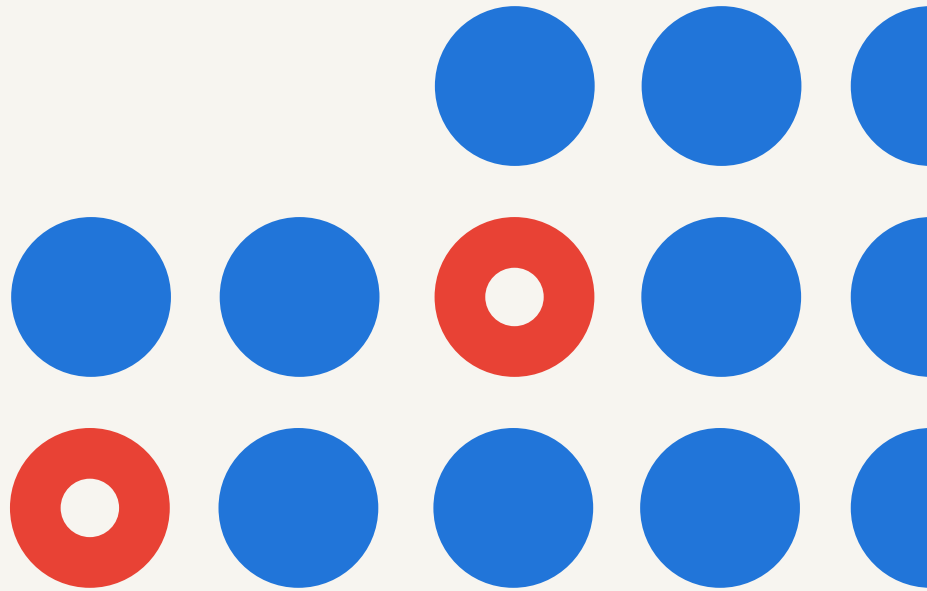
Reasonable Adjustments - are changes made to facilities, work environments or buildings to reduce the disadvantage disabled people may otherwise face.

Wellbeing passport - a document that records actions that can be taken to support an employee to balance their work/life responsibilities; for example, working carers.

Carer - somebody looking after (unpaid) a family member, friend, partner or child who is disabled, is ill or elderly and who wouldn't be able to manage without their support.



# ethnicity and race.



**Ethnicity** - a social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioural patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

**Race** - a socially constructed term without biological merit that has historically been used to categorise different groups of people based on perceived physical differences.

**Ethnic minority** - a group of people of a particular race or nationality living in a country or working in an environment where most people are from a different race or nationality.

**BME/BAME** - an acronym. Black and Minority Ethnic or British / Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic

**Dual Heritage** - having parents from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds.



# sex.



**Male** - the term assigned to a person, usually at birth, who presents with male genitals.

**Intersex** - a general term used when a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the typical definitions of female or male.

**Female** - the term assigned to person, usually at birth, who presents with female genitals.





# gender.

Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as the norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men - and can vary by society and geography.

**Agender** - refers to someone who either feels they have no gender identity, or who identifies not as male or female but 'neutral.'

**Gender fluid** - individuals for whom gender is unfixed: they fluctuate between different identities aside from their biological and physical anatomy.

**Gender neutral** - a synonym for 'agender' i.e. somebody who identifies with no gender.

**Gender queer** - an umbrella term covering any feelings about gender alternative to society's traditional expectations.

**Intergender** - an older term, occasionally used by someone whose gender identity is between male and female.

**Nonbinary** - a term referring to someone who doesn't identify as simply female or male.

**Polygender** - identifying with several different genders either at the same time or different times.

**Transgender/Trans** - an umbrella term for any individual whose gender identity is different from what is their assigned biological sex at birth.



**Gender Dysphoria** - also known as gender identity disorder, this is the feeling of discomfort or distress associated with living as the gender that was assigned at birth. If a person feels that they do not fully identify with their 'assigned' gender, they may experience a wide range of psychological symptoms.

**Cisgender (Cis)** - refers to people whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Transitioning** - means the steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. For some this involves medical intervention, but not all trans people want or are able to have this. It may also involve telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.





# sexual orientation.



**Ally** - a (typically) straight and/or cis person who supports members of the LGBT community.

**Bisexual** - an umbrella term used to describe an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.

**Coming Out** - when a person first tells someone/others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bi or trans.

**Gay** - refers to a man who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men and a woman who has an emotional, romantic and /or sexual orientation towards woman.

**Heterosexual/Straight** - refers to a man who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women or to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men.

**Homosexual** - an older but still-used term describing someone who has an emotional romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.

**LGBT** - an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans.

**Lesbian** - refers to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women.

**Pansexual** - refers to a person whose emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender.

**Queer** - often used as a derogatory term for LGBT individuals but sometimes used by those who don't identify with traditional categories around gender identity and sexual orientation.



# mental health.



We all have mental health. Some people use the terms 'emotional health' or 'wellbeing' and it's just as important as good physical health.

**Anxiety** - a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe. Most people experience some levels of anxiety throughout their lives, but for some this can be overwhelming and debilitating.

**Bi-polar Disorder** - formerly known as manic depression, this is a condition that affects an individual's moods, which can swing from one extreme to another.

**Depression** - a low mood that lasts for a long time, and affects your everyday life. It can mean being in low spirits or can cause feelings of despair and giving up the will to live.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** - a type of anxiety disorder which an individual might develop after being involved in, or witnessing, traumatic events. Sometimes referred to as 'shell shock' it's a low mood that lasts for a long time and can affect everyday life.

**Schizophrenia** - a condition where someone may have severely disrupted beliefs and experiences that cause them to lose touch with reality, see or hear things that are not there, hold irrational or unfounded beliefs and appear to act strangely because they are responding to these delusions and hallucinations.

**Dementia** - is a significant loss of intellectual abilities such as memory capacity, severe enough to interfere with social or occupational functioning.

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)** - is an anxiety disorder formed of obsessions (unwanted thoughts, images worries or doubts) and compulsions - repetitive activities like repeatedly checking the door is locked or saying phrases over and over again.

