



Some Common Terms in New Zealand

(Please Note: This list is not exhaustive)

Asexual	A person who feels low or no sexual interest in others of any gender
Bisexual	A person who is emotionally and physically attracted to more than one gender
Cisgender	A person whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth
Fa'afafine	A Samoan person whose birth sex is male but takes on a range of feminine-gendered behaviours, and is accepted as a third gender
Gay	A person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to the same sex. This tends to be more widely used by men than women, and can be both a personal and community identity
Gender	The socially accepted/expected ideas of how a man or woman should be (see Sex)
Genderfluid	A person who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders (equivalent to Genderqueer or Non-binary)
Gender Identity	Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender. Gender identity can correlate with assigned sex at birth or can differ from it
Homophobia	An irrational fear or prejudice against same sex love or behaviour
Homosexual	A term created in 1868 to describe people sexually attracted to the same sex. It was revolutionary in its time because of its scientific and non-judgemental nature, but today is widely viewed as old-fashioned and clinical
Intersex	Intersex people are individuals born with any of several variations in sex characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals that, according to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "do not fit the typical definitions for male or female bodies"
LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex; the combination and number of letters varies depending on the country and the organisation, but LGBTI+ is well-recognised. The + sign is added to be inclusive
Lesbian	A woman who is sexually and emotionally attracted to other women. This is used as both a personal and community identity
Mahu	The same as Fa'afafine but in Hawai'i and Tahiti
Non-binary	A person who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders (see Genderfluid)

RAINBOW TICK



Pansexual	A person who is not limited in sexual attraction with regard to biological sex, gender, or gender identity. A pansexual person can be attracted to cisgender, transgender or gender-fluid people
Queer	Once an insult, this word has been reclaimed and is used by many to cover the entire range of human and sexual diversity in the same way Rainbow is
Rainbow	An umbrella term that covers all forms of sexual and gender minorities and avoids the “alphabet soup” problem of LGBTI, and has a less politicised feel than “Queer”. This is typically used to identify a community, not an individual
Sex	The biological characteristics of being female or male (see Gender)
Sexuality	This term describes the direction of one’s sexual attraction to other humans. Homosexuality and Heterosexuality represent two ends of the spectrum rather than the only two possibilities.
Takatāpui	A Māori term that encompasses not only aspects of sexuality but also cultural identity. Originally meaning “an intimate companion of the same sex” it has grown in use and meaning. Takatāpui incorporates both a sense of indigenous identity and communicates sexual orientation and it has also become an umbrella term to build solidarity among sexuality and gender minorities within Māori communities. It is used as both a personal and community identifier
Transgender	This term describes a wide variety of people whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. It is the opposite of cisgender. Some transgender people opt for some form of medical intervention (e.g. surgery, hormones) but many do not. (see Transsexual)
Transphobia	An irrational fear or prejudice against people who change their gender or break social gender rules
Transsexual	This term is less common today than transgender, and is typically used for a person who has had or is in the process of changing their body to conform with their gender identity