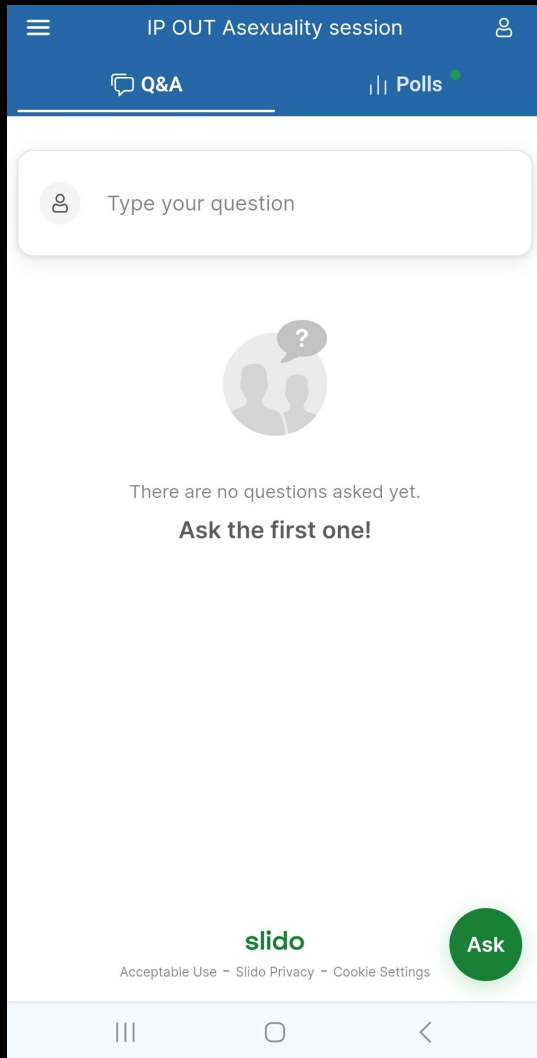




# **Asexuality:** **the Invisible Orientation**

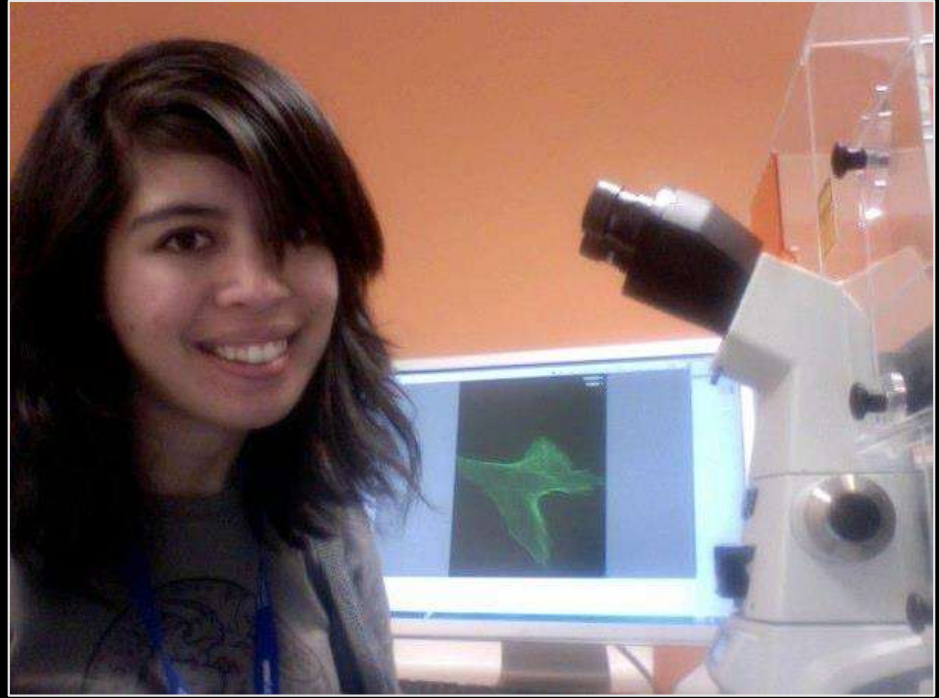
**Sarah Cosgriff (she/they)**





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### #AceInSTEM

Historical and Social Volcanologist. Aceflux panromantic. Enjoy video games, cooking, reading queer fantasy and sci-fi books.

**Jazmin Scarlett**  
(she/her)  
@scarlett\_jazmin  
United Kingdom

International Asexuality Day 2021



### #AceInSTEM

Hi! My name is Joyce and I'm a 5th year PhD student! I study mechanisms of glutamate clearance in the nematode nervous system. I am also an activist focusing on ways to build and strengthen cross-racial solidarity. As director of a mentoring program, I am constantly seeking ways to empower minoritized students, and recognize the different intersections of identity in STEM.

**Joyce Chan**  
(she/they)  
@probably\_joyce  
USA

I identify as ace-aro. In my spare time I love to bird watch and be fascinated by cats!

International Asexuality Day 2021



### #AceInSTEM

Hi! I'm Anna Marie, I'm a demisexual trans lesbian and chemical engineer from CT. My passion is integrating social justice principles and STEM education!

I also host a transfeminist podcast called Rule 63, I collect vinyl records, and I LOVE baking. Let's work together!

**Anna Marie LaChance**  
(she/her)  
@ThatAnnaMarie  
USA

International Asexuality Day 2021



### #AceInSTEM

Hello, I'm Daniel, and I work as an Optical Engineer after studying Physics at university.

I identify as homoromantic asexual and, when I'm not working or doing ace activism, I enjoy gaming, D&D, and cooking... along with far too many other hobbies.

**Daniel**  
(he/him)  
@SliceOfAce  
United Kingdom

International Asexuality Day 2021

Now I'm adding the grey in. Using a pipette means that I have a lot more control



TikTok

@ace.scicomm

Place a card on top.



TikTok

@ace.scicomm



# Asexual:

Someone who experiences little to no sexual attraction





# Asexual:

Someone who experiences little to no sexual attraction and/or sexual desire.





**Asexual**

**Grey-ace**

**Demisexual**



Sex  
repulsed

Sex  
averse

Sex  
neutral

Sex  
favourable





	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers
Ace	5%	2%	1%	-

Stonewall, 2022





	<b>Gen Z</b>	<b>Millennials</b>	<b>Gen X</b>	<b>Baby Boomers</b>
<b>Ace</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Not attracted to either sex</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

Stonewall, 2022





# Aromantic:

Someone who experiences little to no romantic attraction and/or romantic desire.



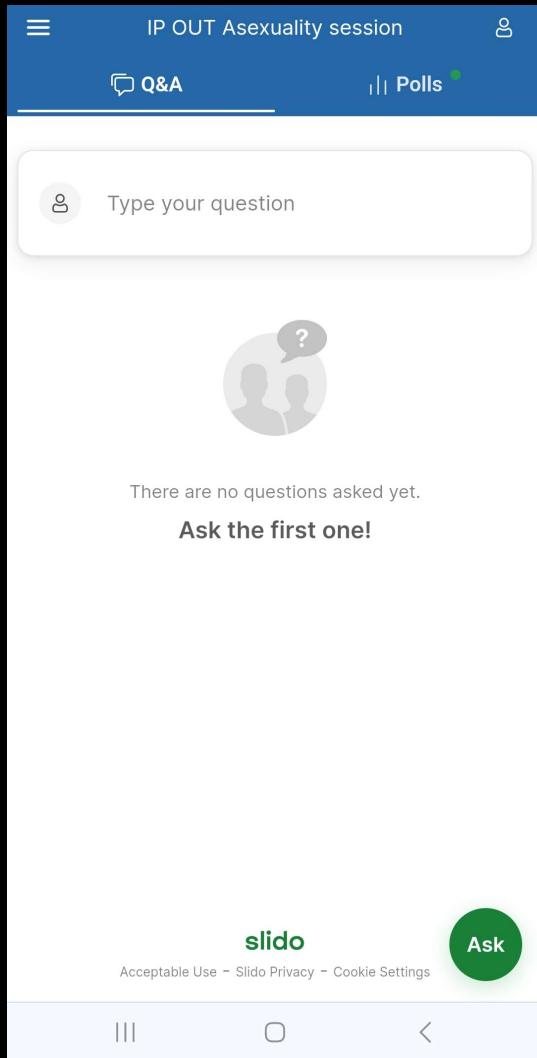


# Split Attraction Model

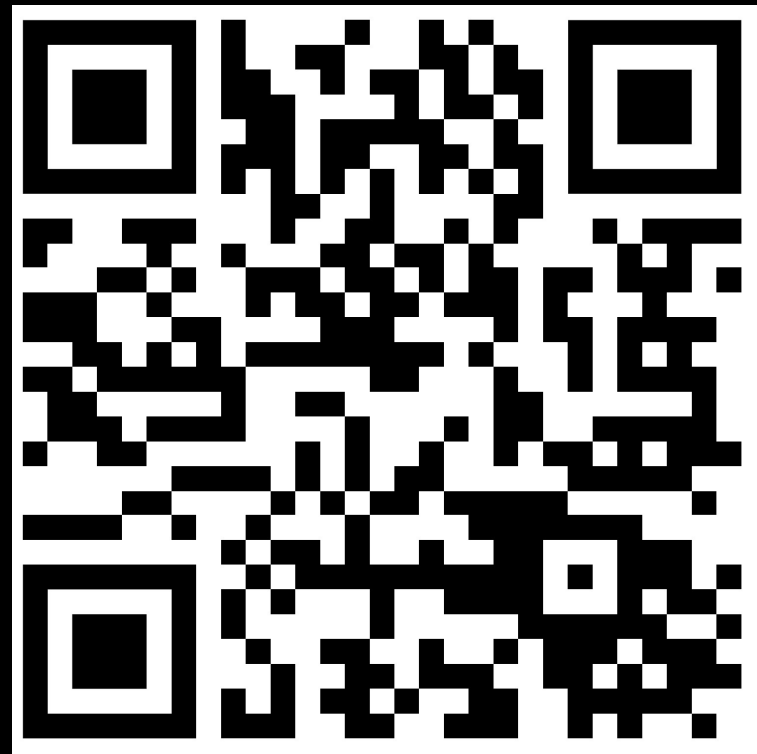
**Romantic  
attraction**

**Sexual  
attraction**





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**#2386862**



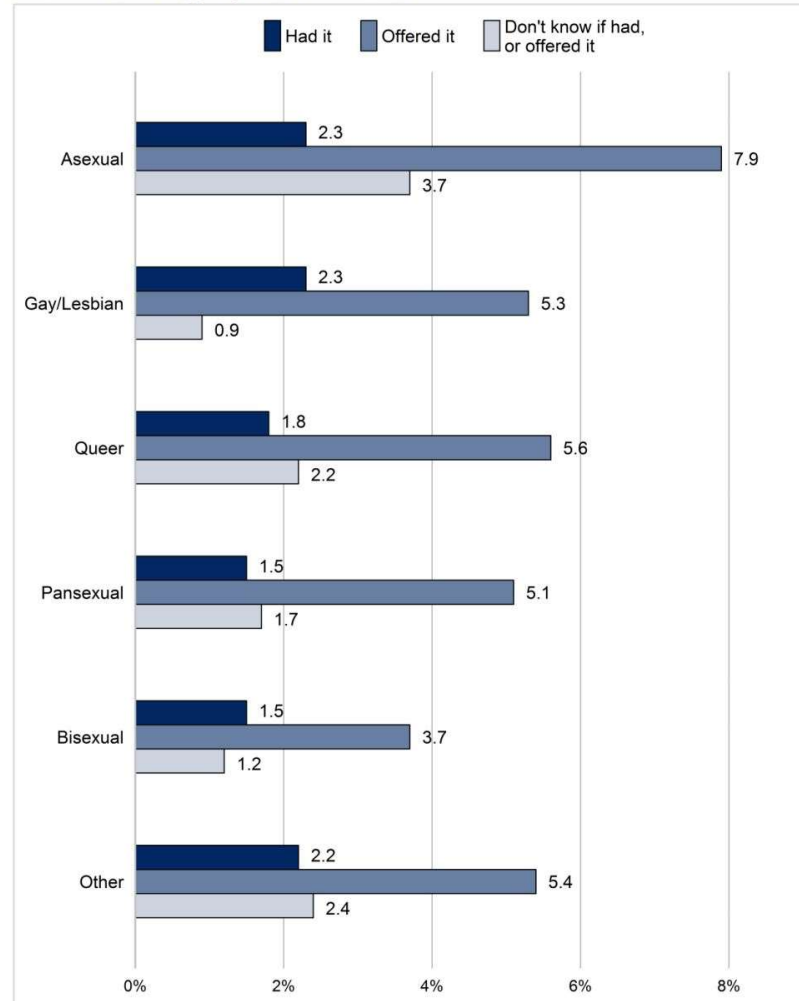
- ♠ Healthcare
- ♠ Workplace
- ♠ Personal life
- ♠ LGBTQ+ community

**Healthcare**

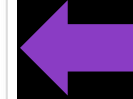


*Credit: IMBD*

**Figure 5.32: Whether cisgender respondents had undergone or been offered conversion therapy, by sexual orientation**



Note: 'Neither had nor offered' not shown; 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' sexual orientations not shown.  
 Base (rounded): 91,370 respondents.  
 Respondents: Cisgender respondents.  
 Excluded: 'Prefer not to say' (Q142-143).  
 See Annex 5 (Q142-143) for data.



National LGBT  
 Survey  
 July 2018

Stonewall

# FACE IN THE UK REPORT

“You’re a twenty-five-year-old woman of course you’re sexually active.”

- Ace in the UK report

# Allonormativity

Allonormativity is the assumption that all human beings are allosexual, i.e. that they experience sexual attraction to other people.

**Table 8.1: How often cisgender respondents had discussed their sexual orientation with healthcare staff in the 12 months preceding the survey, by sexual orientation**

	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Pansexual	Asexual	Queer	Other	Total
All of the time	17.5%	4.5%	5.6%	1.5%	8.3%	6.3%	13.5%
Most of the time	15.1%	5.8%	6.9%	3.0%	11.6%	6.6%	12.2%
Some of the time	31.4%	22.5%	24.3%	21.2%	36.2%	24.1%	28.7%
Never	36.0%	67.2%	63.2%	74.3%	43.8%	63.0%	45.6%
<b>Respondents (rounded)</b>	<b>49,150</b>	<b>17,950</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>72,100</b>

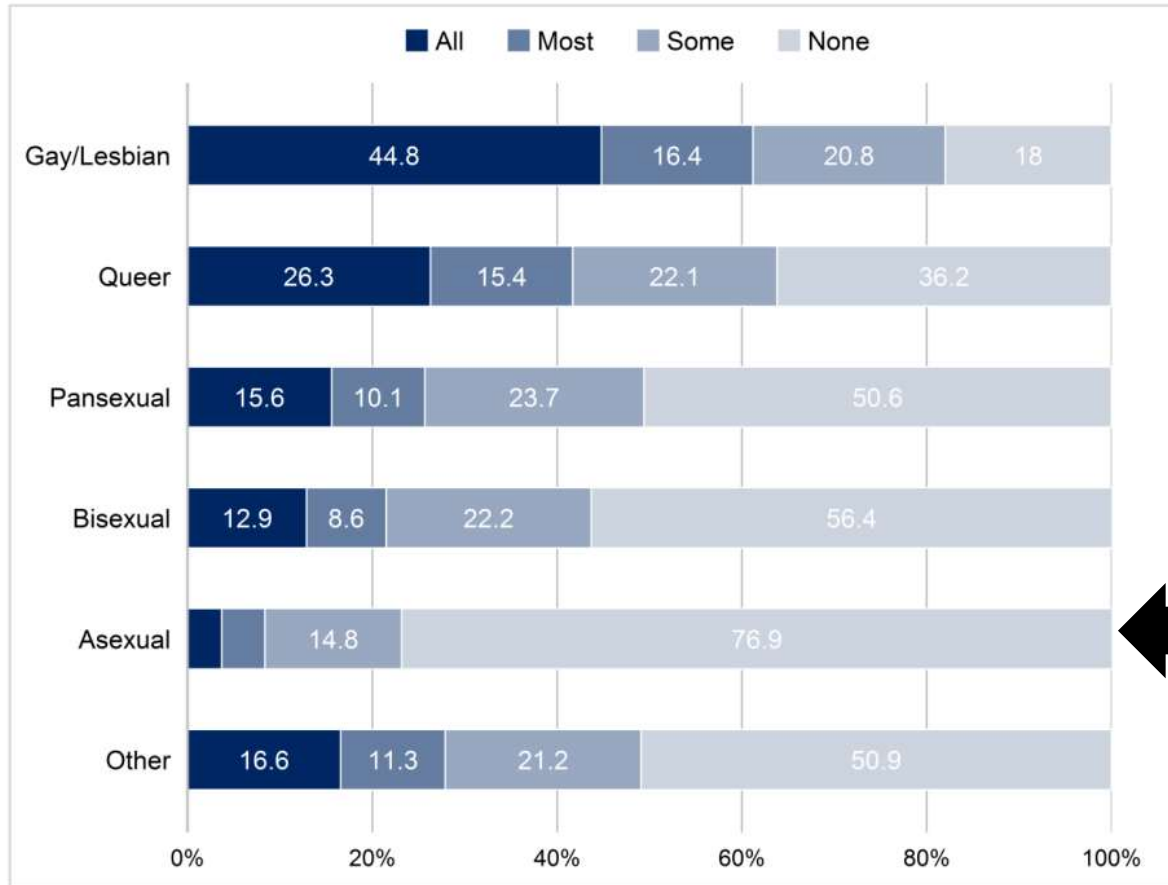
Respondents: Cisgender respondents who had accessed, or tried to access, public healthcare services in the 12 months preceding the survey; 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' sexual orientations not shown.  
 Excluded: 'Prefer not to say' (Q69).  
 See Annex 8 (Q69) for data.

“I’ve seen first hand how harmful it can be when doctors try to **pathologize your illness** when they’ve run out of ideas. I don’t want doctors to pathologize my illness, and I don’t want doctors to medicalize my sexual orientation, but I find that the two often go hand in hand. It’s exhausting.”

– **Courtney Lane**

**Workplace**

**Figure 7.6: How many senior colleagues cisgender respondents had been open with about being LGBT in the 12 months preceding the survey, by sexual orientation**

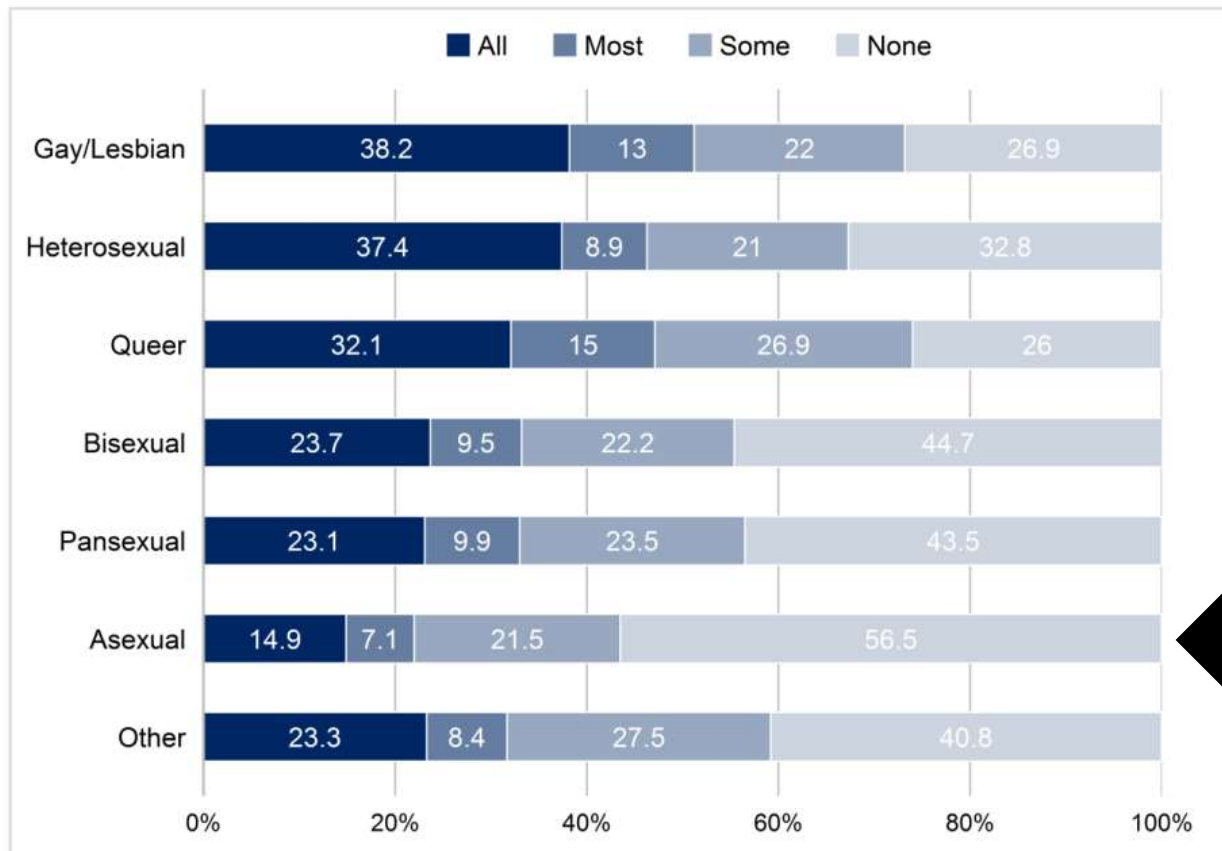


Note: 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' sexual orientations not shown.  
 Base (rounded): 73,480 respondents.  
 Respondents: Cisgender respondents in employment at any time in the 12 months preceding the survey.  
 Excluded: 'Prefer not to say', 'Does not apply to me' (Q51).  
 See Annex 7 (Q51 – Senior colleagues) for data.



National  
 LGBT  
 Survey  
 July 2018

**Figure 7.10: How many senior colleagues trans respondents had been open with about being LGBT in the 12 months preceding the survey, by sexual orientation**



Note: 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' sexual orientations not shown.

Base (rounded): 8,460 respondents.

Respondents: Trans respondents in employment at any time in the 12 months preceding the survey.

Excluded: 'Prefer not to say', 'Does not apply to me' (Q51).

See Annex 7 (Q51 – Senior colleagues) for data.



National  
LGBT  
Survey  
July 2018

“I never feel like they’re trying to make me feel uncomfortable. But in the security industry, I have found crude humour is very prevalent. You know, it’s very sexually based. And so obviously, if you don’t fit into that. It’s difficult because you want to fit in. You don’t want to come across like you think you’re better or you’re stuck up or whatever. But at the same time, you don’t want to be participating in those conversations either.” – Ace in the UK report

“I'm a health sciences student and the number of times I have had to combat the narrative that sex and desire is essential to the human experience is both alarming and exhausting. A lot of health sciences still assumes that sex and romance are essential to life and health. **This has more than a few times made me feel as though my field understands me as being something inhuman.**”

# Sexual orientation

(1) Sexual orientation means a person's sexual orientation towards

(a) persons of the **same sex**,

(b) persons of the **opposite sex**, or

(c) persons of **either sex**.

“For the purpose of this document, sexual orientation refers to the **sexual or romantic attraction** someone feels to people of the **same sex, opposite sex, more than one sex, or to experience no attraction.**”

From the UK Medical Schools Charter on So-Called LGBTQ+ ‘Conversion Therapy’

### 3. Sexual orientation

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? (Please feel free to select more than one if more than one applies to you)

Ace (including asexual, greysexual,  
demisexual)

Bi (including pansexual)

Gay or lesbian

Heterosexual/straight

Prefer not to say

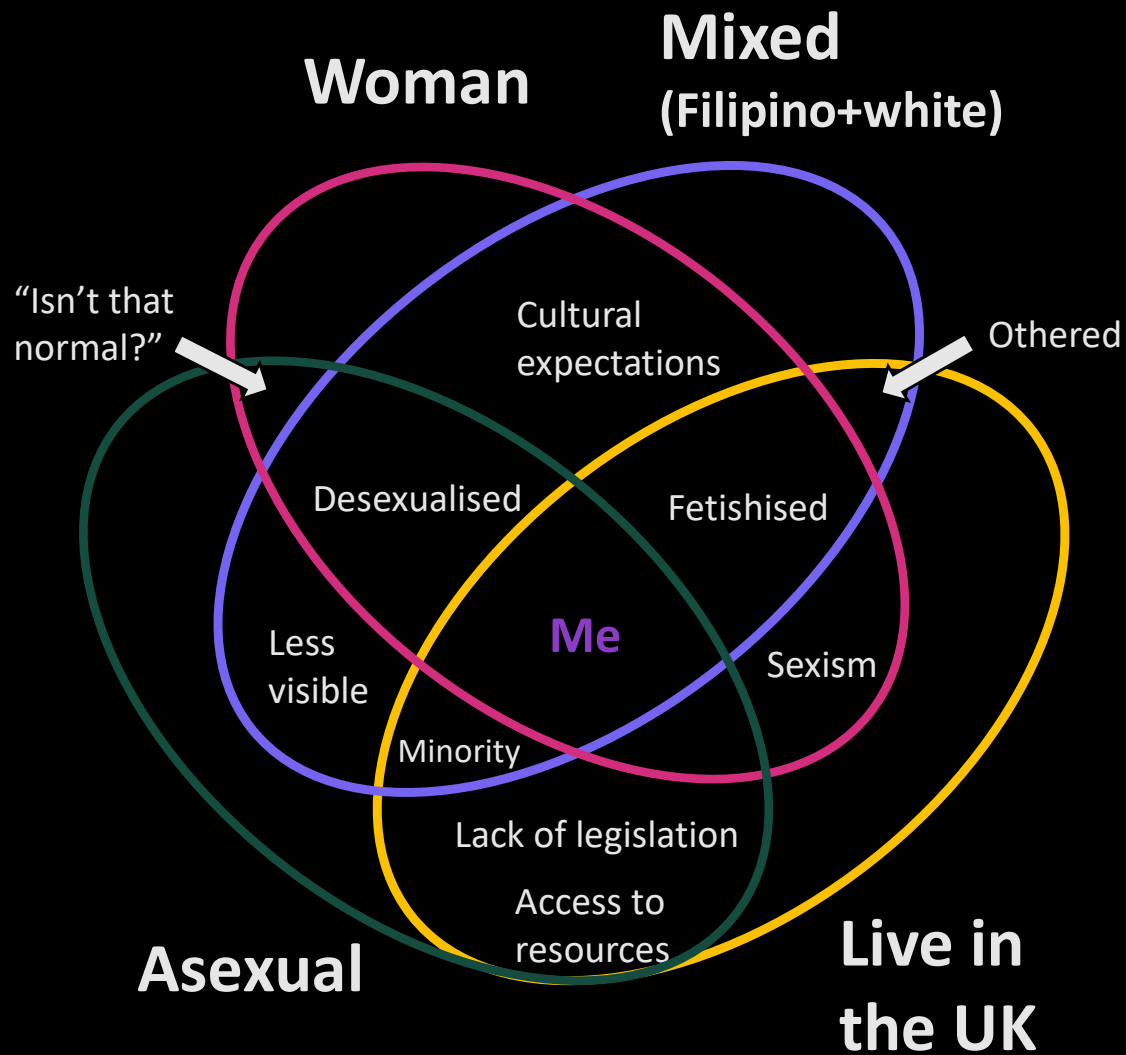
If you describe your sexual orientation with another term, please provide this here:


“I am totally okay being single! **I may not be single forever, but I am for now**, and I’m fine with that! My relationship with the person I refer to as my best friend is really important to me. Please **do not assume** that people are either straight, gay, or bi.”

**Personal life**

It's that conversation every time. If you do mention it, **you have to explain what it is.** And then there's the feeling that sometimes people just don't take it seriously or misinterpret it"

- Aces in the UK Report





“They’re going to **expect to have been dating, to start dating**, because otherwise then I’m not going to be happy.” - Ria



# Allonormativity

Allonormativity is the assumption that all human beings are allosexual, i.e. that they experience sexual attraction to other people.

## Allonormativity

Allonormativity is the assumption that all human beings are allosexual, i.e. that they experience sexual attraction to other people.

## Amatonormativity

Amatonormativity is the assumption that all human beings pursue love or romance, especially by means of a monogamous long-term relationship.  
(coined by Elizabeth Brake)



“I’m mixed eastern Asian and white, and while my heritage is important to me, sexuality is the one part of my life where I try to hide it behind my allegedly ethnically ambiguous appearance in order to **avoid dealing with racial fetishisation.**”

- 鬼





“From my experience, when people see a Black guy who’s asexual they are shocked because often **[Black men] get stereotyped as being hyper-sexualised.**” – Marshall Blount





“**Anti-Black hypersexual myths** are so endemic to our social structures that even non-Black asexuals still cannot manage to sever this connection in their minds. Their asexuality does not absolve them of their complicity **in the fetishization and dehumanization of Black people.**”

– Sherronda J Brown




**Within the LGBTQ+  
community**



One student was told, “Ace people aren’t the same as us. You are just straight people trying to be special. I know you have your issues, but they’re not the same as gay people’s issues so you don’t belong here.”

- Ace in the UK report






Not having sexual thoughts about people in general

Can't relate to descriptions of sexual attraction

Not interested in having sex

People think you're repressed






Different genders  
seem equally  
attractive

Not understanding why  
girls are fawning over  
boys in a magazine

Choosing  
someone you  
think is good  
looking

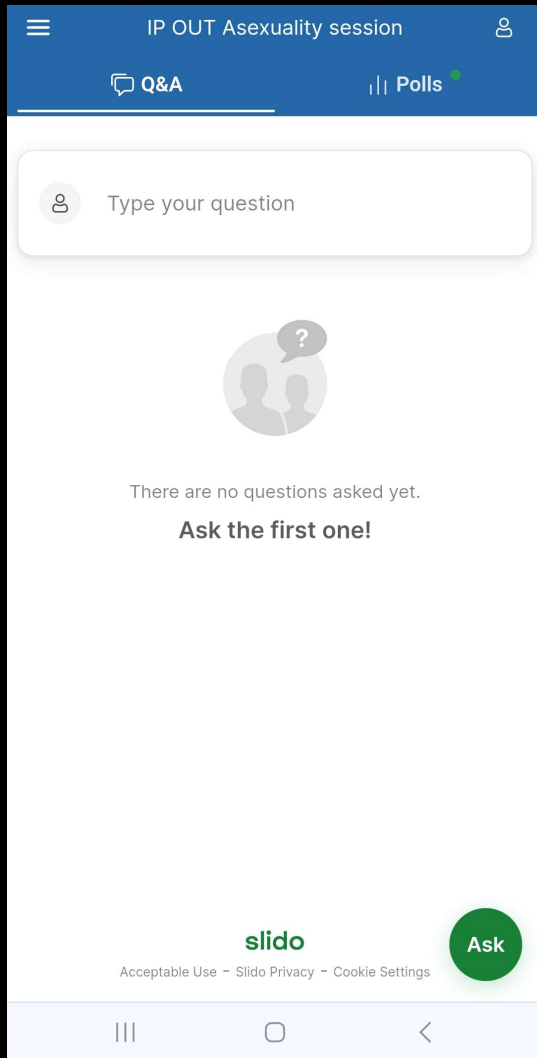
People not  
believing you  
when you come  
out to them

Feeling like  
something is  
wrong with  
you

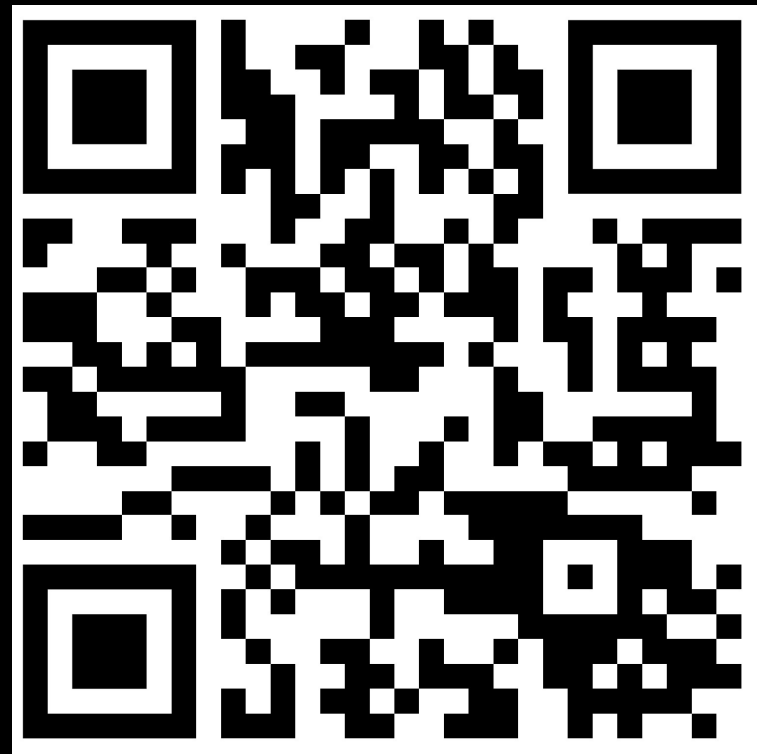


- ♠ Healthcare
- ♠ Workplace
- ♠ Personal life
- ♠ LGBTQ+ community

“....**mentioning asexuality in casual conversation** not directly related to me so that anyone that hasn't heard the word, can learn a bit about it and be familiar with the word. **This would allow for a coming out without having to define asexuality or field invasive questions about sex.**”



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