

Why Allyship Matters, by Lucy Cureton

I have always considered myself an ally and a part of the LGBTQ+ community, and I have been an official University LGBT+ Ally for several years after taking part in the necessary training. It is important to me that my allyship is visible at work, so I display the LGBTQ+ Allies logo and my preferred pronouns in my email signature, in the hope that these small gestures make others feel comfortable and safe around me. I also wear the Pride progress flag lanyard to which I've attached badges with my pronouns, and positive, inclusive messages about love.

The LGBTQ+ community - in particular the trans community - face challenges, abuse and prejudice every day. I believe that people of all genders and sexualities should feel free to be themselves wherever they are, and I hope that I am part of making this a possibility.

Something I often say is: 'I've got my EDI hat on!' I wear this metaphorical rainbow hat inside and outside of work, and part of this includes speaking up when I hear every day microaggressions and throwaway comments, or words that have now fallen out of favour. This can be difficult, but you don't need to be an official ally to do this! We should all encourage the workplace to be an environment where we can speak up when we hear a comment that makes us uncomfortable, or that is incorrect.

As long as there is inequality, we need allies, and I'm proud to be able to speak up for what is right.