



# BlocHaus LGBTQ+ inclusion guide.

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statement of commitment:

**fostering a diverse & inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ climbers is a key value at BlocHaus. we aim to provide an environment that is welcoming to all people regardless of their gender identity or sexuality & to create a space where LGBTQ+ folk can be themselves & feel supported to learn new skills, participate in climbing activities & find a sense of belonging in the community.**

**“BlocHaus at its heart is about making bouldering accessible & fun for everyone. It’s important for us to do what we can to break down barriers to participating & to create safe spaces for our diverse community. We’re proud to be an LGBTQIA+ ally & know there is always more to learn to work towards real inclusion.”**

Ollie Ryrie, Manager BlocHaus Port Melbourne



created in partnership  
with ClimbingQTs.

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## who is this guide for?

this handbook is for anyone who is part of the BlocHaus community, including:

- BlocHaus staff, members & volunteers
- Internal & external stakeholders including coaches, routesetters & officials
- All individuals representing BH within & beyond the facilities
- Families (where families are included within policies/benefits)

BlocHaus believes in ensuring an equitable & inclusive experience for all individuals in the climbing & outdoors community. This means creating an environment & culture where climbers, coaches, spectators & anyone else in the business of climbing feel welcome, valued & recognised.



# inclusive language.

language plays a key role in our inclusion strategy & how we speak, what we write, share & how we treat one another is a critical part of this puzzle — here are some things you may wish to consider.

## avoid stereotypes.

While it's very natural to make assumptions, sometimes these thoughts can lead to harmful & exclusionary behaviours. In climbing this might mean not making the assumption that a femme person doesn't have upper body strength or that a more masculine person can't be flexible. It might mean avoiding phrases such as 'that's such a girly climb' or referring to a steep wall as the 'man cave'. This sort of language can inadvertently lead to harmful & sexist ideas of what the individuals in our community believe they are capable of achieving.

## use person centred & gender neutral language.

Where possible we encourage you to use gender neutral language to ensure your communication is inclusive & welcoming. Why should you use gender neutral language? Gendered language goes beyond pronouns & prefixes. Many gendered terms have a sexist & patriarchal history which in the context of your audience & community is worth being aware of. That's not to say you should stop using terms like girlfriend or brother, but it's worth considering a gender neutral approach when referring to people you don't know. Using gender neutral terms creates safe & inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ people to share their rainbow relationships & in turn be their true selves in the gym & at the crag.

## respect pronouns.

If you aren't able to ask a person which pronouns they use, it's appropriate to use the all gender option of they/them/theirs to refer to someone in third person. However if you've been using gendered language for a long time it can be difficult to make the adjustment. If you do make a mistake, the best thing to do is acknowledge the mistake & move on & definitely don't make a big deal of it.

## learn more.

Inclusive Language & Events Guide & A Guide to Being an LGBTQ+ Ally [syd.blochaus.com.au/community](https://syd.blochaus.com.au/community)

## dress code.

Staff & members (including athletes & casual participants) of the BlocHaus community may dress according to their affirmed gender & attire that suits them. While climbing we recommend you wear anything comfortable, however jewellery is discouraged for injury prevention. Please speak with staff for guidance if you are unsure & your accessory is important to your gender presentation.

## facilities.

All facilities including change room, bathroom, shower & toilet facilities may be used by any person according to their affirmed gender. All gender facilities are available on site.

## gender affirmation.

Here at BlocHaus, we understand that gender identity is about the individual & how they choose to self-identify & how they show it to others. In line with our commitment to inclusion & to support our trans & gender diverse community anyone who chooses to affirm their gender while part of the BlocHaus community may request a 'compassionate pause' on their membership for as long as they require, at any time throughout the year & as many times as requested. This is to support individuals choosing to affirm their gender who may need to take time off from climbing for mental & physical health benefits.

## inclusion guidelines & policy.

To increase participation, visibility & support the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in climbing, we must embed organisational change & a zero tolerance specifically addressing homophobia, biphobia, transphobia & interphobia within our sport.

## definition of homophobia/biphobia/interphobia/transphobia.

Unreasonable fear or hostility, prejudice & discrimination against people who are gay or lesbian/bisexual/intersex/transgender or gender diverse.

## BlocHaus commits to upholding the following statements:

- Participation in any BlocHaus activity whether that's casual bouldering, training, workshops, professional work or competition climbing is based on a person's affirmed gender identity & not the sex they were assigned at birth.
- Participation in She Boulders programs is based on the person's affirmed gender identity & does not require the individual to use she/her pronouns.
- Personal information is only collected by lawful & fair means & from the individual concerned.

## zero tolerance.

BlocHaus has zero tolerance regarding any form of harassment, bullying or discrimination (direct & indirect) based on sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. This includes but is not limited to:

- Physical attacks & theft of belongings
- Verbal abuse including homophobic language, intentionally misgendering or dead-naming
- Cyberbullying such as harassing emails, phone calls or online messages
- Social exclusion, alienation or spreading rumours
- Intentionally breaching privacy by threatening to 'out' someone

## special measures.

In some cases special measures may be put into place where one group may be treated differently or in favour over another based on gender identity, sex or sexuality. Special measures are only appropriate if to support a positive outcome. Current special measures in place at BlocHaus include:

- **She Boulders:** a national BlocHaus program that aspires to uplift & support participation of any climber who identifies as a woman inclusive of trans, non-binary & gender non-conforming womxn.
- **ClimbingQTs:** BlocHaus may host events or facilitate programs in partnership with ClimbingQTs to support the inclusion of LGBTQ+ climbers. This may include discounted fees to support financial access, providing venue support & other special initiatives.

We say **no** to homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, interphobia & any other form of sexist, racist or ableist bullying, harassment or discrimination.

We say **yes** to having fun, positive affirmations, encouraging cheers, crushing projects, respectful behaviour & sharing beta!

## where to find support & more information.

if you have been the target of homophobic/transphobic/biphobic/interphobic specific bullying, harassment &/or vilification we encourage you to get in touch with a BlocHaus LGBTQ+ inclusion champion or with ClimbingQTs directly to make a report & discuss:

**Nikki Phillips (she/her)**  
BlocHaus LGBTQ+ Inclusion Champion (VIC):  
[nikki@blochaus.com.au](mailto:nikki@blochaus.com.au)

**Kim Phan (they/them)**  
BlocHaus LGBTQ+ Inclusion Champion (NSW):  
[kim@blochaus.com.au](mailto:kim@blochaus.com.au)

**Riley Edwards (they/them)**  
external support:  
[riley@climbingQTs.com](mailto:riley@climbingQTs.com)

Always consider your personal safety if you choose to respond to an incident or the individual causing harm. If you would like to make a report you may consider:

- Documenting evidence to support your report/complaint.
- If time critical, speaking directly with a BlocHaus staff member on site (all staff have participated in LGBTQ+ Ally Training).
- Speaking with a BlocHaus LGBTQ+ Inclusion Champion or ClimbingQTs directly.
- If you are uncomfortable raising concerns on your own, we recommend bringing a support person along to conversations with both BlocHaus & ClimbingQTs.
- We also encourage you to get in touch with our LGBTQ+ subject matter experts, ClimbingQTs independently for support during any part of the process.

All information provided will be kept confidential unless it has been identified that a person or group may be in immediate danger or harm, in which case an external group may become involved with the handling of the report/complaint.

Head to [mlb.blochaus.com.au/community/](http://mlb.blochaus.com.au/community/) to find out more.

### definition.

**Homophobia / biphobia / interphobia / transphobia:**  
Unreasonable fear or hostility, prejudice & discrimination against people who are gay or lesbian / bisexual / intersex / transgender or gender diverse.

### example 1 — discrimination (direct).

A cis woman explicitly refuses to climb with another woman because she personally believe that trans women aren't 'real' women & that her presence at the She Boulders sessions makes her feel uncomfortable.

**Suggested sanction:** Dismissal of the offending customer for the remainder of the She Boulders session & follow up statement clarifying BlocHaus' stance on trans & gender diverse inclusion. Based on the response to the conversation, a warning or suspension may be necessary. A check-in with the woman who was discriminated against, providing additional support options.

### example 2 — discrimination (indirect).

A gym facility asks new members to disclose gender when signing up but does provide options beyond the binary of 'male' & 'female'.

**Suggested sanction:** Gym facility to update their registration system to either not ask for gender as part of sign up or provide further options to support trans & gender diverse identities.

### example 3 — harassment.

A non-binary climber attempts to enter the all-gender/accessible bathroom facility & is stopped by another climber who says, 'these facilities are reserved for climbers with disability & you should use those bathrooms' & points to the male & female signage. The non-binary climbers politely asks them to mind their own business & proceeds to use the facility of their choice but is continuously harassed by the offending climbers until they are forced to use another bathroom.

**Suggested sanction:** Gym to offer support options for the non-binary climber & clarify their stance on trans & gender diverse inclusion with the offending climber. Advice also that not all disabilities are visible & that the gym supports customers to use facilities based on their affirmed gender. Considering the harassment was not out of malice, but due to a lack of awareness, the gym may provide further resources & a copy of their policy.

### example 4 — bullying.

A climber finds out someone in their group is gay & has a boyfriend. When no one else is around the bully makes homophobic comments & gestures towards them, making them feel uncomfortable & unsafe in the climbing gym.

**Suggested sanction:** Following a report to the climbing gym, the person subject to the bullying may choose to seek external support, advice from the climbing gym or make a formal complaint. The climbing gym should address the behaviour with the bully & affirm their zero tolerance policy for homophobic behaviour & either issue a warning or follow up with suspension.

## external support & counselling.

climbingQTs inc: [climbingQTs@gmail.com](mailto:climbingQTs@gmail.com)  
[climbingQTs.com](http://climbingQTs.com)

Twenty10:  
(NSW Partner of QLife Australia) [twenty10.org.au](http://twenty10.org.au)  
1800 184 527  
(3pm—midnight, everyday)

switchboard Victoria:  
(VIC Partner of QLife Australia) [switchboard.org.au](http://switchboard.org.au)  
1800 184 527  
(3pm—midnight, everyday)

## resources for LGBTQ+ & allies:

LGBTQ+ Ally Guide for Climbers.

Coming Out Guide for Climbers.

Trans 101 by YGender & Minus18.

Intersex Human Rights Organisation.

LGBTQ+ Human Rights.



thanks for reading.

