

Come out as an Ally!



What is a Straight Ally?

To put it simply, being an Ally means you have made a statement that you believe in equality for LGBT+ people, that you are comfortable for LGBT+ colleagues to come out to you, and that you are interested to learn more about the challenges faced by the LGBT+ community.

What does being an Ally involve?

Whilst some Allies are more active than others, being an Ally can mean:

- Challenging homophobic behaviour. This type of negative workplace culture affects everyone in an organisation, especially when disguised as 'banter'
- Becoming a member or friend of the Respect network
- Holding colleagues to account on what they are doing to advance gay equality at work, this is one of the most effective tools that straight Allies have
- Attending or supporting LGBT+ focussed events
- Asking questions when you're not sure. Just ask gay colleagues, the Respect network or friends for advice
- Keeping up to date with LGBT+ issues
- Being yourself. For inspiration on how to be an effective Ally you need only reflect on your own personal values. Ask yourself, and your colleagues, how would you like to be treated at work?

Ally FAQ



What difference would my support actually make?

Apart from helping to raise awareness of LGBT+ issues and encouraging an open and inclusive workplace where colleagues can bring their whole self to work, being an Ally can also help you to feel empowered.

Stats show that having a wide reaching Ally presence helps combat discrimination and improves wellbeing. You may feel you are only one voice, but together we can combat a whole range of issues, not just LGBT+ rights and ensure a positive culture for us all.

What if I don't have time to be an Ally?

The term 'Ally' can encompass a whole spectrum of support, just because you are not shouting about LGBT+ rights from the rooftops doesn't mean you are not an Ally.

Your activity doesn't have to be time consuming but could include letting colleagues know when their language isn't quite right, making sure all projects are fully inclusive, or for more ways to get involved with the Respect network email respectlgbt@coop.co.uk.

What if people think I'm gay?

The initial response should be 'so what?', however if this is something you are genuinely worried about you can calmly explain that being an Ally means you are standing up for equality and want to make the workplace and the world, a better place for all.

I want to show my support as an Ally - what do I do now?

You can sign up and become a member of Respect, follow us on Twitter [@CoopRespectLGBT](https://twitter.com/CoopRespectLGBT). You can also read up on current LGBT+ issues, come to some events or for more information www.stonewall.org.uk is a great resource.

If you have any further questions or want to become a member please email the Respect Network respectLGBT@coop.co.uk

Tweet: [@cooprespectlgbt](https://twitter.com/cooprespectlgbt)