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# Guide to Inclusive Terminology

When it comes to the written word, the days have gone when it was customary to say, **“The masculine form shall include the feminine”**. It is important to understand that the concept of language and how it is used evolves continually. When we are talking about people (or to them), inclusive language makes the process of writing more democratic by assigning a neutral role to gender.

For one thing, gender-neutral writing, which is used in both English and French, seeks to “de gender” certain commonly used terms and formulations. For example, we can opt to speak about the teaching staff or faculty members at a university, rather than about male or female professors.

Inclusive writing assigns the same importance to the female and male genders. In French, the raised punctuation mark known in English as the “interpunct” (·), also called the “mid-dot” or “median-period”, is now recognized by the Government of Canada and is the most commonly used system. Nowadays, the tendency in French-speaking Canada is to write “professeur-es” (the combined form of professeurs + professeures).

In recent years, growing numbers of individuals and organizations have elected to write inclusively. This initiative is typically embraced by people and companies attuned to the importance of giving voice to gender minorities and making more room for diversity.

Familiarizing ourselves with gender-neutral terminology and more inclusive ways of writing is a step in the right direction towards greater equity. Guides, in both English and French, created by feminist, 2SLGBTQIA+ and allied associations, as well as by the Government of Canada, are available free of charge online.

**Be part of the solution and take the time to read over the guide to inclusive terminology!**

To achieve gender plurality in less formal day-to-day writing, whether in the artistic sphere or otherwise, other formulas, punctuation marks and linguistic processes are available.

1. Government of Canada (in English), <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2022/10/check-guidelines-inclusive-writing.html>  
Government of Canada (in French), <https://www.canada.ca/fr/ministere-defense-nationale/feuille-derable/defense/2022/10/consultez-lignes-directrice-ecriture-inclusive.html>

#### References:

*Guide de rédaction épiciène* (in French only), available online here: <https://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/3656970>

In English: <https://egale.ca/awareness/affirming-and-inclusive-language/>

In French: <https://tcmfm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Aide-Memoire-1.pdf>



#### GLOSSARY<sup>2</sup>

2SLGBTQIA+ is an acronym designating individuals who self-define as two-spirit (2S), lesbian (L), gay (G), bisexual (B), trans (T), queer or questioning (Q), intersex (I), asexual or androgynous (A) and/or as members of other communities (+).