

## Questions on Sexual Orientation (Interim Guidance)

Terminology to describe sexual orientation can vary and the question should be posed in a way that recognises not everyone within the LGBTQIA+ community identifies in the same way.

The preferred way to present this question is to ask the following, with a free response box;

What is your sexual orientation? \_\_\_\_\_

However, we recognise that this is not always possible. If sufficient written justification is provided, then the following categories are currently suggested:

What is your sexual orientation?

Bi  
Gay Man  
Gay Woman / Lesbian  
Heterosexual / Straight  
Prefer to self-describe: \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to say

These should be listed in alphabetical order so as not to imply a value judgement.

**PREFER NOT TO SAY:** People should be given the option to not identify their sexual orientation. This option should be used consistently across all diversity questions, not just questions on sexual orientation and gender identity.

**PREFER TO SELF DESCRIBE:** Providing a free-text space enables a person to accurately express how they identify. Providing this space is important so that no-one feels silenced on the basis that their sexual orientation does not fit into a prefixed category.

This is interim guidance, and will be updated once this topic has been fully discussed by the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Self Evaluation Committee. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the UREC/EDI Forum Liaison Dr Kirsten McKenzie on [kmckenzie@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:kmckenzie@lincoln.ac.uk)

## Questions on Race/Ethnicity (Interim Guidance)

If asking questions about Race and Ethnicity is necessary for your research, it is important to ensure that this is done sensitively and correctly. Ethnicity is not just a person's race – it is about tradition, learned behaviour and customs, and celebrating the traditions and ideas that are part of a specific geographical region.

It is also important to remember that while Race and Ethnicity are not the same thing, the two terms are often used interchangeably, and many people who participate in research may not understand the distinction.

Therefore, we recommend that you ask the following, with a free response box;

Please indicate your ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

If this is not possible, and there is sufficient written justification for doing so, then the following categories are suggested for categorical data collection in England or the wider UK;

### Ask for ethnic groups in 2 steps

First, ask participants to indicate their broader ethnic group, then direct them to a second question whereby they can choose a more specific ethnic background.

It is important that you ensure that these questions are optional, and that respondents are able to specify another ethnic group from those already provided. You should also ensure that specific categories are listed in alphabetical order so as not to imply a value judgement.

**Step 1: What is your ethnic group?**

Asian or Asian British

(Includes any Asian background, for example, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani)

Black, African, Black British or Caribbean

(Includes any Black background)

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups

(Includes any Mixed background)

White

(Includes any White background)

Another ethnic group

(Includes any other ethnic group, for example, Arab)

or

Prefer not to say

**Step 2:**

**Which one best describes your Asian or Asian British background?**

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Indian

Pakistani

Another Asian background: \_\_\_\_\_

Unknown

or

Prefer not to say

**Which one best describes your Black, African, Black British or Caribbean background?**

African

Caribbean

Another Black background

Unknown

or

Prefer not to say

**Please describe your Mixed or Multiple ethnic group background.**

\_\_\_\_\_

Unknown

or

Prefer not to say

**Which one best describes your White background?**

English, Northern Irish, Scottish, or Welsh

Irish

Irish Traveller or Gypsy  
Another White background: \_\_\_\_\_  
Unknown  
or  
Prefer not to say

**Please describe your ethnic background.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Unknown  
or  
Prefer not to say

We are aware that the use of these categories is not necessarily best practice; this is interim guidance based upon UK government guidelines, and it will be updated once this topic has been fully discussed by the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the UREC/EDI Forum Liaison Dr Kirsten McKenzie on [kmckenzie@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:kmckenzie@lincoln.ac.uk).

The following are currently suggested for US data collection;

American Indian or Alaska Native  
Asian or Asian American  
Black or African American  
Hispanic or Latino  
Multi-ethnic  
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander  
White  
Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to say

For data collection in other regions, please consult the UREC/EDI Forum Liaison Dr Kirsten McKenzie on [kmckenzie@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:kmckenzie@lincoln.ac.uk) for current guidance.