



Data Collection Documentation

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Document Details

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Version	Name	Representing	Signature
1.0	Carrie Graham	Scottish Government	
	Raymond Buckley	Scottish Government	

Signed approval forms are held by the **ScotXed** Programme Office.

Location

File Name	Last Updated

Notation

Additions to the document since its last release are shown in green and in italics *like this*.

Deletions to the document since its last release are shown in red and using strikethrough ~~like this~~.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

It is the responsibility of the LASWS (Children & Families) Group to ensure that these Guidance Notes are updated in accordance with amendments to the data specification. These notes have been prepared by SG to assist local authority and MIS developer support staff who provide advice and detailed guidance to staff in local authorities. They provide information on the requirements for and uses to be made of data. Support staff involved in using MIS should find these notes helpful and are free to adapt them and make them more relevant to users of a particular MIS.

The document complements the data specification documents, and the XML Schema prepared by the ScotXed project team. The documents can be downloaded from the ScotXed website at www.scotxed.net

Precise details of the format of items such as dates are part of the XML schema. Software developers will ensure that values held in the MIS are converted to the format specified in the appropriate schema.

Local authorities should ensure that all data on looked after children, and those eligible to aftercare support, held in local authority MIS is maintained up-to-date and accurate. Good practice suggests that this can often be managed best by procedures and planning which spread the workload throughout the year. This can lead to advantages dealing with the survey returns in November of each year.

1.2 Related Documents

The document “Data Specification: Looked After Children” defines the format, potential values and number of occurrences of each data item in the collection.

2. Inclusion Criteria

All children who has had an open looked after episode within the collection period, every episode which was open at some point in the collection period, every placement that took place during these episodes and every legal reason for which a child was being looked after during these episodes.

Children are looked after by local authorities when they are:

- a) provided with accommodation under section 25, or
- b) subject to a supervision requirement from a Children’s Hearing, or
- c) subject to an order, authorisation or warrant according to which they have responsibilities under Chapter 2, 3 or 4 of Part II of the Act. This may include a child protection order, a child assessment order, an authorisation from a justice of the peace to a place of safety, removal to a place of safety by a police constable, warrants to keep a child in a place of safety made by a Children’s Hearing or Sheriff and a parental responsibilities order which gives the local authority responsibilities towards the child.

Section 2 of the return should include children who come into any of the three categories during 2016-17. However, it should **not** include any children who **have only** been provided with accommodation under section 25 for the purposes of respite only.

Notes on Requirements and Completion

2.1 Child Data Items

Where information is required from children, parents or guardians (e.g. ethnic group), Local Authorities may wish to obtain information from children themselves from age 12 years and upwards.

Ref	Field Name	Requirement	Notes on Completion
1	Local Authority	Included as a check as to the Local Authority responsible for looking after the child.	This item must be provided by all local authorities.
2	Child Identifier	The Child Identifier is the key unique identifier of children within local authority (LA) management information systems (MIS). Child Identifier will be used for additional data management and quality assurance purposes, together with allowing linking looked after children datasets together for longitudinal statistical analysis purposes only.	This must be provided for all children. The Child Identifier is generated by MIS software when children are first registered onto the local MIS system.

3	Scottish Candidate Number	The SCN is the key unique identifier of pupils within the Scottish education system. The SCN will be used for data management and quality assurance purposes, together with linking to other ScotXed datasets for statistical analysis purposes only.	<p>This should be provided for all pupils who have been allocated an SCN number (which is all children attending a publicly funded primary, secondary or special schools or any child who has been entered for SQA examinations and who are not being educated in a publicly funded school).</p> <p>When submitting your return, please provide an explanation within ProcXed for any child who has not been reported as having a SCN as to why this is the case (e.g. child being educated outwith Scotland).</p>
4	Date of Birth	This variable will be very useful for quality assuring data, in particular the age of children being looked after. It would also be used for age analysis of looked after children data.	The date of birth must be provided.
5	Gender	Used for gender analysis of looked after children data that will help local authorities equality monitor the effectiveness of strategies aimed at these children.	A value of M or F must be provided.

6	Ethnic Group	<p>To allow analysis of looked after children data by ethnic group.</p> <p>The Scottish Government has a clear commitment to equal opportunities under the Scotland Act 1998. The Equality Act 2010 puts a general statutory duty on public bodies, including the Scottish Government, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and to promote equality and good race relations. For this reason, it is important that the Scottish Government is able to monitor the impact of its social work service to ensure that it meets the needs of all children and that no one group is at a disadvantage.</p> <p>This information will enable a national picture to be built of the ethnic background of looked after children, and this in turn will inform policy development and help the Scottish Government to address identified needs and to deploy resources usefully.</p>	<p>This must be provided for all children.</p> <p>It is suggested that for pupils up to and including those aged 11, parents or guardians are asked to declare the ethnic background of children. Children aged 12 or above may declare their own ethnic background.</p> <p>The purpose in this item is to record the ethnic background of individuals, not nationality. For example, those of Asian background are to be reported as under the Ethnic Group “Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British”. This ignores whether the person was born in Scotland or not.</p> <p>In cases where an individual does not wish their ethnic background to be recorded please use code 97 – Not Disclosed. This code should only be used in cases where this selection has been made by the appropriate individual.</p> <p>In all other cases where no return has been made by the appropriate individual, please use code 99 – Not Known.</p> <p>All local authorities are asked to make reasonable efforts to ensure that ethnic background data are available for all children.</p> <p>See Annex E for Definitions.</p>
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7	Disability	<p>To allow analysis of looked after children data by whether a child has a disability.</p> <p>The Scottish Government has a clear commitment to equal opportunities under the Scotland Act 1998. The Equality Act 2010 puts a general statutory duty on public bodies, including the Scottish Government, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and to promote equality and good relations towards disabled persons. For this reason, it is important that the Scottish Government is able to monitor the impact of its social work service to ensure that it meets the needs of all children and that no one group is at a disadvantage.</p> <p>This information will develop information on the additional support needs of looked after children with disabilities which will, in turn, allow policies to be developed which support identified needs.</p>	<p>To be returned for all children.</p> <p>A person is disabled if the child/young person have a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities</p> <p>Only include those children who have been assessed as disabled by a social worker irrespective of whether the child or parent has declared them as disabled.</p> <p>See Annex A for definitions.</p>
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2.2 Episode Data Items

Ref	Field Name	Requirement	Notes on Completion
8	Local Authority	Included as a check as to the Local Authority responsible for looking after the child.	This item must be provided by all local authorities.
9	Child Identifier	The Child Identifier is the key unique identifier of children within local authority (LA) management information systems (MIS). Child Identifier will be used for additional data management and quality assurance purposes, together with allowing linking looked after children datasets together for longitudinal statistical analysis purposes only.	This must be provided for all episodes. The Child Identifier is generated by MIS software when children are first registered onto the local MIS system.
10	Episode Start Date	This shows the first day of each episode a child was being looked after by the local authority. A child could have started being looked after on one or more occasions during the year. This date must be a date on or before 31 July 2017.	This item must be provided for all episodes.
11	Episode End Date	This shows the last day of each episode a child was being looked after by the local authority. A child could have stopped being looked after on one or more occasions during the year. This should be left blank if the child is still being looked after at 23:59 on 31 July 2017.	This item must be provided for all episodes that have ended during the reporting year.
12	Has Care Plan Indicator	This shows whether a child had a current care plan recorded on the documentation recognised by your local authority as the “care plan” for looked after children. A care plan defined as current is one which was developed or revised within the last 12 months.	This item must be provided for all episodes, including those that have ended.
13	Destination accommodation	This shows the first destination on discharge for all episodes that have ended during the reporting year. This should be left blank if the episode had not ended by 23:59 on 31 July 2017.	This item must be provided for all episodes that have ended during the reporting year. See Annex B for definitions.

14	Reached school leaving age at episode end	<p>This shows whether the child had reached their minimum school leaving age (i.e. were eligible to leave school) at the point their episode of being looked after ended.</p> <p>A young person who turns 16 years of age between 1 March and 30 September is eligible to leave school on 31 May during this time period.</p> <p>A young person who turns 16 years of age between 1 October and the last day of February is eligible to leave school at the start of the Christmas holidays (or 21 December) during this time period.</p> <p>This should be left blank if the episode had not ended by 23:59 on 31 July 2017.</p>	<p>This item must be provided for all episodes that have ended during the reporting year.</p>
15	Had pathway plan at episode end	<p>This shows whether the young person, who had reached their <i>sixteenth birthday</i> at the time their episode of being looked after ended, had a pathway plan at the point their episode of being looked after ended.</p> <p>A Pathway Plan is <u>any</u> plan which covers the areas outlined in the pathway assessment and pathway views that is: Lifestyle; family and friends; health and well-being; learning and work; where I live; money and rights and legal issues. Chapter 6 of Young People Leaving Care (Scotland) Regulations 2005 provides more detailed information. The Plan sets out the actions that will be taken to meet the needs identified through the assessment and therefore it may not be appropriate for all the areas specified above to have action points.</p> <p>This should be left blank if the episode had not ended by 23:59 on 31 July 2017, or if the young person had not reached sixteen years of age at the time their episode of being looked after ended.</p>	<p>This item must be provided for all episodes that have ended during the reporting year, and that the young person had reached their sixteen years of age at the time their episode of being looked after ended.</p>

<p>16</p>	<p>Had pathway co-ordinator at episode end</p>	<p>This shows whether the young person, who had reached their <i>sixteenth birthday</i> at the time their episode of being looked after ended, had a pathway co-ordinator at the point their episode of being looked after ended.</p> <p>Regulation stipulates that the authority responsible for either a <i>compulsorily or discretionary supported person</i> must appoint a Pathway Co-ordinator (definitions of these terms can be found in Young People Leaving Care (Scotland) Regulations 2005).</p> <p>A Pathway Co-ordinator need not be an officer of the local authority but the responsible authority will want to ensure that the co-ordinator is a suitable and capable person. They will provide advice and support to the young person on any throughcare and aftercare issues the young person raises. The co-ordinator should be responsible for ensuring that the young person's pathway views have been sought and taken into account when producing the pathway assessment and plan. The pathway co-ordinator will also be charged with co-ordinating the provision of services identified in the pathway plan. They should have an identified role in the co-ordination of the throughcare and aftercare plan. They should provide ongoing support to the young person and ensure that the action points in the throughcare and aftercare plan are taken forward. Chapter 7 of Young People Leaving Care (Scotland) Regulations 2005 provides more details: (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/03/19113/34719)</p> <p>This should be left blank if the episode had not ended by 23:59 on 31 July 2017, or if the young person had not reached their sixteen years of age at the time their episode of being looked after ended.</p>	<p>This item must be provided for all episodes that have ended during the reporting year, and that the young person had reached sixteen years of age at the time their episode of being looked after ended.</p>
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2.3 Placement Data Items

Ref	Field Name	Requirement	Notes on Completion
17	Local Authority	Included as a check as to the Local Authority responsible for looking after the child.	This item must be provided by all local authorities.
18	Child Identifier	The Child Identifier is the key unique identifier of children within local authority (LA) management information systems (MIS). Child Identifier will be used for additional data management and quality assurance purposes, together with allowing linking looked after children datasets together for longitudinal statistical analysis purposes only.	This must be provided for all episodes. The Child Identifier is generated by MIS software when children are first registered onto the local MIS system.
19	Episode Start Date	This shows the first day of each episode a child was being looked after by the local authority. A child could have started being looked after on one or more occasions during the year. This date must be a date on or before 31 July 2017.	This item must be provided for all episodes.
20	Placement Start Date	This shows the first day of each type of placement. The start date of the first placement should equal the episode start date. A new placement cannot start until a previous placement has ended. There should be no occurrences where a child is not in a placement during their episode of being looked after.	This item must be provided for all episodes and should be provided for all placements within each episode.
21	Placement End Date	This shows the last day of each type of placement. The end date of the last placement should equal the episode end date. A placement cannot end after another placement has started. There should be no occurrences where a child is not in a placement during their episode of being looked after. The end date of the child's last placement type should be left blank if they are still being looked after at 23:59 on 31 July 2017.	This item must be provided for all episodes that have ended and for all placements that have ended within every episode.

22	Placement type	<p>This shows the type of placement a child has had during their episode of being looked after.</p> <p>For those children on mixed placements (for example a child attending a residential school and living with foster carers during the weekend), please report the dominant placement (i.e. the place where the child spends the most time).</p>	<p>This item must be provided for all episodes, and for all placements within each episode.</p> <p>See Annex C for definitions.</p>
23	<i>Foster placement type</i>	<p><i>This shows the type of foster placement as defined by the short life working group on Placement Descriptors for Care Planning, a group set up as part of the National Foster Care Review implementation.</i></p> <p><i>For children on foster placements (either purchased or provided by the Local Authority), please report the type of foster placement as being either Permanent (secured by a permanence order), long-term (a placement longer than 24 months not secured by a permanence order), interim (a placement of less than 24 months not secured by a permanence order) or emergency (an unplanned placement made in an emergency where no other placement type has been identified by the LA).</i></p>	<p><i>This item must be provided for all episodes where the placement type is foster care.</i></p> <p><i>Please provide the descriptor which is current at the start of the collection year for existing foster placements, or the one that is correct at the start of the placement. Changes of descriptor should only be recorded at the start of the new collection year.</i></p>

2.4 Legal Reason Data Items

Ref	Field Name	Requirement	Notes on Completion
24	Local Authority	Included as a check as to the Local Authority responsible for looking after the child.	This item must be provided by all local authorities.
25	Child Identifier	The Child Identifier is the key unique identifier of children within local authority (LA) management information systems (MIS). Child Identifier will be used for additional data management and quality assurance purposes, together with allowing linking looked after children datasets together for longitudinal statistical analysis purposes only.	This must be provided for all episodes. The Child Identifier is generated by MIS software when children are first registered onto the local MIS system.
26	Episode Start Date	This shows the first day of each episode a child was being looked after by the local authority. A child could have started being looked after on one or more occasions during the year. This date must be a date on or before 31 July 2016.	This item must be provided for all episodes.
27	Legal Reason Start Date	This shows the first day of each legal reason as to why a child was being looked after. The start date of the first legal reason should equal the episode start date. There should be no occurrences where a child does not have a legal reason during their episode of being looked after. A child may have more than one legal reason open at any time. All legal reasons should be recorded.	This item must be provided for all episodes and should be provided for all legal reasons within each episode.
28	Legal Reason End Date	This shows the last day of each legal reason as to why a child was being looked after. The end date of the last legal reason should equal the episode end date. There should be no occurrences where a child does not have a legal reason during their episode of being looked after. The end date of the child's last legal reason should be left blank if they are still being looked after at 23:59 on 31 July 2016.	This item must be provided for all episodes that have ended and for all legal reasons that have ended within every episode.
29	Legal Reason	This shows the legal reason(s) a child was being looked after under during their episode of being looked after.	This item must be provided for all episodes, and for all legal reasons within each episode. <i>Interim variations to a Compulsory Supervision Order should</i>

			<p><i>still be recorded as the relevant CSO option (legal reason 03-06), as they are not the same as an interim CSO, which has its own legal reason code (07).</i></p> <p>See Annex D for definitions.</p>
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2.5 Permanence data items

Ref	Field Name	Requirement	Notes on Completion
30	Local Authority	<i>Included as a check as to the Local Authority responsible for looking after the child.</i>	<i>This item must be provided by all local authorities.</i>
31	Child Identifier	<i>The Child Identifier is the key unique identifier of children within local authority (LA) management information systems (MIS). Child Identifier will be used for additional data management and quality assurance purposes, together with allowing linking looked after children datasets together for longitudinal statistical analysis purposes only.</i>	<p><i>This must be provided for all episodes.</i></p> <p><i>The Child Identifier is generated by MIS software when children are first registered onto the local MIS system.</i></p>
32	Episode Start Date	<i>This shows the first day of each episode a child was being looked after by the local authority. A child could have started being looked after on one or more occasions during the year. This date must be a date on or before 31 July 2017.</i>	<i>This item must be provided for all episodes.</i>
33	Permanence away from home recommended	<i>The date on which permanence away from home was recommended.</i>	<p><i>This item must be provided where relevant.</i></p> <p><i>Not all local authorities will call the meeting that recommends pursuing permanence away from home a looked after children review. This recommendation may be made at an equivalent review or meeting (for example, a legal advice meeting).</i></p> <p><i>By permanence away from home we mean a plan for adoption, a permanence order, a permanence order with authority to adopt or a kinship care order.</i></p>
34	Decision by Agency Decision	<i>The date of the ADM's decision which allows the legal process to pursue permanence away from home to begin.</i>	<p><i>This item must be provided where relevant.</i></p> <p><i>The date approved by the ADM is being used rather than the</i></p>

	<i>Maker</i>		<i>date of the Adoption and Permanence panel given the panel only makes a recommendation and there may be more than one panel.</i>
35	<i>Application submitted to court</i>	<i>The date when an application for a permanence order is submitted to court.</i>	<i>This item must be provided where relevant. Where this is not currently recorded on file it can be provided by the local authority solicitor (permanence order or permanence order with authority to adopt) or the prospective adopters (adoption order).</i>

DISABILITY

Question

Does the child/young person have a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Definitions

Mental or physical impairment with a substantial adverse effect

This means significant difficulties with any of:

- *Mobility, lifting/carrying*
- *manual dexterity*
- *continence*
- *communication (speech, hearing, eyesight)*
- *memory/ability to concentrate or understand*
- *recognise if in physical danger*
- *physical coordination*
- *other problem or disability that you think has an adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*

Exclude difficulties that you would expect of a child of that age

Long-term

Long-term means 12 months or more. For children under a year, 'long-term' should be assessed in relation to their age.

If a young person has not been assessed as having a disability, or where the assessment showed that the person was not deemed disabled.

Responses

Not known – It is not known whether the child/young person has a disability and they have been looked after for longer than three weeks.

Not assessed – It is not known whether the child/young person has a disability and they have been looked after for three weeks or less.

DESTINATION ACCOMMODATION

At home with (biological) parent(s): at home with parent(s) or 'relevant person(s)' as defined in Sec. 93(2)(b) of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995.

At home with newly adopted parents: use this category if the child has ceased being looked after because they have become adopted. If a child who is already adopted has further episode(s) of being looked after, then subsequent destinations should be recorded as "At home with (biological) parent(s)".

With friends or relatives: independent living without formal tenancy support. They could obviously still have a life coach who provides a range of other support. Includes flats sharing with friends or relatives on a shared lease/shared tenancy/shared ownership.

Own tenancy/independent living: without formal tenancy support. They could obviously still have a life coach who provides a range of other support. In general this will include young people living alone or cohabiting with an independent tenancy of flat, house or bed-sit, including local council or housing association tenancy, or accommodation provided by a college or university.

Supported accommodation/semi-independent: Some formal tenancy support available (either on site or via outreach). This includes transitional accommodation (e.g. supported hostel, trainer flats); self-contained accommodation with specialist personal assistance support (e.g. for young people with disabilities, pregnant young women and single parents); self-contained accommodation with floating support. Also includes supported lodgings (where supervisory staff or advice workers are available to provide formal advice or support); foyers and similar supported accommodation which combines the accommodation with opportunities for education, training or employment. Includes living with former foster carers.

Former foster carers: With foster carers previously accommodated with when looked after.

Residential Care: In a community home or other form of residential care such as an NHS establishment.

Homeless: defined by Section 24 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (see annex E for details), but excludes everyone in semi-independent living as defined above. This is basically everyone living in emergency accommodation (e.g. roofless, night shelter, direct access, emergency hostel, bed and breakfast), where this is not part of the pathway plan.

In custody: In prison.

Child died: use this category if the child has ceased being looked after because they had died.

Other: Still in contact with the young person and accommodation type is known, but none of the categories mentioned above apply.

Not Known: Don't know where the young person is being accommodated.

PLACEMENT TYPES WHILST BEING LOOKED AFTER

At home with parent(s): at home with parent(s) or 'relevant person(s)' as defined in Sec. 93(2)(b) of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995

With friends / relatives: placed with friends or relatives who are not approved foster carers

With foster carers provided by the local authority: with approved foster carers provide by the local authority

With foster carers purchased by the local authority: with approved foster carers purchased by the local authority

With prospective adopters: with prospective adopters

Other community: for example, supported accommodation

Local authority home: in local authority children's home/hostel, local authority home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, local authority home/hostel for physically disabled children

Voluntary home: in voluntary children's home/hostel, in voluntary home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, in voluntary home/hostel for physically disabled children

Residential school: in local authority residential school (home/hostel), in voluntary residential school (home/hostel), in private school, in independent school

Secure accommodation: in secure accommodation

Crisis Care: for example: in women's refuge, in local authority hostel for offenders, in voluntary hostel for offenders, in local authority hostel for drug/alcohol abusers, in voluntary hostel for drug/alcohol abusers

Other residential: a known residential setting but does not fit with one of the above

LEGAL REASONS

Accommodated Under Section 25	S.25	Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Care Duty of Local Authorities (including respite)
Parental Responsibilities Order	S.86	Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Parental responsibilities order Note: this code is historical and is not a viable code for incoming children.
Compulsory supervision order at home	S.83 S.73(9)	Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 Compulsory Supervision Order Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Change in requirement condition imposed by Review Hearing
Compulsory supervision away from home (excluding Residential Establishment)	S.83 S.72(1) S.73(9)	Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 Compulsory Supervision Order with conditions of residence Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Transfer of child subject to Supervision Requirement Change in requirement condition imposed by Review Hearing
Compulsory supervision away from home (in a Residential Establishment but excluding Secure)	S.83 S.72(1) S.73(9)	Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 Compulsory Supervision Order with conditions of residence Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Transfer of child subject to Supervision Requirement Change in requirement condition imposed by Review Hearing
Compulsory supervision away from home with a Secure Condition	S.82(2)e S.73(9) S.75 Powers Secure ACC. Regs 6 & 7	Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 Compulsory Supervision Order with conditions of residence in Secure Accommodation Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Change in requirement condition imposed by Review Hearing Placement of children in Secure Accommodation Secure Accommodation (Scotland) Regulations 1996 Placement of Children in Secure accommodation
Interim compulsory supervision order	S.45(4) & (5) S.63(5) S.66 S.67	Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011- renamed from 'Warrant' Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Hearing warrants (7 days) Children detained by the police Children detained under hearing warrant (21 days)

	S.68 S.69	Extension of hearing warrant (further 21 days) Warrant to hold child whilst grounds established (14 days) Warrant to hold child for further investigation (21 days)
Child Protection Measure	S.55-56 S.35-36 S.37-54	Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 Child Assessment Orders (7 days) Child Protection Orders (8 days) Emergency Protection where CP order not available
Criminal Court Provision	S.205(2) S.208 S.216(7) S.44(1) S.43(4) S.51	Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 Detention following a conviction for murder Detention of children convicted of an indictment Failure to pay a fine, maximum detention one month Detention in residential accommodation Detention of child (unruly certificate) Detention of child by the Court (inc. unruly certificate)
Freed for Adoption	S.18 S.25 & S.26	Adoption (Scotland) Act 1978 Freeing order Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 Return of child to the local authority
Permanence order	S.80	Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 Permanence orders
Permanence order with authority to place for adoption	S.83	Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 Order granting authority for adoption: conditions
Other Legal Reason	e.g. Any statute from England & Wales or Northern Ireland	Other

ETHNICITY CLASSIFICATION

Introduction: Why is it necessary to collect information about ethnic groups?

Government and public authorities have a statutory duty to collect information on ethnic groups under the Equality Act 2010 to tackle discrimination and promote equality. Ethnic group statistics are also important to the private and voluntary sector for monitoring discrimination and inequality. The information is also used to inform resource allocation, policy formulation and service delivery.

"Poor measurement and a lack of transparency have contributed to society and governments being unable to tackle persistent inequalities and their causes. The data available on inequality are utterly inadequate in many ways, limiting people's ability to understand problems and their causes, set priorities and track progress. And even where data do exist, they are not consistently used well or published in a way that makes sense."

This was one of the conclusions of *Fairness and Freedom, The Final Report of the Equalities Review* in 2007. This was followed by a report from the Office of National Statistics which identified eight principles for collection and dissemination of equality data. Principle 4 states that:

"Consistency of methods, concepts and classifications is fundamental in the collection, analysis and presentation of equality statistics."

In order to promote more consistency the Scottish Government has been working on providing harmonised questions for use in surveys in Scotland.

Ethnicity is a complex issue. There is no consensus about what constitutes an "ethnic group". Research shows that it means different things to different people, has a number of possible meanings which can depend on the context or situation, and understanding of the term evolves over time. It encompasses aspects of identity, race, ancestry, history, culture, and it is very diverse. We have provided this guidance to help you use the questions and classifications to get the best quality information you can on **ethnic group**.

The ethnicity classification of children should be regularly reviewed!

Making changes to the questions and categories

In order to reflect modern circumstances, and respond to concerns over the question used in the 2001 Scottish Census, the ethnic group question has been reviewed. The new ethnic group question was produced using evidence collected from wide consultation with users and extensive question testing. Detailed results of this work can be found at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/07/29095058/0> .

The ethnic group question has been developed to be acceptable to both respondents and users. It is very strongly recommended that you retain it in its entirety and using the exact format.

Presentation of the questions

The words used in the question have been carefully selected to be acceptable, so far as possible, to respondents to aid understanding of what is being asked and to provide the most reliable data for users. If the wording is changed then people may not answer or may answer with a less good response. The capitalisation and bold font are used to emphasise the instructions and help reduce response errors. The ethnic group question is split into categories (which contain a number of tick boxes including write-in boxes) and each one is assigned a letter. The use of these letters is very important and testing showed that they act as a visual cue to ensure the respondent keeps reading down the list, through each category, until they find the most appropriate tick box, rather than choosing prematurely.

Length of the ethnic group question

Due to the complex nature of ethnic groups this question is much longer than other survey questions. The number and description of the categories and tick boxes has been selected carefully to best represent the Scottish population and to improve response rates by making the question acceptable to respondents. Removing categories and tick boxes could result in people answering with a less good response and your data will not be directly comparable with other information. It may also result in your question being less acceptable to some people and consequently this could affect response rates. We strongly recommend using the full question as it is. If this is not possible, for example, because your survey is very short and cannot be extended or you require information on people not listed then **please contact us**.

Ordering of the categories and tick boxes

It is important that you retain the order of the categories and tick boxes as they are arranged this way to minimise response errors. Research has shown that people tend to read down the list only as far as the first suitable answer and for that reason the categories and tick boxes are generally

listed by population size. The Mixed or Multiple ethnic group category is placed after the White category as tests have shown that this category is likely to be missed if placed further down the list.

Write-in boxes

The list of tick boxes is by no means definitive and, as a result, write-in boxes are present in each section and under "Other" at the end so that people can identify in another way if they wish. These write in boxes are very important to the acceptability of the question. Removing these could have implications for the response rate and acceptability of your survey. Ethnic group is a self-defining concept and people should be able to identify as they wish. We would strongly recommend that you retain them. If resources are not available to process and output the write in responses and you need to reduce their number, **please contact us**.

Single tick response of the ethnic group question

Respondents are requested to answer the ethnic group question with a single response only. It is strongly advised that you adhere to this. The length of the ethnic group question means the number of combinations that could be produced by multiple responses would make it difficult to output usable data and it would be extremely difficult to cross reference ethnic group data with other data (for example on health, education or housing) to obtain information about inequalities. Response errors, where a respondents has ticked one category at the top of the question and then selected a more appropriate category lower down (which they did not initially see), without crossing out the earlier response, occurred in question testing. Allowing multiple responses would make it difficult to determine if this type of response error has occurred or if the response is a genuine multiple tick.

The Scottish Census in 2001 used a single tick response. If multi-tick responses are used the data will not be comparable with the 2001 Census and consequently changes over time could not be explored reliably.

How to deal with multiple ticking of the ethnic group question

Despite respondents being asked to answer the ethnic group question with a single response, inevitably there will be a few who give multiple responses, either within a category or across categories.

Due to the significance of ethnic group data and the small numbers that can be associated with some of the categories in Scotland, it is important that information is available at the most specific level possible. Therefore, the general rule is where more than one box has been ticked the more

specific or smaller group should be retained. This will show if a specific ethnic group is more likely to be experiencing discrimination or has specific service needs.

If multiple responses occur:

- when one response is a subset of another, the most specific response should be retained. For example, if both 'Scottish' and 'British' are ticked, then the 'Scottish' response should be retained;
- when two non-overlapping responses are given in the same category the smaller population ticked should be retained. For example, if 'Scottish' and 'Polish' are both ticked then 'Polish' should be retained;
- when boxes have been ticked in two different categories then the tick that occurs in the category with the smallest population size should be retained;
- when a respondent has ticked a response and then provided a write in response to an 'Other' box then the write in answer should be retained as this information is most likely to reflect their ethnic group;
- when boxes have been ticked in three or more categories the response should be recorded as 'unknown'.

Information on population size can be obtained from the GROS website using the link below.

If you require help when dealing with multiple responses **please contact us directly**.

Data collection method

There are a number of considerations to be made when deciding on the mode of data collection. When a survey is administered by an interviewer, it is important to remind the interviewer to provide the respondents with clear instructions to read or listen to the whole question before answering and to respond with a single answer on the ethnic group question. Having an interviewer present means that extra guidance can be provided to respondents who are having difficulty understanding the question. If show cards are being used, they should reflect the questions as they are published here, with all the categories and in the same order.

Using a computer, either for self or interviewer completion, can limit the respondent to a single tick for the ethnic group question as the script can be moved to the next question after one box has been completed. However, it should be noted that the ethnic group question is long and does not fit fully on a computer screen. The GROS are conducting research on developing a solution to presenting the question in full on a computer screen and this guidance note will be updated as soon as the results of this work are known.

When using computers to administer surveys or when employing an internet based survey, it is especially important that the bold font and capitalisation of the question are adhered to.

For postal surveys and other data collections administered using paper forms, it is important that the form is clearly designed, easy to read and the ethnic group question is presented as published here.

Proxy responses

These questions are designed to collect information on a person's self-defined ethnic group and national identity and should be addressed directly to the respondent. Where the respondent is unable to provide an answer another member of the household, or the person's carer, can be asked to give a response on the respondent's behalf. This should be a last resort and the interviewer should record that a proxy response was given. It is very important that interviewers, administrative staff or anyone other than the individual's family member or carer does not provide an answer on behalf of the respondent.

The questions were designed and tested with adults, but changes should not be made when asking children. If possible the response should be provided by the child although a proxy response may be needed, especially if they are under the age of 12 (ONS, 2003). Proxy responses should only be accepted from a parent or guardian. Extra guidance may be needed for parents when the child is under 12. If you require help with extra guidance **please contact us directly**.

Analysing and presenting data

Where it is necessary to combine categories, the headings used should be fully reflective of the individual categories that have been combined. If it is necessary to combine categories B, C, D and E you must label the results as 'Mixed or Multiple; Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British; African, Caribbean or Black; and Other ethnic groups'. While this is a very long heading to use in a data table, it is important to avoid offence. Combining categories B, C, D and E and labelling them 'Non-White', 'Coloured', 'Black', 'Black or Minority Ethnic', or 'Other' is unacceptable. The term Black and Minority Ethnic Groups (BME) should not be used, as it is a very general term, offensive to some people and inaccurate (because some categories under the White section are also small in number).

RELIGION

Introduction: Why is it necessary to collect information about religion/belief?

"Poor measurement and a lack of transparency have contributed to society and governments being unable to tackle persistent inequalities and their causes. The data available on inequality are utterly inadequate in many ways, limiting people's ability to understand problems and their causes, set priorities and track progress. And even where data do exist, they are not consistently used well or published in a way that makes sense."

This was one of the conclusions of *Fairness and Freedom, The Final Report of the Equalities Review* in 2007. This was followed by a report from the Office of National Statistics which identified eight principles for collection and dissemination of equality data. Principle 4 states that:

"Consistency of methods, concepts and classifications is fundamental in the collection, analysis and presentation of equality statistics."

In order to promote more consistency the Scottish Government has been working on providing harmonised questions for use in surveys in Scotland.

There are six equality strands: age, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion/belief. This guidance note provides a recommended question for collecting information on **religion/belief**.

Recommended question

What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?

- None
- Church of Scotland
- Roman Catholic
- Other Christian
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Sikh
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Pagan

Another religion, please write in

The religion classification of children should be regularly reviewed!

The wording of the question is the same as that used in the 2001 Census. The categories from the 2001 question were reviewed and amended slightly. The addition of a Pagan tick box was tested in the 2006 Census test. It is strongly recommended that you do not change the wording of the question as it could have implications on the data you receive. The wording of this question affects the way in which people answer, especially if they only have a loose affiliation with religion. Any changes to the wording of the question may result in people either not answering or providing a less suitable response and you will not be able to make comparisons to results from the 2011 Census.

The categories have been carefully selected to best represent the Scottish population and to ensure the highest response rates by making it relevant and acceptable to respondents. This list of categories is not definitive and a write-in box has been provided so that respondents can answer as they wish. Making changes to the categories could affect response rates if people feel that they are unable to record their religion accurately. It is very important to the completeness and acceptability of the question that the 'Other' write-in box is retained. If you need to make changes to the categories, for example you require information on a specific religious group not listed, **please contact us**.

Multiple ticks

The recommended religion question is a single tick response question. In order to obtain a complete count if a respondent has provided multiple responses then the rule should be that the response is recorded as 'don't know'. The exception to this rule would be if a respondent has ticked one of the categories and also the 'Other' box. In which case:

- If the respondent has ticked a category and written in a response in the 'Other' write in box then the write in answer should be used.
- If the respondent has ticked one category and then ticked the other box without writing in a response then the first category they ticked should be used.

Proxy responses

This question is designed to collect information on a person's own religion and should be addressed directly to the respondent. Where the respondent is unable to provide an answer then another member of the household, or the person's carer, can be asked to give a response on their behalf. This should be a last resort and the interviewers should record that a proxy response was given. It is very important that interviewers, administrative staff or anyone other than the individual's family member or carer does not provide an answer on behalf of the respondent.