

Script for solicitor to follow when gathering equality data from clients as part of the legal aid application process

As part of your application for legal aid, the Scottish Legal Aid Board gather equality data. Equality data is information about your age, sex, any disabilities you may have, your national identity and ethnic group, and if you are or have been care experienced.

Completing the equality data questions is important because the answers:

- give the Scottish Legal Aid Board the data they need to make important decisions about the legal aid system
- help them design and deliver their services to people who apply for legal aid.

Your equality data will not affect your application for legal aid or advice and assistance. You can also answer 'prefer not to say' to any of the questions apart from age which is needed to check your identity if you speak to the Scottish Legal Aid Board about your application.

The questions asked are the same as in the Scottish Census 2022. You can answer the questions in the same way.

What is your date of birth?

Optional explanation: You must answer this question. This is the date you were born. The Scottish Legal Aid Board use this to calculate the age of people accessing legal aid.

What is your sex?

You can answer male, female or would you prefer not to say.

Optional explanation: If you are transgender the answer you give can be different from what is on your birth certificate. If you are non-binary or you are not sure how to answer, you could use the sex registered on your official documents such as your passport.

Do you have any disabilities which have lasted or are expected to last at least 12 months?

You can choose as many of the following as you want to:

- Deafness or partial hearing loss
- Blindness or partial sight loss
- Full or partial loss of voice or difficulty speaking: a condition that requires you to use equipment to speak
- Learning disability: a condition that you have had since childhood that affects the way you learn, understand information and communicate
- Learning difficulty: a specific condition that affects the way you learn and process information
- Development disorder: a condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills and speech language

- Physical disability: a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying.
- Mental health condition: a condition that affects your emotional, physical and mental wellbeing
- Long term illness, disease or condition: a condition, not listed above, that you may have for life, which may be managed with treatment or medication.
- Other condition: If you are unsure which option(s) you should choose, we can write it in here.
- No known conditions
- Or would you prefer not to say

What do you feel is your national identity?

Optional explanation: National identity is a feeling of attachment to a nation. This does not need to be the same as your ethnic group or legal nationality (citizenship). For example, this could be about the country or countries where you feel you belong or think of as home. You can tick as many of the listed nationalities as you like.

You can choose all that apply from these options:

- Scottish
- English
- Northern Irish
- Welsh
- British
- Other - we can write this in
- Or would you prefer not to say

What is your ethnic group?

Optional explanation: Your ethnic group could be your cultural or family background. It is up to you how you answer this question. You may need to write in your ethnic group in the space provided. Some boxes have a list of ethnic groups (for example, 'Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani'). The list simply shows all the ethnic groups which are included in that category, so you can tick the box if your ethnic group is any of those in the list.

White

- Scottish
- Other British
- Irish
- Polish
- Gypsy/Traveller
- Roma
- Showman/Showwoman
- Other white ethnic group, we can write this in

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups

- Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups, we can write this in

Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian

- Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani
- Indian, Scottish Indian or British Indian
- Bangladeshi, Scottish Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi
- Chinese, Scottish Chinese or British Chinese
- Other, we can write this in

African, Scottish African or British African

- We can write this in (for example, NIGERIAN, SOMALI)

Caribbean or Black

- We can write this in (for example SCOTTISH CARIBBEAN, BLACK SCOTTISH)

Other ethnic group

- Arab, Scottish Arab or British Arab
- Other, we can write this in (for example, SIKH, JEWISH)

Or would you prefer not to say

Care experience

Optional explanation: another term for 'looked after' is 'care experienced'. This refers to anyone who has been, or is currently in care. This care may have been provided in many different settings, such as:

- Kinship care - living with a relative who is not your mum or dad.
- Looked after at home - with the help of social work.
- Residential care - living in a residential unit or school.
- Foster care - living with foster carers.
- Secure care - living in a secure unit.
- Adoption.

Are you currently, or have you ever been, 'looked after' by a Local Authority, including continuing care to age 21. By 'looked after' we mean subject to a supervision order with no condition of residence, or with foster carers, or in a residential care home, or in a residential school, or a secure unit.

Which of the following applies to you?

- Currently 'looked after' by a Local Authority
- Have previously been 'looked after' by a Local Authority
- Never been 'looked after' by a Local Authority
- Or would you prefer not to say