

Equalities Analysis for the Child Support (Meaning of Child and New Calculation Rules) (Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendment) Regulations 2012

Strategic Thinking

1) Who needs to be involved in the Equalities Analysis team?

Names	Role on assessment team
Corporate Affairs	Directorate/Service Area Lead
Philip Geeves	Equalities Analysis written by
	Contact for Equalities Analysis (if different to writer)
Sara Forrest	Equality & Diversity Advisor
Sarah Stoney	Legal Advisor
Philip Geeves/Holly Greig	Policy Advisor
Angela MacDonald	Customer representative

2) Scope of the Equalities Analysis

What are the broad aim(s) / objective(s) of the regulations?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the purpose of the proposal or change? <p>The Child Support (Meaning of Child and New Calculation Rules) (Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendment) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”) contain provisions relating to amendments to deduction from earnings orders (“DEOs”) and other minor consequential changes.</p> <p>A separate public consultation was held between 1 December 2011 and 23 February 2012 and a separate Equality Impact Assessment was published on 2 July 2012 in respect of the consequential provisions. This is because the merging of the consequential provisions with the DEO provisions was only undertaken post public consultation. Therefore this Equalities Analysis relates solely to those provisions relating to DEOs.</p> <p>The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (“the Commission”) became the Government body responsible for the child maintenance system in November 2008 and was established through the Child Maintenance and Other Payments Act 2008. The Commission was abolished on the 31 July 2012 and subsumed into the Department for Work and Pensions (“the Department” or “DWP”). The Child Support Agency (“CSA”) now functions as one of the ‘operational</p>

arms' of the Department, providing the Government's statutory maintenance service.

The Department currently operates two separate child maintenance schemes; "the 1993 scheme" for applications made prior to 3 March 2003, and the "2003 scheme" for applications made after that date. A new statutory child maintenance scheme, which will gradually replace both these schemes will be introduced in late 2012.

As part of the new scheme, child maintenance liability will be based on gross income, provided by HM revenue and Customs ("HMRC") rather than net income provided by non-resident parents or employers.

The change in the method of calculation of the child maintenance liability means amendments to DEO provisions (contained in the Child Support (Meaning of Child and New Calculation Rules)(Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendment) Regulations 2012) are required.

A DEO is an administrative order, i.e. an order which is made by the Department without application to a court, requiring employers to make deductions from an employee's earnings in respect of that employee's child maintenance liability and pay them to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will then arrange for that maintenance to be paid to the parent with care. The amendments contained in the Regulations make changes to the way the amount to be deducted by employers is set out and how provision for "protected earnings" is made.

Protected earnings represent the amount of the earnings a non-resident parent must retain after deductions for child maintenance liability have been made.

- **Who does the proposal or change affect?**

Two main groups are impacted by the changes, these are non resident parents and employers.

Employers

Employers will be required to calculate an employee's protected earnings each time the non resident parent is paid and a deduction is due to be made in respect of child maintenance. This is a change as under the 1993 and 2003 schemes, a fixed protected earnings figure equal to their normal earnings has been provided to employers which meant that they have not previously been required to calculate this. Employers will also be required to align deductions to be made to their employee's actual pay frequency. To support this the Department will provide a schedule aligning deductions to a number of common payment frequencies; monthly, weekly, two weekly and four weekly and the employer will be required to identify the deduction to be made from this list.

Detailed guidance will be provided to employers who are required to operate the new DEO processes for the new scheme to support them in this change in approach. In addition, all employers will have access to a dedicated employer support team whenever they need information, support or advice. This team will also contact all employers upon receipt of their first new scheme DEO to explain how the DEO will work and answer any questions they may have.

Non-resident parents

The amended DEO provisions will apply to cases on the new child maintenance scheme and to a number of cases on the existing 1993 and 2003 schemes. The cases affected on the existing scheme will generally be those cases that have been closed for the purposes of on-going maintenance, but have arrears outstanding. The new provisions will apply to such cases, following notice being given to the non-resident parent, in writing, by the Secretary of State. This will happen as a result of the case being moved onto the new IT system.

Under the new scheme, protected earnings will be a percentage of the non-resident parents net earnings (60%) for the earnings period in question, so whatever the non-resident parent earns in that period, 60% of that amount will be protected, conversely this means that a deduction will always be able to be made for up to a maximum of 40% of whatever the non-resident parent has earned in the period,

This is a change to the provisions for protected earnings under the 1993 or 2003 schemes. Under the 2003 scheme protected earnings is expressed as a fixed amount, equal to a percentage (60%) of the non-resident parents normal earnings, so whatever the non-resident parent earns in any period, that fixed amount will always be protected. If the earnings fall below that fixed amount, no deduction in respect of child maintenance can be made.

Exempt Income (which is also a fixed amount) is protected for the purposes of DEOs under the 1993 child maintenance scheme.

An impact will be that under the new regulations, in some circumstances, such as when a non-resident parent's earnings fluctuates downwards, they will have a lesser level of protection, than if their case was administered under the 1993 or 2003 scheme. The DEO provisions for the new scheme will be applied equally to all non-resident parent and will result in DEOs falling more into line with other common methods of collection, such as direct debit or standing order, which provide non-resident parents with no protection against income fluctuation.

As is the case on the existing child maintenance schemes, DEOs will only be imposed on non-resident parents after they have passed through a number of 'checkpoints'. These provide non-resident parents the opportunity to fulfil their maintenance obligations to their children by means other than a DEO, for example, by paying the parent with care

directly or setting up a direct debit to the Department.

Prior to entry to the new statutory child maintenance scheme both parents will be encouraged and given appropriate support to make a “family-based arrangement” between themselves to discharge their obligation to their children. Where an application is made to new scheme, a DEO would only be imposed on a non-resident parent if they have failed to provide an alternative method of collection, have arrears outstanding for which they have not made an acceptable agreement to pay or have failed to honour an agreement to make payment. Non-resident parents will be made aware of this and the implications of non-compliance i.e. the provisions of the DEO regime.

A non-resident parent may also choose to pay their liability by DEO in which case they will be made aware of how DEOs operate and therefore will have made an informed decision to pay liability through this method and have accepted the implications of this decision.

A further group that will be impacted by the change to the Regulations will be employees of the Department, as systems of work will change resulting from the amendments. These impacts will be largely consistent with those detailed in the Equalities Analysis for the new statutory child maintenance scheme that have been considered separately.

- **How will the proposal or change be put into practice?**

The amendments to the DEO provisions will be introduced when the new child maintenance scheme is commenced and will apply to cases on the new child maintenance scheme and to a number of cases on the existing 1993 and 2003 schemes. For existing 1993 and 2003 scheme cases, the Regulations will commence following written notification from the Secretary of State to the non-resident parent.

What outcomes do you want to achieve?

- To ensure that the DEO provisions are aligned with the new scheme method for the calculation of child maintenance liability in order to ensure they continue to operate successfully. The new scheme is based on gross rather than net income and uses income information reported by HMRC rather than income information from the non-resident parent or employer.

3) Which pieces of legislation / regulations / best practice codes / other policies is it relevant to?

- Child Maintenance and Other Payments Act 2008
- Child Support Act 1991
- Child Support (Collection and Enforcement) Regulations 1992
- The Child Support Maintenance Calculation Regulations 2012

Gathering Evidence

4) Data & Research

Communication

An internet and DWP library search was conducted to source empirical and theoretical evidence in relation to other general policy areas where DEOs are used. The desk research did not uncover evidence specifically in relation to the impact of DEOs on different demographic groups, however, the research identified evidence on the different information needs and experiences of interaction with the CSA between various client groups. Therefore it is suggested that any communications regarding the change in DEO provisions will need to be tailored to clients' specific circumstances. Details of findings can be found in Annex B.

General Research

Through utilizing historic research carried out by the CSA we are able to provide general statistics relating to equality groups. Details can be found in Section 6 and Annex C.

Existing sources	Key learning from data and research
Child Support Agency National Statistics	See Annex B
Internet and DWP Library search (Client Insight Research Team)	See Annex D
	See Annex C

Communicating Information to Clients Groups General Research Statistics (GB)	See Annex E
---	-------------

What new data and research do you need to help you find out the impact?

New sources:
None required

5) Consultation and involvement

Existing consultation and involvement sources	Key learning
Consultation with employer group representatives and payroll software providers to advise them of the proposed changes and obtain their views so that changes to standard payroll packages can be implemented prior to the changes coming into effect.	This was undertaken both before and during the public consultation period, prior to the introduction of the Regulations.

What new consultation, if any, do you need to undertake?

Who I need to consult with or involve	How I will consult with or involve them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regulations were the subject of a public consultation exercise, between 24 April 2012 and 4 June 2012, which was carried out in line with the government's consultation best 	We have consulted publicly, and actively sought the views of our stakeholders and clients

practice.

Assessment & Action

6) Assess impact and outcomes

Stake Holder Group	Potential Impact of Policy/Procedure Practice/Strategy/Service Area:	What action do you intend to take?
Religion and Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no data available on the religious beliefs of separated parents within the CSA client base.• There is no evidence to suggest that cases with a DEO or any specific groups subject to these policies will be treated differently to other cases or groups within the CSA caseload.• General research statistics for GB can be reviewed at Annex E.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No further action required.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of administrative data shows the majority of non-resident parent (the group most likely to be impacted by the Regulations) across the entire caseload are between the ages of 30-59.• By default, the proposals will have the greatest impact on those of working age, as they relate to provisions for employed non-resident parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No further action required.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We currently have no evidence to suggest the age profile of DEO cases would be any different to that of any other cases. 	
Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research data shows (see Appendix C) the following CSA ethnicity split of all respondents – 92% White, 5% Asian and other, 3% refused to provide details. A weighted sample base of 4,006 CSA client respondents was used and 4,006 un-weighted base. Research was carried out in 2008 before the Commission was formed. It should be noted that all research was carried out on CSA clients prior to improvements introduced by the Commission. There is no evidence to suggest that cases with DEOs or specific groups subject to these policies will be treated any differently to other cases or groups within the Department’s caseload. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further action required.
Gender (inc. transgender)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An impact of the changes is that for DEOs issued relating to new scheme liability the protected earnings of non-resident parents may, in certain situations, be less than if their case was administered on the 1993 or 2003 schemes. Examples of these situations would be where non-resident parents receive less pay from their employment during particular periods than is usual, for example, they work reduced hours one week. In terms of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objective of the policy is to address a wider social need to ensure that all non-resident parents (irrespective of gender) continue to make financial contributions towards the upbringing of their children with whom they no longer live. Males constitute the vast majority of non-resident parents. This is due to prevailing social factors which result in the majority of

	<p>Department's client group non-resident parents are overwhelmingly male (95%).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of the changes will have a disproportionate affect on the Department's male client group. This is due to prevailing social conditions (that children tend to remain with the mother rather than father after parental separation). All parents will be treated equally regardless of gender. <p>Female non-resident parents are more likely to have periods when they receive no pay or reduced pay due to caring responsibilities. However a proportion of all non-resident parents' earnings continues to be protected in these circumstances and male and female non-resident parents will be treated equally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department holds no statistical information relating to its transgender client group. However, no evidence is held that would indicate that the proposals would have a disproportionate impact on transgender clients. 	<p>the Department's caseload that the non-resident parent being male.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The changes to the processes introduced by these Regulations impact on how DEOs are administered and not who they will be made against. The policy will apply to all non-resident parents in the same way irrespective of gender. The potential impact of the Regulations is mitigated in that it they continue to ensure that a proportion of a non-resident parent's earnings are protected.
<p>Disabled People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research data shows (see Appendix C) that 15% of CSA clients were registered with a disability, 83% had no disability and 2% refused to provide this information. A weighted sample base of 4,006 CSA client respondents was used and 4,006 un-weighted base. Research was carried out in 2008 before the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further action required.

	<p>Commission was formed. It should be noted therefore that all research was carried out on CSA clients prior to improvements introduced by the Commission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no evidence to suggest that cases with DEOs or specific groups subject to these policies will be any different to the Department's caseload. 	
Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no data available on the sexual orientation of separated parents within the Department's client base. • There is no evidence to suggest that cases with DEOs or specific groups subject to these policies will be any different to the Department's caseload. • General research statistics can be reviewed at Annex E. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further action required.
Marital status/civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research data shows (see Appendix D) that 48% of CSA clients are married and 26% are living with their partner. The remaining 26% related to other types of relationships. • A weighted sample base of 4,006 CSA client respondents was used and 4,006 un-weighted base. • Research was carried out in 2008 before the Commission was formed. It should be noted therefore that all research was carried out on CSA clients prior to improvements introduced by the Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further action required.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no evidence to suggest that cases with DEOs or specific groups subject to these policies will be treated any differently to other cases or groups within the Department's caseload. 	
Maternity/Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no evidence to suggest that cases with Deductions from Earnings Orders or specific groups subject to these policies will be treated any differently to any other cases or group within the CSA caseload. • Females who are either pregnant or on maternity leave may have periods when they receive no pay or reduced pay due to either pregnancy or maternity leave. However all non-resident parents will have a proportion of their income protected in circumstances when their income fluctuates, including females on maternity leave or who are pregnant. • Males who take paternity leave may have periods when they receive no pay or reduced pay during that leave. However all non-resident parents will have a proportion of their income protected in circumstances when their income fluctuates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further action required.

7) Formal agreement

Who will sign this off?	When?

8) Publication

Is it appropriate to add this Equalities Analysis to the schedule at this time, if not when will this be reviewed?	How will you publish the results of the Equalities Analysis?	Has a copy been sent to the Policy Team via 'CM HR Equality and EIA' mailbox ?
Yes	By adding to the Equalities Analysis Schedule published on the Department's intranet and website, via the HR Policy Team.	Yes

9) Monitoring

What monitoring arrangements are in place?	Who will monitor and when?
There should be no requirement for monitoring because the Equalities Analysis has identified no unreasonable differential outcome for any group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1062 638 1486 667">• No further action required.

Appendix A

Equalities Analysis Action Plan

Date identified	Action points	Lead Officer	Timescale for completion	Resource Implications	Action taken (date)	Integrated in service plan?

ANNEX B – Child Support Agency National Statistics

The Department for Work and Pensions publishes statistics for the Child Support Agency's caseload and performance on a quarterly basis.

The most recent figures available were published for the quarter ending June 2012 indicating:

- The Child Support Agency's total caseload was 1,118,200 (826,200 cases administered under the 2003 scheme and 292,000 cases administered under the 1993 scheme).
- In the 12 months to the end of March 2012 the total maintenance collected or arranged was £1,194.8 million.
- In 95.2% of the Child Support Agency's cases the non-resident parent is male.
- In the year ending March 2012 there were 141,690 cases with an active Deduction from Earnings Order or Deduction from Earnings Request¹ which collected a total of £288 million of child maintenance payments.

¹ Deduction from Earnings Requests perform a similar function to Deduction from Earnings Orders and relate to those non-resident parents that are employed by the armed forces.

ANNEX C - Communicating Information to Clients Groups

An internet and DWP library search was conducted to source empirical and theoretical evidence in relation to other general policy areas where part payment and write off of arrears are used. The desk research did not uncover evidence in relation to the impact of the amendments to the DEO provisions on different demographic groups.

However CSA Client Insight research² provides some information on how the communication of changes to the DEO provisions could be tailored to the needs of the Department's equal opportunities client groups. This information relates to these groups *in general* and does not specifically represent the views of the client group with DEOs. This information is presented below.

It should be noted that there is no data available to link the DEOs caseload to these ethnicity groups.

Furthermore, the evidence is based on clients' views before the Commission was established. Thus, they may not represent people's views about the CSA's service provision today. The group differences discussed below are statistically significant. To put the findings in context, however, the following data is provided on the overall volumes in the equal opportunities groups contacted in the above client insight research.

- 92% of CSA clients were of a White ethnic background – 5% were from a Black Minority ethnic group, Asian or other (referred to from now on as BME), 3% refused to answer the question.
- 83% of CSA clients did not have a disability, 15% agreed they had a longstanding limiting illness, disability or infirmity³ and 2% refused to answer.

1. Communications and interaction with the CSA

The research explored the extent to which clients agreed that they could contact the CSA in a way that suited them.

² <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep471.pdf>

The study used a mixed methodology approach – 15 focus groups with CSA clients across the country and 4,006 telephone interviews with CSA clients – to explore their experiences and perceptions of the service provided by the CSA at various touch-points of the client journey, e.g. application and assessment, case maintenance, debt enforcement etc.

³ The question asked was; Do you have any long standing limiting illness, disability or infirmity that gives you substantial difficulties in any aspect of your day to day life? By long standing, I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of at least 12 months or is likely to affect you over a period of 12 months?

Ethnicity

Generally speaking those from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups were less likely to agree that they could contact the CSA in a way that suited them.

- 53% of BME origin clients strongly or slightly agreed that they could contact the CSA in a way that suited them compared to 63% of White clients who agreed strongly or slightly that this was the case.

Illness and/or disability

The research also found that clients with an illness/disability were less satisfied with the way they interacted with the CSA.

- 55% of those with an illness/disability agreed strongly or slightly that they could contact the CSA in a way that suited them compared to 64% of those who did not have an illness and/or disability.
- 47% of those with an illness/disability agreed strongly or slightly that the CSA was easy to contact compared to 56% of clients who did not have an illness/disability.
- 45% of clients with an illness/disability agreed strongly or slightly that the CSA contacts them in a way that suited them compared to 54% of clients without an illness/disability.

Gender⁴

There were some interesting differences in parent with care and non-resident parent clients' views on their interaction with the CSA.

- 69% of parent with care clients agreed strongly or slightly that they could contact the CSA in a way that suited them compared to 54% of non-resident parent clients.
- 69% of parent with care clients agreed strongly or slightly that they could contact the CSA at a time that suited them compared to 58% of non-resident parent clients.

⁴ We have made an assumption here and in the sections below examining Gender differences that a PWC is female and the non-resident parent is male. We know this is usually the case but not always.

- Less than 45% of non-resident parent clients agreed strongly or slightly that the CSA was easy to contact, compared to 63% parent with care clients.

The above findings suggest that clients with an illness/disability, BME groups and males (non-resident parents) may have different issues in relation to contacting the Department, compared to other client groups. There may also be different issues in relation to how the Department contacts these particular clients. In order to minimise any adverse impact these groups the communications about the DEOs provisions changes need to be tailored to the needs of these client groups.

2. Online information

This study also explored the extent to which clients agreed that the CSA's website contained the information they were looking for.

Ethnicity:

The findings indicate that the website may be less clear and may not contain information of relevance to those from BME groups.

- Almost a half (48%) of BME origin clients strongly or slightly agreed that the website contained the information they were looking for compared to 58% of white origin clients.
- 55% of BME clients agreed strongly/slightly that the information on the website was clear and easy to understand, whereas 71% of White clients agreed this strongly/slightly.

Disability and/or Illness

Similar views were expressed by clients with a disability and/or illness who felt that the website may not contain information relevant to them and experienced problems in finding and understanding the information on the CSA's website.

- 31% of clients with an illness and/or disability agreed strongly or slightly that the website contained the information they were looking for compared to 59% of clients without an illness and/or disability.
- 39% of clients with an illness and/or disability agreed strongly or slightly that it was easy to find the information they were looking for on the website, compared to 62% of those without an illness and/or disability.

- Just over a half (51%) of clients with an illness and/or disability agreed strongly/slightly that the information on the website was clear and easy to understand compared to 71% of clients who did not have an illness and/or disability.

Gender

- 67% of parent with care clients agreed strongly or slightly that it was easy to find the information they were looking for on the website, compared to 56% of non-resident parent clients.

Again these findings suggest that any information provided on the Department's website about the DEOs regulations changes should be accessible in a format that suits the needs of clients of different Ethnic origins, i.e. in different languages, as well as of clients with a disability, i.e. bigger letter format, audio format etc. This will allow all client groups to have equal access to the same information and make informed decisions.

3. Letters, leaflets and information packs

The research gauged people's views on whether the CSA letters, leaflets, or information packs provided sufficient information.

Disability and/or Illness

The findings showed that those with an illness and/or disability may be more inclined to think that letters, leaflets and information packs do not provide sufficient information for their needs.

- 43% of clients with a an illness and/or disability agreed strongly or slightly that the letter they received from the CSA provided them with all the information they needed compared to 54% of those without an illness and/or disability.
- 60% of clients with an illness and/or disability agreed strongly or slightly that the leaflet or information pack provided them with all the information they needed compared to 70% of those without an illness and/or disability.

Gender

- 57% of parent with care clients compared to 49% of non-resident parent clients strongly or slightly agreed that the letter provided them with all the information they needed.

- 75% of parent with care clients compared to 55% of non-resident parent clients strongly or slightly agreed that the letter was clear and easy to understand.
- 76% of parent with care clients agreed strongly or slightly that the leaflet or Information pack provided them with all the information they needed compared to 65% of non-resident parent clients.
- 79% of parent with care clients agreed strongly or slightly that the leaflet or information pack was clear and easy to understand compared to 65% of non-resident parent clients.

Again, this suggests that any written communications about the changes in the DEOs provisions should be tailored so that they are equally accessible and meet the information needs of all client groups.

4. Views on CSA employees knowledge of processes

The research examined the extent to which clients agree that CSA employees displayed good knowledge of the CSA processes and provided them with the information they needed.

Ethnicity

Clients from BME groups were less likely to feel that CSA employees had a good knowledge of the CSA processes and were also less likely to provide them with the information they needed.

- 33% of BME clients agreed strongly or slightly that CSA employees displayed a good knowledge of the CSA child maintenance process compared to 45% of white clients.
- 31% of BME clients agreed strongly or slightly that CSA employees provided the information they needed on how the child maintenance process works compared to 45% of white clients.

Gender

Parent with care clients were also more likely to rate higher the CSA employees knowledge of the process compared to non-resident parent clients.

- One half (50%) of parent with care clients agreed strongly or slightly that CSA employees displayed good knowledge of the CSA child maintenance process compared to 39% of non-resident parent clients
- 31% of non-resident parent clients agreed strongly or slightly that CSA employees were able to deal with any queries or issues they raised about their case while 45% of parent with care clients agreed strongly or slightly.

5. Satisfaction with maintenance amount

Finally, the study explored CSA clients' satisfaction with the maintenance amount calculation.

Ethnicity

Clients from BME groups were less likely to be satisfied with the overall maintenance amount compared to white clients.

- 12% of clients from BME groups strongly or slightly agreed that the maintenance amount was an adequate contribution towards the cost of supporting their child, compared to 21% of clients from a white origin.

Gender

Parent with care and non-resident parent clients' views about the maintenance calculation also differed.

- 35% of parent with care clients strongly or slightly agreed that the maintenance amount was affordable, whereas 16% of non-resident parent clients strongly or slightly agreed.
- Interestingly, while 30% of non-resident parent clients agreed or strongly agreed that the maintenance amount calculated was an adequate contribution towards the costs of supporting their child, only 10% of parent with care clients strongly or slightly agreed.

ANNEX D – Child Support Agency Client Insight Research

Page 58 in the document below provides further information relating to Section 6.

ANNEX E – General Research Statistics (Great Britain)

Religion

Research data⁵ shows that 82% of adults aged 16 and over in England and Wales reported having a religion in 2008/09 and 18% reported having no religion. The largest proportion of those with a religious affiliation reported being Christian, with 72% stating that this was their religion. The next most common groups were: Muslims (4%), Hindus (2%), Sikh (1%) and Buddhist (1%). 3% responded 'other religion'.

The Office for National Statistics' 'Integrated Household Survey: Experimental Statistics'⁶ indicates that in April 2009 to March 2010; 71% of people in Great Britain stated that their religion was Christianity, 4% stated their religion was Muslim and 21% stated they had no religious affiliation.

Sexual Orientation

The Office for National Statistics' 'Integrated Household Survey: Experimental Statistics'⁷ indicated that:

- 94% (46,659,000) of adults identified themselves as heterosexual / straight
- 1% (466,000) of adults identified themselves as gay or lesbian
- 0.5% (229,000) of adults identified themselves as bisexual
- 0.5% (246,000) identified themselves as 'other'
- 3% (1,597,000) of adults stated the 'don't know' or refused the question
- less than 1% (320,000) of respondents provided no response to the question.

The 'other' option on the question was to address the fact that not all people will fall in the first three categories.

The HIS estimate of 1.4% lesbian/gay/bisexual (LGB) is broadly consistent with other household surveys in the UK that have asked questions about sexual identity where previous research found estimates range between 0.3% and 3%.

⁵ The 2008/09 'Race, Religion and Equalities Topic Report' based on data from the Citizenship Survey - **Source:** Department for Communities and Local Government (2009) – <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/17835.pdf> and 'Lifestyles and Social Participation, Social Trends 41' – Office for National Statistics (2011) - http://www.statistics.gov.uk/articles/social_trends/ST41-Lifestyles.pdf

⁶ Office for National Statistics (2011) – <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/ihs0910.pdf>

⁷ Office for National Statistics (2011) – <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/ihs0910.pdf>

Heterosexual respondents were much more likely to be in a formally registered relationship such as marriage or civil partnership than those who identify as LGB. The HIS data indicated that:

- Around half (47.7%) of heterosexual respondents were married and living with their spouse, compared with approximately one-fifth (16.4%) of those who identified as LGB.
- 12.3% of those respondents who identified as LGB were, or had previously been, in a legally recognised civil partnership.

Sexual identity by legal marital status, April 2009 to March 2010 in the United Kingdom

	Single (never married)	Married (living with spouse)	Married (separated from spouse)	Divorced	Widowed	Currently or previously in a civil partnership
Heterosexual / straight	32.6%	47.7%	3.0%	9.3%	7.4%	<0.1%
Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual	63.2%	16.4%	1.3%	6.0%	0.8%	12.3%
Other	35.9%	40.8%	3.9%	8.1%	10.8%	0.5%
Don't know / Refusal	40.0%	35.5%	3.4%	8.0%	12.9%	0.1%
Non Response	53.9%	39.6%	1.3%	4.1%	0.9%	0.2%

The total number of eligible responders to the question referred to in the table above was 238,206