

# Sexual orientation and gender identity quality information for Census 2021

Known quality information affecting sexual orientation and gender identity data from Census 2021 in England and Wales to help users correctly interpret the statistics.

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## Table of contents

1. [Quality information](#)
2. [Related links](#)
3. [Cite this methodology](#)

# 1 . Quality information

## Not answered

As sexual orientation and gender identity were voluntary questions in the census, missing values on census responses were legitimate responses. So, (unlike with mandatory questions) we did not impute values to replace those missing on received responses. This means that these questions include a "not answered" category in standard outputs. Any write-in responses that did not relate to the question were coded as if the question had not been answered. Take care to not confuse between proportions of all people aged 16 years and over falling in a particular category and proportions of all people aged 16 years and over who answered the question falling in that category.

## Data collection and coding

Census data on sexual orientation and gender identity are derived from the tick boxes selected and write-in terms provided by respondents. It is possible that proxy responses for these sensitive topics may be less accurate than for other topics. A proxy response is where someone has answered the census questions on behalf of someone else. Answers for these questions did not always correspond to well-defined concepts and write-in answers have been coded, both automatically and manually, to categories shown in published tables.

## Student adjustment for sexual orientation and gender identity

An adjustment made to improve the estimation of students living at their term-time address will have slightly increased the proportion of "Not answered" and decreased proportions of other categories. Take care when interpreting data for 18- to 22-year-olds or, specifically, full-time students. Other than this, the effect of this adjustment should not materially affect analysis of these topics.

# 2 . Related links

### [Quality and methodology information Census 2021](#)

QMI | Updated 9 December 2022

Details the data strengths, limitations, uses, users and methods used for Census 2021, England and Wales.

### [How we quality assured the census population estimates](#)

Methodology | Released 7 November 2022

Methodology for the validation of Census 2021 population estimates for England and Wales, including the assurance of processes, assessment of estimates, and involvement of local authorities.

### [Sexual orientation and gender identity variables Census 2021](#)

Supporting information | Released 4 January 2023

Variables and classifications used in Census 2021 data about sexual orientation and gender identity.

# 3 . Cite this methodology

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 6 January 2022, ONS website, methodology, [Sexual orientation and gender identity quality information for Census 2021](#).