

Appendix One – Protected Characteristics & Ethnic Codes Description

Protected Characteristics

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. [\[1\]](#) This will also be true in Scotland when the relevant legislation is brought into force. [\[2\]](#)

Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Appendix One – Protected Characteristics & Ethnic Codes Description

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

[1] Section 1, Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.

[2] Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014.

Last Updated: 04 Sep 2015

Ethnic Codes

A	White - British
B	White – Irish
C	White – Any other background
D	Mixed – White & Black Caribbean
E	Mixed – White & Black African
F	Mixed – White & Asian
G	Mixed – Any other mixed background
H	Asian or Asian British – Indian
J	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
K	Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
L	Asian or Asian British – Any other Asian background
M	Black or Black British – Caribbean
N	Black or Black British – African
P	Black or Black British – Any other Black background
R	Chinese
S	Any other Ethnic Group
Z	Not stated