Language

Mark the expressions below in the following way:

Q   if they are polite ways of asking personal questions
R   if they are ways of responding to personal questions

1. I hope you don't mind me asking, but …
2. I'd rather not answer that (if you don't mind).
3. I know this is a bit nosey, but …
4. Mind your own business!
5. Why do you ask?
6. Can I ask you a personal question?
7. That's rather a personal question.
8. I know this is a bit personal, but …
9. I'm afraid that's really none of your business.

Discussion

Look at the questions below. Decide who has the right to ask you these questions. It may be a particular person, for example, a doctor, a priest, a police officer, a partner/lover. It might be anybody or it might be nobody. Write _anyone_, _a particular person_ or _no one_ next to each question.

How old are you?

How much do you weigh?

How tall are you?

How much do you earn?

Have you got a boy/girlfriend?

Are you a virgin?

Are you married?

Were your parents married?

Have you ever taken drugs?

Are you planning to start a family?

Who did you vote for at the last election?

Have you got a criminal record?

Are you gay?

How much was your CD-player?

What religion are you?

How do you feel about abortion?

Work in pairs. Ask your partner the questions. Use the expressions in the Language work to help you ask and answer the questions.

Your best friend

Could you say these things to your best friend?

Your breath is terrible.

You smell nice. What is it?

You need a haircut.

Your boy/girlfriend's got nice legs.

I wish you'd learn how to make coffee.

I think you've had enough to drink.

You look silly in that shirt.

I think you should ring and apologise.

If you want to smoke, do it outside.

Your fly is undone. (fly = trouser zip)

Could you say the same things to your teacher or your boss?
Do you have a friend you can say <u>anything</u> to?
Are you a tactful person or are you more blunt and direct?
Do you think being direct is a good or a bad thing?