

(The College logo must be used unless the Ethics Committee specifically permits you not to.) You should delete the blue guidance text.

# Participant Information Sheet

A **Participant Information Sheet** must be provided for all ethics applications. This is an **example** of a Participant Information Sheet which must be written in **plain language**. **Guidance notes given in blue.**

It should begin with the details of the Researcher and the title of the research project. If the full title is not entirely clear to a lay person a secondary title should be given to clarify.

**Note** that there are two paragraphs indicated that you must include in some form. You can adapt these to personalise your information sheet.

**Provide** the Study title and Researcher Details.

**Suggested** Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask the researcher/s if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take some time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

**An introduction should provide:**

* The purpose of the research.
* What is involved in participating.
* It should be clear that participation is entirely voluntary.
* It should be clearly explained what participation will involve, for example, a 40 minute interview.
* The benefits and risks to participants of taking part in the research. (Not all research has benefits for the participants, this should be explained, as well as any risks involved and what will be done to mitigate these.)
* The terms for withdrawal should be explained. (Participants should be told that they have a right to withdraw at any time without prejudice for example, to their job, studies or well-being and without providing a reason.)

**IMPORTANT NOTE - Thought** should be given to what will happen to existing, already provided, data in the event of withdrawal.

**Details** should be provided of the purpose of the study, including confirmation that participation is voluntary, and what that participation will entail; for example, participant in a focus group.

**Explanation should be provided of how** participant’s personal details will be kept confidential, such as by allocation of id numbers.

**Strategies for assuring ethical use of the data:** It is important that you explain how you intend to protect your participants’ personal data. Indicate procedures for maintaining confidentiality; anonymising data where necessary, especially in relation to data archiving

The **University Ethics Committee** requires that your Participant Information Sheet must contain a statement on limits to confidentiality, examples are given below:

**Essential** statement on confidentiality as required by University Ethics Committee: **choose one.**

* Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies.
* Please note that confidentiality will be maintained as far as it possible, unless during our conversation I hear anything which makes me worried that someone might be in danger of harm, I might have to inform relevant agencies of this.
* Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.
* Confidentiality will be respected unless there are compelling and legitimate reasons for this to be breached. If this was the case we would inform you of any decisions that might limit your confidentiality.
* Confidentiality may be limited and conditional – and the researcher has a duty of care to report to the relevant authorities possible harm/danger to participant or others.
* Please note that confidentiality may not be guaranteed; due to the limited size of the participant sample.

Explanation should be provided of what the data collected will be used for, for example the production of conference papers, journals etc. Also explain how it will be stored, destroyed or kept and re-used.

**Usage of the data:**

It should be clearly explained what you intend to do with the data collected:

* during research
* during dissemination, for example, publication in articles, conference papers, presented within a PhD thesis

**Storage, archiving, sharing** **and re-use** of data should be explained:

* for example providing data to other researchers.

**IMPORTANT NOTE - You** should always bear in mind that you, as the researcher, are responsible for ensuring that when collecting or using data, you are not contravening the legal or regulatory requirements in any part of the UK. This is not the responsibility of the Research Ethics Committee.

**Information should be provided on any organisation funding** the research, if this is the case.

Where relevant, you should provide the details of any:

* funding source
* sponsoring institution

Confirmation should be giventhat this project has been considered and approved by the College Research Ethics Committee.

**You must also provide information on:**

* contact details for researchers and supervisors if you are a student
* how to file a complaint
* Anyone with concerns regarding the conduct of the project should be advised to contact the College Ethics Officer, you should provide their email address.

To pursue any complaint about the conduct of the research: please contact the College of Social Sciences Lead for Ethical Review, email socsci-ethics-lead@glasgow.ac.uk

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