**Participant Information Sheets**

The Participant Information Sheet should be a clear and simple document, on headed paper with the University Crest (or equivalent for other institutions), that would be easily understood by those to whom it is aimed; for example, it should be age-appropriate. It should be a concise document; the length and design should encourage a potential participant to read it in full.

There is no set format, however investigators may like to consider including the following sections:

*Title*

Use a simplified title if the original title would be too technical

*Invitation paragraph*

A brief introduction; for example: *Before you decide to take part in this study it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. A member of the team can be contacted if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.*

*Purpose of the study*

State the background and aim of the study. When will the study be completed?

*Why have I been chosen?*

Explain why the potential participant has been approached.

*Do I have to take part?*

Explain that taking part is entirely voluntary and that refusal or withdrawal will involve no penalty or loss, now or in the future.

*What will happen to me if I take part?*

Say where the assessments will take place, how many will there be, how long the assessments will be each time and what exactly will happen. What are the participant’s responsibilities? Set down clearly what you expect of them.

*What do I have to do?*

Make clear if there are any lifestyle restrictions as a result of participating.

Make clear if video or audio taping will be used and if so, say when they will be destroyed. For example: *Tapes will be identified only by a code, and will not be used or made available for any purposes other than the research project. These tapes will be destroyed at the end of the study.*

*Are there possible disadvantages and/or risks in taking part?*

Describe any reasonably foreseeable discomforts, disadvantages and risks.

*What are the possible benefits of taking part?*

Any benefits to the participants that can reasonably be expected should be stated. However, where there is no intended benefit to the participant from taking part in the project this should be stated clearly. It is important not to exaggerate the possible benefits to the particular participant during the course of the project. This could be seen as coercive.

*Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?*

The participant’s permission will be needed to allow restricted access to information collected about them in the course of the project. You should explain that all information collected about them will be kept strictly confidential and briefly described how this will ensured. For example: *All data will be identified only by a code, with personal details kept in a locked file or secure computer with access only by the immediate research team.*

Bear in mind that investigators are responsible for ensuring that when collecting or using data, they are not contravening legal or regulatory requirements. Participants should be informed of the legal basis under which the data is being collected and processed. General information about the legislation can be found at <https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection>),while the aspects that pertain to research activities can be found at <https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/research-participant-data>

*What will happen to the results of the research project?*

You should be able to tell the participants what will happen to the results of the research. When are the results likely to be published? Where can they obtain a copy of the published results? Will they be told which arm of the project they were in? You might add that they will not be identified in any report or publication. For example*: Results will be presented at conferences and written up in journals.  Results are normally presented in terms of groups of individuals. If any individual data are presented, the data will be totally anonymous, without any means of identifying the individuals involved.*

Depending on the nature of your proposed project, you may need to include a statement indicating that the data collected during the course of the project might be used for additional or subsequent research.

*Who is organising and funding the research?*

Name the organisation or company sponsoring or funding the research.

*Ethical review of the study*

Example text:*The project has received ethical approval from the Engineering Research Ethics Committee of the University of Cambridge.*

*Contact for further information*

You should give contact details of a named investigator for further information.