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**UniSQ HREC Approval number: ETH20XX-XXXX**

University of Southern Queensland

Participant Information Sheet

Focus Group

[This template provides the basic information that must be provided to participants to assist in the process of achieving informed consent.

* Refer to 2.2.6 of the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2023%22%20%5Cl%20%22block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1) for further information.

**Instructions for Use:**

* Delete the blue instructional text and unnecessary blue text as required;
* Delete all the [square brackets];
* Black text should not be removed unless instructed otherwise;
* Ensure all remaining blue text has been changed to black;
* Ensure this document is written in the second person (e.g. ‘you’, ‘your’ instead of ‘the participants’);
* Ensure the information provided aligns with the details provided within the application;
* Ensure formatting remains consistent (i.e. use Arial 10 throughout) and proofread for errors;
* Ensure you include all listed investigators under the appropriate role headings when completing the contact details section. Delete incorrect roles as necessary, e.g., for a student project, ‘[Principal/Student] investigator details’ should become ‘Student Investigator details’]
* Aim to keep your information sheet to two pages only.

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| **Project Title**  |
| **[Insert project title]** |

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| **Research team contact details** |
| **[Principal/Student] Investigator details** | **[Principal Supervisor/Co-investigator] details** |
| Mr John CitizenEmail: john.citizen@unisq.edu.auTelephone: +61 7 4631 XXXXMobile: +61 413 XXX XXX | Prof Jane BloggsEmail: jane.bloggs@unisq.edu.auTelephone: +61 7 4631 XXXXMobile: +61 413 XXX XXX |
| **[Associate Supervisor/Co-investigator] details** | **[Supervisor/Co-investigator] details** |
| Dr Fred SmithEmail: fred.smith@unisq.edu.au Telephone: +61 7 4631 XXXXMobile: +61 413 XXX XXX | Ms Ann DoeEmail: ann.doe@unisq.edu.au Telephone: +61 7 4631 XXXXMobile: +61 413 XXX XXX |

[Add more lines or delete details as required]

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| **Description** |

[Ensure the description of your research project is written in terms easily understood by the lay reader i.e. Plain English. Ensure all acronyms are writ in full. As a minimum, the following should be included:]

This project is being undertaken as part of [an Honours (include program), Doctor of Philosophy, or Masters project (include program)] through the University of Southern Queensland.

The purpose of this project is to [provide further information here outlining the purpose of the research].

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| **Participation** |

Your participation will involve contributing your thoughts and ideas in a group discussion (focus group) that will take approximately [X minutes/ X hours] of your time.

The focus group will take place at [include date, time, venue, location, address, etc. If the focus group will be conducted online provide information about how and when to access the online forum.]

Questions will include: [include two or three indicative questions of the overall theme of the focus group].

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. Due to the collaborative nature of focus groups, you will be unable to withdraw data collected about yourself once you have participated in the focus group.

If you do wish to withdraw from this project prior to participating, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form) [or specify an investigator].

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or take part and then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland [and/or “External organisation name”].

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| **Expected benefits**  |

It is expected that this project [will or will not] directly benefit you [include details of anticipated individual benefits]. However, it may benefit [XXXXXXXX].

[If researchers are offering incentives for participants, any information must be noted here. Please refer to section 2.2.10 of the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 (updated 2018)](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018) for further information]

[Generally, you (the researcher) have 4 options for providing incentives to participants for participating in research, including:

1. Every participant receives an incentive (e.g. a free gift)
2. Participants can enter a prize draw
3. Participants can be awarded course credits (if this is available within your school)
4. No incentive is offered]

[Suppose you are including entry into a prize draw as an incentive for participants. In that case, you must consult [USQ’s Guidelines to give prizes as incentives](https://www.usq.edu.au/current-students/academic/higher-degree-by-research-students/conducting-research/human-ethics/resources) for research participation for information on how to conduct the draw.]

Participants will receive [provide details of incentive or delete if no incentive is being offered]

Include details of:

 How participants can access the incentive, e.g., payment or prize draw (if required)

 How and when participants will receive the incentive (e.g. be informed they have won the raffle)

 How the planned incentive will be provided, with respect to participant privacy and confidentiality

 Can participants opt in/out of the incentive

[omit this information if no incentive is being offered.]

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| **Risks**  |

In participating in the focus group, [choose one of the following options – ensure details align with the ethics application:]

there are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living. OR

there are minimal risks such as, [list any risks and how these have been minimised or will be managed]. OR

there are significant risks. These include [include any risks and how they have been minimised or will be managed].

Sometimes thinking about the sorts of issues raised in the focus group can create some uncomfortable or distressing feelings. If you need to talk to someone about this immediately, please contact [provide details to an appropriate support/ help line] on XXXX. You may also wish to consider consulting your General Practitioner (GP for additional support. [omit this paragraph if this is not a risk].

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| **Privacy and confidentiality**  |

All comments and responses are confidential unless required by law.

Please be advised that although the research team will take every precaution to maintain the confidentiality of the data, the nature of focus groups prevents the research team from guaranteeing confidentiality. Please respect the privacy of other participants and not repeat what is discussed during the focus group with others.

[If you are recording the focus group, this information should be provided to inform the participant; include:

* If the focus group will be audio and/or video recorded and for what purpose, e.g. for transcription
* If the recording will be used for any other purpose (i.e. as a teaching/instructional tool)
* Who will have access to the recording, including who may be involved in the transcribing of the recording (include if this will be conducted by a person or persons outside of those listed as investigators for this project)

It is not possible to participate in the focus group without being [audio/video] recorded. [Omit this if focus group is not being recorded]

[Include a statement to indicate whether a participant’s data will be made available for future research purposes (whether for similar projects only or for full unspecified use) and specify what form the data will be stored and shared (identifiable, re-identifiable, non-identifiable).]

[Please include details about how participants will be provided, or how they can access, a summary of the project results.]

[If the project is funded by an external third party, you will need to inform participants of this. No statement is required if the project is self (or University) funded.]

Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely, as per University of Southern Queensland’s [Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure](https://policy.usq.edu.au/documents/151985PL#4.3).

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| **Consent to participate**  |

[Select one of the following – ensure details align with the ethics application:]

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to a member of the Research team prior to participating in the focus group.

OR

[Outline the consent process being utilised.]

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| **Questions**  |

Please refer to the Research team contact details [or specify investigator] at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

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| **Concerns or complaints**  |

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project, you may contact the University of Southern Queensland, Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics on +61 7 4687 5703 or email researchintegrity@unisq.edu.au. The Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics is not connected with the research project and can address your concern in an unbiased manner.

**Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please keep this document for your information.**