



University of  
**Strathclyde**  
**Glasgow**

# University Ethics Committee

## Guidance on ethical issues in participant information and consent for online surveys and questionnaires

Before participating in a project, participants should always be provided with a participant information sheet that they can keep and provided with an opportunity to ask questions about the project should they wish. If their personal data are being processed, they must be provided with a [Privacy Notice](#). You **must** obtain their consent to participate.

When using online surveys or questionnaires to collect data, researchers should:

- Provide an initial page before their survey starts, which contains a brief summary of the project, the information from the participant information sheet, the researchers contact details, and a downloadable participant information sheet.
  - this is important so that participants are given the legally required data protection information in a form that they can retain.
- Provide a final page containing a 'Submit' button, prefaced by a statement reminding the participant that clicking the final 'Submit' button of the survey at the end will constitute the participant providing consent to participate, in full knowledge of the information in the participant information sheet.

Example statements for both pages are provided below. The template participant information sheet is provided on the [University Ethics Committee webpage](#).

### Partial completion

Researchers should consider what will happen with participants data should they only partially complete the survey and fail to complete the final 'submit' phase that indicates consent. If partial data is of value and would not compromise the integrity of the dataset it may be worthwhile:

- ensuring it is not a requirement for submission that all questions be answered
- including a statement to let participants know that they can exit the survey at any time by skipping to the final page

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- (Note: replace the text inside the square brackets with text appropriate for your project)

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You are being invited to participate in a research study titled [project title]. This study is being done by [researcher name] from the [School/Department name] at the University of Strathclyde.

[Provide the information contained in the Participant Information Sheet, indicating the aim of the project, a brief description of what the participant will be asked to do, and how long it will take. If there is a reward associated with any participation, please provide brief details].

If you are interested in taking part, please download a copy of the participant information sheet here [provide download link] and retain this for your records before

starting the [survey or questionnaire]. If you have any questions, please email or call [me or us] at [researcher's University email address] or [researcher's University phone number].

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time. You are free to omit any question. [Make sure your survey/questionnaire allows for the omission of questions].

[Start button]

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- **Online survey or questionnaire - template final page closing statement**

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By clicking the 'Submit' button below, you are consenting to participate in this study, as it is described in the participant information sheet, which you can download here [provide download link]. If you did not yet download and keep a copy of this document for your records, we recommend you do that now.

[Submit button]

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