## Information Sheet Template – FOCUS GROUP – HUI

1. *This template is the starting point for constructing a participant Information Sheet for a* FOCUS GROUP/HUI*.*
2. *Example/suggested text has been provided in places. Please ensure this document is fully edited so the information is relevant and accurate for your study.*
3. *Please use every day easy-to-understand language (e.g., short sentences, avoid jargon, avoid passive sentences, explain technical terms, consider the audience).*
4. *Please delete or replace all information in square brackets [ ] and italicised information before submitting with your application to the Human Research Ethics committee (e.g., these instructions).*



*[UC School or Department]*

Phone: *[a UC School/Departmental number or a mobile number used solely for purposes of the study is recommended – do not use a personal number]*

Email: *[UC email address]*

*[Date]*

HREC Ref: [*Provided by HREC when study approved]*

***[Study Title]***

**Information Sheet for participants**

*[Greeting e.g., Kia ora]*

You are invited to participate in a research study on [*topic/focus of the research].* This study is being conducted by [**name of main researcher or research team**] from the University of Canterbury ׀ Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha (UC). Other research team members include [*name of supervisors or other team members*]. The study is being carried out as a requirement for *[course or degree – if relevant].*

**What is the purpose of this research?**

This research aims to determine *[brief details about the purpose of the study].* I am/We are interested in finding out about *[focus of the research].* The information from this study will help to *[details about any broad or specific research outcomes etc.].*

**Why have you received this invitation?**

You are invited to participate in this research because you [*reasons for recruiting the participant, e.g. you have responded to a request for participants. OR We obtained your contact information from publicly available sources. OR Other people shared information about this study with you because they thought you may be interested in it].*

Your participation is voluntary (your choice). If you decide not to participate or to withdraw, there are no consequences. Your decision will not affect your relationship with me, the University of Canterbury or any member of the research team *[or external organisation].*

**What is involved in participating?**

If you choose to take part in this research, you will be asked to participate in a focus group. This focus group will involve you and XX to XX others meeting to discuss *[topic].* The focus group will take place *[face-to-face at [location] or online (e.g., via Zoom)].* We/I will contact you and the other participants to arrange a suitable time and location.

The focus group will involve the researcher/s introducing myself/ourselves, and other members of the group. I/we will explain how the group will work, and answer any questions you may have. Then, I/we will facilitate a group discussion about *[topic/s].* It is estimated that the focus group will take around *[XX to XX minutes].*

*[Light refreshments will be provided for participants – explain what, e.g. tea/coffee/snacks – delete if inapplicable].*

**Will the focus group be recorded?**

The focus group will be audio*[/video]-*recorded using a portable recorder *[or using Zoom’s recording feature]. [Written notes will also be taken].* The recording will be used to create a written transcript of the group discussion which [*I/we*] will analyse as part of the research. I/we will transfer the audio*[/video] recording* to a password-protected file on UC’s computer network and delete from the recording device as soon as practical. *[Another person [name if known] will transcribe (type out all the words of) the group discussion. They will sign a confidentiality agreement before listening to the recording].*

**Are there any potential beneﬁts from taking part in this research?**

*[A potential benefit is that participants will develop further understanding of [insert knowledge or topic area]].*

*[I/we do not expect any direct beneﬁts to you personally from participating in this focus group. However, the information gathered will potentially benefit [possible future benefits]].*

At the conclusion of the focus group I/we will provide you (and each of the other participants) with *[details of any inducement].* You will get this inducement even if you withdraw from the study *[if applicable].*

**Are there any potential risks involved in this research?**

*[We are not aware of any risks to participants in the research].*

OR

*[EXAMPLE: Some questions or topics discussed may involve sensitive information about [sensitive topic areas]. This may cause some participants to become upset, distressed, or experience other emotions associated with social interaction. If you become upset or distressed we will help you decide whether or not you wish to proceed, or, you may withdraw from the study without providing any reason. I/we may also suggest you consider contacting the support agency[/agencies] listed below.*

**Support Agency Contact Information**

*[Name] [Phone number or web address]]*

**What if you change your mind during or after the study?**

You are free to withdraw at any time. To do this, please feel free to leave the group at any point, or let the researcher/s know after the group has finished that you wish to withdraw. I/we will remove any information you have provided up to that point from the data set, if it is still possible *[insert final date after which withdrawal will not be possible].* Please note that the nature of focus group discussions makes it difficult to remove data, or the influence of your contribution. However, every effort will be made to do so.

**What will happen to the information you provide?**

I/we will ask each focus group participant to agree not to share information about the group with people outside the focus group. If you are unable to agree to this, you will not be able to participate. *[All of the researchers/I]* will keep all participants’ identities, and the information they provide during the focus group, confidential.

To ensure your identity is not known to anyone outside the research team, I/we will store signed consent forms separately from the focus group transcript and notes. Your name will be changed to a pseudonym (a fake name)*[/code number]* whenever it appears in the transcript. We will store the file that links your real name and your pseudonym*[/code number]* individually on a password-protected, secure device.

All study data will be stored in password-protected files on the University of Canterbury computer network or stored in lockable cabinets in lockable offices. *[Anonymised data from the study will also be made available to other researchers from...].*

All data will be destroyed *[five/ten years]* after completion of the study/publication of study findings *[amend if the data is to be destroyed at the end of the project or kept indefinitely]. [Name of person/I]* will be responsible for making sure that your data is only used by members of the research team for the purposes mentioned in this information sheet [*please consider here the potential for other research team members to be added to the project at a later date – if this is a possibility, make it clear now, so you do not need to amend your application or re-contact your participants (if possible) at a later date*].

**How will the results of the study be published?**

*[The results of this research will be published in a [Master’s/Doctoral thesis]. This thesis will be available to the general public through the UC library].* Results may be published in peer-reviewed, academic journals. Results will also be presented during conference or seminars to wider professional and academic communities *[delete if inapplicable]. You will not be identiﬁable in any publication [,unless you consent to this].*

I will send a summary of the research to you at the end of the study, if you request this.

**Who can you contact if you have any questions or concerns?**

If you have any questions about the research, please contact: *[name: email address; name: email address; name: email address] [for student projects, questions should go to the researcher and concerns to the supervisor].*

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). If you have a complaint about this research, please contact the Chair of the HREC at human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

**What happens next?**

Please review the consent form. If you would like to participate, please sign, scan/take a photo of, and return the consent form to *[email, or by hand, or by post, as appropriate].*