

Before fieldwork

What do recruiters need to tell potential respondents at recruitment?

The nature of the service to be provided by respondents must be clear it must be immediately apparent that the purpose is market research.

BHBIA, MRS and ABPI requirements mean the agreement/consent must include:

- subject and purpose of the market research (MR) study
- methodology and approach, including the medium for the MR and how they contacted
- location and duration of fieldwork
- date and time of fieldwork
- reimbursement offered – both the nature and the rate of remuneration
- adverse event and product complaint reporting obligations if appropriate

In addition, in order to meet data protection requirements for informed consent, you must tell all respondents:

- identity and contact details of the data controller(s)
 - agency or researcher name and contact details – name, telephone number, email address as appropriate
 - source of their personal data if it didn't come from the data subject, this may require you to name another organisation eg the commissioning client company
 - recipients of their personal data, this will require you to name any other organisation the personal data is being transferred to eg the commissioning client company
 - why you want their data (purpose) and what you will do with it (types of processing activity) including if and how viewing or recording will take place and who will have access to live or recorded information
 - if the data is not obtained directly from the data subject the categories of personal data
 - their right to withdraw consent at any time
 - of any automated decision making and its consequences
- Depending on the methodology different means to capture agreement may be needed – use of a tick box online; email, post or fax confirmation for telephone interviews.
 - A record of consent must be kept.

During fieldwork

What do interviewers need to tell respondents at the start of the interview?

- Respondents should be reminded of the terms of the interview as listed above and they should also be reminded of their rights to confidentiality, anonymity and to withdraw.

Do respondents have to answer every question?

- No, respondents are within their rights to refuse to answer a question.

What happens if a respondent does not want to finish an interview?

- Respondents have the right to withdraw at any point during fieldwork.

What happens if a respondent arrives late or finishes early?

- The terms of the agreement have been broken and it is a question of judgment as to whether the respondent should be interviewed and/or paid the full incentive.

Are there different guidelines when interviewing vulnerable respondents?

- Special design considerations, planning, conditions and contingency planning should be considered.

Are there different guidelines when interviewing children?

- Consent from a responsible adult is needed when interviewing children (under 16) as well as consent from the child – in a form that is verifiable.
- Criminal record checks (DBS checks) may be necessary in some circumstances but it is not a standard requirement for all researchers interviewing children.

How should interviewers deal with sensitive topics?

- Interviewers must not intrude on a respondent's privacy or show a lack of respect for an individual's feelings or values.
- Respondents must be made aware of the subject of the discussion before the interview.

How do the guidelines vary by research medium?

- If interviewing by mobile phone it is recommended that interviewers check that it is safe and convenient to proceed with the interview.
- If ethnographic/observational market research is being carried out respondents should be clear about the extended nature of the approach and safeguards against unwarranted intrusion should be put in place.
- A privacy policy must be available online for internet-based market research and a user's informed consent must be secured if cookies are to be placed on a computer.

What guidelines have to be taken into account if commissioning company personnel are viewing fieldwork?

- Respondents have to be informed that this is the case; the company need not be named if the fieldwork is not audio or video recorded but company personnel must be introduced openly and honestly and their role in the market research explained. For guidance on scenarios in which clients view fieldwork by live or delayed video-relay (including video streaming) please consult the full Guidelines.
- Company personnel should not be known to respondents.

If a respondent did not provide you with their personal details, do they need to be told of the source?

- Yes, respondents must be made aware of the source of their personal data if it didn't come directly from the respondent themselves.

Should an interview be interrupted to collect details of an adverse event, product complaint or special reporting situation?

- No, this is not necessary; details of a suspected AE/PC/SRS can be collected at the end of the interview.

Are respondents allowed to take questionnaires, guides or stimulus away with them at the end of the interview?

- No, not unless this is necessary to the market research and has been pre-arranged. All materials should be collected in at the end of the interview.

After fieldwork

Can respondents be re-contacted after an interview has finished?

- Only if they have given their permission for this at recruitment or during the interview.
- However re-contacting respondents for quality control does not require prior permission.
- A re-contact request must make it clear why re-contact is being requested and who will make it.

Do I have to protect respondents' personal data?

- Yes, personal data always has to be stored securely, so that it is only accessible to those that have authorisation.
- Personal data includes any information that identifies an individual e.g. contact lists, recruitment screeners with a name on, incentive receipts, video recordings of interviews.

Fieldwork consent forms

The BHBIA provides the following templates for fieldwork consent forms to help researchers ensure that all the correct consents required are fully understood and obtained:

- Recruitment Agreement;
- Receipt of Reimbursement;

See Market Research Proformas available online at <https://www.bhbia.org.uk/guidelines-and-legislation/legal-and-ethical-guidelines>

Further information

For further detail on all guidelines please see the BHBIA Legal & Ethical Guidelines for Healthcare Market Research at www.bhbia.org.uk upon which the Quick Guide is based.

If you have any queries about this Quick Guide or the BHBIA Legal & Ethical Guidelines for Healthcare Market Research, please visit www.bhbia.org.uk and submit your query via 'My BHBIA'. Please note: this ad hoc advisory service is available to full BHBIA members only.

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