SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET

Create your own Information Sheet for your participants. The following gives you an idea of how to set out the information and also what particular ethics information is mandatory on participant information.

Use language that is easily understood, check spelling and grammar.

Researchers must use the current Southern Cross University letterhead

Name of project – this could also be placed in the Introductory paragraph!

Introduction – how do I introduce myself and my research project to my participants?

Example:
My name is ……. I am conducting research as part of my Honours degree in Psychology at Southern Cross University. My research project is titled:
Or,
State how you have selected your participants, for example:
Your name has been given to me by …
I have found your name by …
I am inviting all undergraduate students at Southern Cross University to participate in this study.

Or,
My name is …… I am part of the research team …..

What is this research?
Describe the research, and;

What does this research involve? (for example),
This research involves the completion of an anonymous survey, questionnaire.
This research involves an experiment (describe it).
This research involves interviews.
This research involves focus groups.

In other words, provide a <u>brief, understandable</u> statement on what is hoped to be achieved by the research as well as the purpose and methods of this research project.

What are the risks associate with this research?
Clearly state what the risks associated with participation in the research are.
What is the relative likelihood of the risk occurring.
How risks are being minimised and managed.

My responsibilities to my participants.
Include details of what you will do for your participants, e.g. Provision of counselling or other services to participants adversely affected by the research (NS 2.2.6), although this should not occur in "low" risk research.
How their privacy and confidentiality will be protected.
Any expected benefits to the wider community.
Any payments to participants.
Any other provisions for them, such as travel facilities, morning/afternoon tea/lunch.

Your participants' responsibilities for this research.
Tell them what will be required of them to participate in this research. Include details such as, their participation is voluntary, travelling time, situation of the research, how long it will take to participate, exactly what they will be asked to do, that they should inform you if they wish to leave the research

The likelihood and form of dissemination of the research results, including publication.
If the results of this research are to be published, the participant should be aware of this, e.g. "The results of this study may be published in a peer-reviewed journal and presented at conferences, but only group data will be reported".

Participants should also have the option to obtain a summary of the research or be guided to a place to go to view research findings.

Include details about the security and storage of the research material. In general, the minimum recommended retention period of five years from the date of publication applies to University research material. Please refer to Section 2.1 of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research for other retention periods for specific types of research eg clinical trials.

Participant's Consent – Is consent to this research implicit or explicit?

Provide detail of what consent is necessary and how it will be given for this research project, e.g. if the research involves an anonymous questionnaire being returned to the researcher, then consent is implied by the return of the questionnaire. Therefore, a consent form is NOT necessary.

If the participant is required to return the consent form, then the researcher should inform them in this section how that will occur. e.g. A return self-addressed envelope has been included.

Participant's Consent – Future use of data or tissue

Provide detail on whether consent will be specific, extended or unspecific and provide sufficient information relating to purpose, methods, demands, risks and potential benefits, if known (as per 2.2.2).

Inquiries

Provide detail of how participants can make further inquiries about the research.
Include the Researcher contact details and the Supervisor contact details.

It is preferable to use SCU telephone details, if possible. Do not use mobile phone numbers.

Feedback

All participants are entitled to feedback from the study. This should be more than just advising them that the results will be part of a Thesis that will be available 'at some later stage' in the SCU Library. Where possible, participants should be offered the option of receiving a summary of the results by email or mail and provision for that option should be included where appropriate, for example, on the Consent Form.

Also, if the participants wish to receive results of this research, notify them in the information sheet that they can leave their contact details on the consent form, which is returned to the researcher.

Has this research been approved by Southern Cross University? (include the following statement)

This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Southern Cross University. The approval number is ECN-??-???

THE FOLLOWING IS MANDATORY INFORMATION

Complaints about the research/researchers

Participants must have access to a complaints mechanism at SCU if they have any concern about the ethical conduct of the research or the researchers.

The following procedure should be included in your information sheet.

*If you have concerns about the **ethical conduct** of this research or the researchers, the following procedure should occur. Write to the following:*

The Ethics Complaints Officer
Southern Cross University
PO Box 157
Lismore NSW 2480
Email: ethics.lismore@scu.edu.au

All information is confidential and will be handled as soon as possible.