The examples of the consent/assent forms provided are a minimum requirement and suitable for most studies but may need alterations to be commensurate with individual study requirements. The participant is consenting to everything described in the text of the Participant Information Sheet.

For some studies a fuller itemised consent form may be needed to cover other important issues especially where additional elements are optional for the participant, for example:

* Additional questionnaires, interviews or focus groups with sub-samples of the study population
* Consent to the use of audiotaping
* Consent to the use of photographs

Applicants should note that where a study involves the participation of children under the age of 16, parental consent should usually be sought. Where it is not sought, this will need to be justified. Where research is taking place in a school or other institution where the adults working there operate in loco parentis, it may be possible to ask them for permission to work with children/young people under the age of 16. This permission should be recorded on a consent form. For social science based research young people aged 16 years and older are generally capable of giving their own consent; however as a researcher you will need to assess the individual’s capacity to consent, depending on their maturity and understanding. Where researchers are recruiting young people aged 16-18 years old without parental consent they should, where appropriate, encourage the young person to inform their parent or guardian of their participation.

Where a study involves the administration of a questionnaire or survey a signed record of consent is not required for completion of the questionnaire/survey as long as it is made clear in the information sheet that completion of the questionnaire/survey is voluntary. Under these circumstances return of the completed questionnaire is taken as implied consent.

In such cases the Ethics Committee would expect a statement to be included at the start of the questionnaire/survey where the respondent confirms that they have read the participant information sheet and are happy to complete the questionnaire.

Participation in any other interventions within the same study e.g. interviews, focus groups must be supported by obtaining appropriate written consent.

Where a consent form is to be signed by a participant at home and returned by mail to the researcher 2 copies should be provided both of which are returned and countersigned by the researcher and one copy posted back to the participant.

All consent forms must include the logo of the lead and any other participating institutions.

All consent forms should include the name and contact details of the research supervisor.