INFORMATION STATEMENT GUIDELINES

You must provide sufficient information for participants to be able to make an informed decision about consent. How this information is provided depends on the project. The format of this information varies from project to project and the information you will be providing to the participant must be reviewed by the HREC. Typically information is provided in the form of a written information statement for participants.

An Information Statement must be written specifically for your particular research project and must include Charles Sturt University logo.

The information statement must be a separate document from the consent form so the participant can retain it. The information statement should be written in an easily accessible style, and in “plain English”, that is, in simple nontechnical terms. It is not necessary to provide every detail; rather, it should be a summary of the essential points, which any reasonable person would need to know before agreeing to participate.

Important points to consider:

- an information sheet should be reader friendly as this helps their understanding and is more likely to increase participant uptake
- researchers should think about the research from the point of view of the participant. If the researcher was the participant what would they need to know.
- the use of headings to break up the information sheet into sections may prove beneficial to participant understanding.

The Information Statement must include the following;

a. the name of the investigator(s), and name and contact details of the supervisor(s), and (if applicable) identification of the investigator as a student and their course at the top of the document. Please note students should not provide personal contact details on any forms that are distributed to the general public. Only a mobile phone number or work contact details to be used.

b. details about the host institution (e.g. Charles Sturt University)

c. the title of the project

d. an invitation to the participant in the research

e. a brief statement (in lay terms) of the purpose of the research, its process, activities and methodology

f. full disclosure of what is required or expected of the research participant, including the time required of the research participant

g. a detailed explanation and full disclosure of any possible risks or side effects of the project, including where relevant, details of counselling or support available for research participants.

h. an explanation of how data collected will be managed and used i.e. published and where stored

i. where applicable, reference to the taking of photographs, publishing research participants' names or the audio and or video recording of data collection

j. an explanation of how the confidentiality of the participants will be protected/ managed including any mandatory reporting obligations. Consideration should also be given to the possibility that participants may wish to be identified in project outcomes.

k. advice to the effect that the participant does not have to participate in the project or can withdraw from the project at any time (if there is a dependency relationship between the research participant and the investigator, the information sheet should also state that non-participation or withdrawal will not result in any penalty or discriminatory treatment)

l. if focus group participation is to occur the researcher to include advice that data may not be able to be withdrawn

m. detail if the results of the project will be provided to the participants and if so how.

n. these details:
NOTE: Charles Sturt University's Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this project. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Committee Secretary:

Presiding Officer
Human Research Ethics Committee
Research Integrity Unit
Charles Sturt University
Locked Bag 588. NSW. 2678.
Tel: (02) 6933 4213. Email: ethics@csu.edu.au

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.