# School Uniform Dress Codes and Appearance Policies

## Participant Information Sheet

### Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take some time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

### What is the purpose of this study?

School uniform is a fixed cost for nearly all families with children of school-age. The four nations of the UK have dealt with this differently. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland there is statutory and non-statutory guidance while in Scotland there is currently no guidance at a national level. Without a clear picture of school uniform requirements, school clothing grant and other support for families on low incomes it is not possible to fully understand the affordability of school uniform. So far this research has identified the requirements at all publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland and the support available with school clothing costs provided by local authorities. Further research is being conducted to find out about the role of school uniform and clothing banks to support families on low incomes.

### Who will conduct the research?

This research is being conducted by a member of staff at the School of Education at the University of Aberdeen, namely Dr Rachel Shanks.

### Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate because you are involved with a school uniform bank, clothing bank or similar organisation in Scotland. Please note to take part in the survey you must be over 18 years old.

### Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part unless you want to. If you decide to take part, you are free to change your mind at any time without giving a reason.

### What will happen during this project and what type of questions will be asked?

The study will be conducted online by completing an online survey and will take you approximately 10 minutes from beginning to end. The survey will ask you about the organisation you are part of and about its activities in relation to handing out and/or receiving school uniform items. information is strictly confidential; only the researcher will have access to it.

### Will I be compensated for taking part?

There is no compensation for taking part in this research project.

### What are the benefits and risks (if any) of taking part?

The questions are based around organisation’s involvement in providing school uniform and other clothing to families on low incomes. The advantage of taking part is that you may gain greater insight into what is happening in this field across Scotland. A potential disadvantage is that it takes time to complete the survey which takes you away from other duties.

### What will happen to the information that is collected?

If you take part in the research, confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines. Any references to individuals or organisations in this research and any subsequent publications/presentations will be anonymous. The information will be kept in a secure location which is password protected and accessible only to the researcher. The results will be anonymised and analysed by myself before being reported. The results will form the basis of a policy briefing and may also be presented in appropriate scientific journals and conferences. If you take part in this research, you can obtain copies of these publications or summaries of data through my email address. Data is made available to participants by personal request. The data will be stored by myself, Dr Rachel Shanks, at The University of Aberdeen for a minimum of ten years, thereafter the files will be deleted.

### Who has reviewed the study?

The study has been reviewed and approved by the Committee for Research Ethics & Governance in Arts, Social Sciences & Business on 26th June 2023.

### Will my participation be kept confidential?

Your participation in the study will remain strictly confidential. In accordance with data protection law, the Data Controller is for this project is the University of Aberdeen. This means that we are responsible for making sure your personal information is kept secure, confidential and used only in the way you have been told it will be used.

All information collected will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations e.g., if illegal activities are disclosed, if a safeguarding issue is uncovered). Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of research material:

* all research data will be fully anonymised and saved on the University of Aberdeen’s password protected secure network and/or held in locked cabinets, in locked offices.
* data will only be viewed and analysed by Dr Rachel Shanks.
* all data will be destroyed 10 years after the data is collected using specialist software.

Any information about you will have your name and email address removed so that you cannot be recognised from it. Any quotations used in research reports will be fully anonymised so that that there is no possibility of you being identified. It should be noted that, If, during the study, you disclose information about any current or future illegal activities, we have a legal obligation to report this and will therefore need to inform the relevant authorities.

Please also note that individuals from the University, and regulatory authorities may need to review the study information for auditing and monitoring purposes or in the event of an incident. Note that this may involve looking at identifiable data, but all individuals involved in auditing and monitoring the study will have a strict duty of confidentiality to the research participant.

### Under what legal basis are you collecting this information?

We are collecting and storing the data collected in accordance with data protection laws which protect your rights. These state that we must have a legal basis (specific reason) for collecting your data. For this study, the specific reason is that it is ‘a public interest task’ and ‘a process necessary for research purposes’.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible. You can find out more about how we use your information <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/privacy>

### What are my rights in relation to the information you will collect about me?

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example, you can request a copy of the information we hold about you at any point during the five years we will be storing the data we collected.

If you would like to know more about your rights or the way we use your personal information to ensure we follow the law, please consult our Privacy Notice for Research:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/about/privacy/research-participants-938.php>

### What if I have a complaint?

If you have any concerns with any aspect of this study, please to speak to the researcher who will do their best to answer your questions – contact details are at the end of this Participant Information Sheet.

If you wish to make a formal complaint to someone independent of the research team, then please contact the University of Aberdeen’s Research Policy & Governance Officer, Dawn Foster [dawn.foster@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:dawn.foster@abdn.ac.uk)

Participants also have the right to make a complaint about concerns relating to personal identifiable information to the Information Commissioner’s Office: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/> tel. 0303 123 1113.

## CONTACT FOR THE STUDY

If you require any further information, or if you have any questions regarding your participation in this study, please feel free to contact the researcher.

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Thank you taking the time to read this information sheet and for your interest in the study.