



# Lancaster University Law School

## PROFESSIONAL FOCUS GROUP

### Participant information sheet

#### Access to Justice in an age of austerity

For further information about how Lancaster University processes personal data for research purposes and your data rights please visit our webpage: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/data-protection](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/data-protection)

I am a PhD student at Lancaster University and I would like to invite you to take part in a research study about access to justice in private family law and personal injury cases in England and Wales.

Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to take part.

#### **What is the study about?**

This study aims to explore what legal problems people have, what steps they take to resolve those disputes and what affect the disputes have on their health and wellbeing.

#### **Why have I been invited?**

I have approached you because I am interested in understanding from your prospective what the challenges are in a post Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 with regards to both private family law and personal injury and understand the issues your clients face in trying to access justice on limited means.

#### **What will I be asked to do if I take part?**

If you decided to take part, this would involve the following:

*Attending a focus group at a neutral venue, along with other legal professionals and answering a series of questions in relation to Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 and its implementation*

#### **What are the possible benefits from taking part?**

If you take part in this study, your insights will contribute to our understanding of the success of implantation and what issues, if any, arise from it.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

No. It's completely up to you to decide whether or not you take part. Your participation is voluntary.

### **What if I change my mind?**

If you change your mind, you are free to withdraw at any time prior to the focus group has started. Once the recording has started it will not be possible to withdraw as it will not be possible to distinguish your voice from others on the tape

### **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

There are no disadvantages or risks to you taking part in this survey.

### **Will my data be identifiable?**

After you have completed the focus group only I, the researcher, conducting this study and my supervisors will have access to the ideas you share with me.

I will keep all personal information about you (e.g. your name and other information about you that can identify you) confidential, that is I will not share it with others. I will remove any personal information from the written record of your contribution.

### **How will we use the information you have shared with us and what will happen to the results of the research study?**

I will use the information you have shared with me only in the following ways:

I will use it for research purposes only. This will include my PhD thesis and other publications, for example journal articles. I may also present the results of my study at academic conferences.

When writing up the findings from this study, I would like to reproduce some of the views and ideas you shared with me. I will only use anonymised quotes from the survey, so that although I will use your exact words, you cannot be identified in our publications.

#### **How my data will be stored**

Your data will be stored in encrypted files (that is no-one other than me, the researcher will be able to access them) and on password-protected computers. I will store hard copies of any data securely in locked cabinets in my office. I will keep data that can identify you separately from non-personal information (e.g. your views on a specific topic). In accordance with University guidelines, I will keep the data securely for a minimum of ten years.

### **What if I have a question or concern?**

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact myself Stephane Osborne at [s.i.osborne@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:s.i.osborne@lancaster.ac.uk) or alternatively my research supervisors Professor Alasdair Gillespie [a.gillespie@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:a.gillespie@lancaster.ac.uk) or Dr Siobhan Weare [s.weare@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:s.weare@lancaster.ac.uk).

**If you have any concerns or complaints that you wish to discuss with a person who is not directly involved in the research, you can also contact Professor Sara Fovargue, Director of Research at [s.fovargue@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:s.fovargue@lancaster.ac.uk).**

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School's Research Ethics Committee.

**Thank you for considering your participation in this project.**



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