

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

### Project title

**Automating Universal Credit**

Research investigator: Morgan Currie, Lecturer in Data & Society

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### ABOUT THE PROJECT

This research looks at how users experience automation and digital interfaces of the Universal Credit scheme while making and receiving claims. This experience includes some of the services and third-sector groups claimants may work with to receive benefits from the system. The project will also advocate for more consultation with claimants to shape the UC experience.

### Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw from the study at a later date, without giving a reason. Only the researchers – the principle investigator (Currie), the co-investigator (Jay Wiggan) and the project research assistant(s) – will have access to the research data.

### What does taking part involve?

You will be asked a series of questions about universal credit and its effects on claimants. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

The interview will be audio-recorded and a transcript produced. Access to the recording and the interview transcript will be limited to the researchers. The recording and the transcript will be stored securely, safely and in accordance with Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and with University of Edinburgh data protection policy.

Any interview content made available through academic publication or other academic outlets can be anonymized so that you cannot be identified. Interviewed officials may be identifiable when referring to their position, so care will be taken to ensure that information in the interview that could identify your is not revealed, unless given explicit consent to retain these details. Any variation of these conditions will only occur with your further explicit approval.

### What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By sharing your experiences, you will be helping me and the research community to better understand how the automated and digital aspects of Universal Credit impact claimants and ways that claimants’ voices can be included in informing the design of this system.

### What If I Want To Withdraw From The Project?

Agreeing to participate in this project does not oblige you to remain in the study or to have any further obligations to the research project. If at any stage you no longer want to be part of the study, you can withdraw from the project by contacting Morgan Currie (morgan.currie@ed.ac.uk). You should note that your data may be used in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, reports) prior to your withdrawal and so you are advised to contact the researchers at the earliest opportunity should you wish to withdraw from the study.

If you withdraw from the project all the information and data collected from you, to date, will be destroyed and your name removed from all the project files.

### How Will My Data Be Looked After during the project?

All your data will be processed and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) along with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). The project will be also be guided by and adhere to the University of Edinburgh’s data protection guidance and regulations. All personal details, including contact details, addresses, phone numbers etc, will be kept strictly confidential with the researchers, stored on the University's cloud-based file storage (Microsoft OneDrive).

Electronic project data will be uploaded as soon as possible to a secure University of Edinburgh server and stored there for the duration of the project, only accessible to the researchers. Your Consent Form will be stored in locked storage at the University.

### What will happen to my data after the end of the project?

Data will be retained by the researchers for possible future (re)use, and stored on the University secure server.

### What will happen with the results of the research project?

The results of this study will be used for research outputs, such as academic articles, books, reports and presentations. We may also use data from this project in teaching. Quotes from your interview may be used in these outputs, and these will be anonymous.

### Who is organising the research?

Morgan Currie, Lecturer in data and society, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Edinburgh. This research is supported by an ESRC New Investigator Grant.

### Who has approved this project?

This research project has been approved through the ethical review process in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Edinburgh*.*

### Contact for Further Information

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