

# Interview Schedule Template for Qualitative Research

A semi-structured schedule for one-to-one qualitative interviews. Replace the grey example wording with your own study's questions before the first interview.

## STUDY AND SESSION DETAILS

|                                                          |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Study title                                              |  |
| Research question                                        |  |
| Ethics / IRB approval reference                          |  |
| Interviewer / participant code (no names)                |  |
| Date, start and end time, mode (in person, video, phone) |  |

## SECTION 1: PREAMBLE AND CONSENT

**How to use:** read the preamble aloud in your own words, then tick each item once the participant confirms it. Do not start recording until consent to record is given.

"Thank you for taking part. My name is [name], and I am [role] at [organization]. This study explores [topic]. The interview will take about [length] minutes. With your permission, I will audio-record it so I can transcribe it accurately. Your answers will be kept confidential and reported under a participant code, not your name. You can skip any question, pause, or stop at any time without giving a reason. Do you have any questions before we begin?"

- |                                                                                      |                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Study purpose and interview length explained                | <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality, data storage and retention period explained |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consent form signed (or verbal consent logged per protocol) | <input type="checkbox"/> Right to skip questions and to withdraw explained            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Permission to audio-record given                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Participant's questions answered                             |
|                                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Recording started at: _____                                  |

## SECTION 2: WARM-UP AND BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

**How to use:** keep these short and non-sensitive. They build rapport and give context for the answers that follow.

**W1** Example: "Tell me a little about your role and how long you have been in it."

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Your question |  |
| Notes         |  |

**W2** Example: "What does a typical week look like for you?"

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Your question |  |
| Notes         |  |

## SECTION 3: CORE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS WITH PLANNED PROBES

**How to use:** most studies need 8 to 12 core questions. This schedule gives you 10 slots, with room for 2 more on page 4. Start questions with "What", "How" or "Tell me about". Plan 2 to 3 neutral probes for each, and tick the box once the question has been covered, in whatever order the conversation takes.

**Q1** ☐ covered Example: "What was your first reaction when [change] was introduced?"

|                      |                                                                    |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Question             |                                                                    |
| Planned probes       | e.g. "What concerned you most?" / "What appealed to you about it?" |
| Notes and timestamps |                                                                    |

**Q2** ☐ covered Example: "How has [change] affected the way you work day to day?"

|                      |                                                         |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Question             |                                                         |
| Planned probes       | e.g. "What takes longer now?" / "What takes less time?" |
| Notes and timestamps |                                                         |

**Q3** ☐ covered

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Question             |  |
| Planned probes       |  |
| Notes and timestamps |  |

**Q4** ☐ covered

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Question             |  |
| Planned probes       |  |
| Notes and timestamps |  |

**Q5** ☐ covered

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Question             |  |
| Planned probes       |  |
| Notes and timestamps |  |

**Q6** ☐ covered

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Question             |  |
| Planned probes       |  |
| Notes and timestamps |  |

**Q7** ☐ covered

Question

Planned probes

Notes and timestamps

**Q8** ☐ covered

Question

Planned probes

Notes and timestamps

**Q9** ☐ covered

Question

Planned probes

Notes and timestamps

**Q10** ☐ covered

Question

Planned probes

Notes and timestamps

## NEUTRAL PROBE BANK

**How to use:** these follow-ups deepen an answer without suggesting one. Avoid probes that start "Don't you think..." or offer the participant an answer to agree with.

- "Can you say more about that?"
- "What did you mean by ...?"
- "Can you give me an example?"
- "What happened next?"
- "How did that feel at the time?"
- "It sounds like you're saying ... Is that right?"
- "What made that important to you?"
- "Can you walk me through that step by step?"

## OPTIONAL CORE QUESTIONS (Q11 AND Q12)

| Q11 <input type="checkbox"/> covered |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Question                             |  |
| Planned probes                       |  |
| Notes and timestamps                 |  |

| Q12 <input type="checkbox"/> covered |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Question                             |  |
| Planned probes                       |  |
| Notes and timestamps                 |  |

## SECTION 4: CLOSING

"We've covered all the questions I had. Is there anything else about [topic] you'd like to share, or anything you expected me to ask that I didn't? Thank you for your time. The next step is [transcription / analysis], and I will [share a summary of findings / offer you the transcript to check] by [date]."

- ☐ Final open question asked
- ☐ Participant thanked
- ☐ Next steps and how findings will be shared explained
- ☐ Support or debrief information given, if the topic was sensitive
- ☐ Recording stopped at: \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION 5: RECORDING AND TRANSCRIPTION NOTES

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Interview date and total duration    |  |
| Recording device and audio file name |  |
| Secure storage location of the file  |  |
| Transcriber                          |  |

### Transcription status

- ☐ Not started
- ☐ In progress
- ☐ Complete (verbatim)
- ☐ Checked against the audio

### Data handling

- ☐ Transcript de-identified
- ☐ Participant code applied throughout
- ☐ Offered to participant for checking
- ☐ Audio deleted on: \_\_\_\_\_

|                                                                                |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Field notes and reflections (setting, tone, interruptions, your own reactions) |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|