

Working with Panellists at the Facility during the COVID-19 Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 Pandemic has necessitated many changes to enable safe working practices for staff, consumers and sensory panellists entering the facility. This policy explains how SD will operate to minimise any risk.

This document should be read and understood prior to participation in any study.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all sensory panellists coming to the SD facilities to participate in sensory sessions on site or to collect samples for testing at home.

1. On-site Study Participation.

- a. Panellists will be unable to participate in sensory studies if they fall into any of the following groups:
 - i. People that are vulnerable and/or shielding, including pregnant consumers.
 - ii. Panellists who are currently feeling unwell or have shown any of the following symptoms in the past 7 days
 - High temperature
 - New, continuous cough
 - Loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste
 - iii. Panellists who live with, or are in a bubble with, anyone showing the above symptoms over the past 14 days
 - iv. Consumers who have visited a country over the past 14 days which requires them to quarantine on arrival back in the UK
- b. Panellists will be asked whether they understand the contents of this document and whether they agree to participate in studies following the procedures as specified, prior to arrival and again upon arrival to the facility. Panellists who do not provide consent will not be allowed into the facility to attend a sensory session.
- c. Panellists must consent to their personal details being passed on to a Government Test & Trace Service Provider to allow them to be contacted in the event of participating on a study alongside a panellist who later tests positive to COVID-19.

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2. On-site Testing

a. SD Preparations

Prior to any on-site testing, Sensory Dimensions will carry out the following:

- i. All study rooms will be cleaned and disinfected at the start of each day.
- ii. In addition, panel room booths, keyboards, mice, toilets and door handles will be cleaned prior to the start of each new fieldwork session
- iii. A one-way system will be in place to move through the building
- iv. Additional alcohol hand gel dispensing points will be in place as you enter and leave the building and you will be required to use these.
- v. All booth areas will contain a box of tissues
- vi. Booths will be allocated so that each panellist is sat between two empty booths, with a maximum number of panellists allowed in each panel room per session.
- vii. Panellists may put their coats on the back of their allocated chair. Coat stands will not be available.
- viii. Panellists will communicate with the panel leader and other panellists via Zoom where necessary in training sessions. This allows panellists to be spread across different panel rooms to ensure social distancing.

b. Arriving at the Facility:

Panellists participating in studies must adhere to the following:

- i. Panellists must arrive showing good personal hygiene and will be expected to cough or sneeze into tissues and clean hands as appropriate.
- ii. Panellists must queue outside the building observing the social distancing markers on the floor until invited in by a member of staff.
- iii. Panellists must have their temperature checked by a member of staff using a non-contact thermometer before being allowed entry to the building. Anyone with a temperature of 38°C or over will not be allowed into the building and will not be allowed to participate in the study.
- iv. Upon entry, panellists must use the provided alcohol gel before proceeding through the building.
- v. Consumers must wear a face mask upon entry to the building and must keep it on until seated at their allocated booth.
- vi. Panellists must move through the building following the one-way system as directed by a member of staff and the arrow signs displayed throughout. Social distancing must be adhered to at all times.
- vii. Panellists will have the opportunity to use the toilet facilities on their way through to the panel room but will be unable to use them after entry to the panel room or training room due to the one-way system in place
- viii. Panellists will be directed to a chair where they must stay seated. If in a panel room,

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the booths directly adjacent to your allocated booth will be empty to enable social distancing. If in a training session taking place in a large meeting room, tables will be spaced 2m apart.

c. Participating in the on-site study – Panel Room

- i. Panel leaders will be wearing PPE including face coverings, lab coats and gloves to protect panellists and themselves.
- ii. Each panellist will have their own allocated materials and samples where possible. Where not possible, these must be cleaned by the panel leader before being passed on to another panellist.
- iii. Panel leaders will place your test samples in a designated space close to your booth and step away before inviting you to collect your samples.
- iv. Once a sample has been evaluated, panellists will be instructed to place samples back in the designated space before the panel leader provides the next sample.
- v. Panel Leaders will prepare and sign all timesheets so that panellists do not have to touch communal pens.

d. Leaving the facility

- i. Once the study has finished, panellists must remain seated until asked by a member of staff to leave the panel room. do so. Panellists will be directed out one at a time, with the consumer nearest the door being asked to leave first.
- ii. Panellists must leave following the one-way system and via the designated exit, using the alcohol hand gel as you leave.
- iii. Panellists will not be allowed re-entry to the building.

3. Collection of samples from the facility for testing at home

- a. Panellists will be given their own designated pick up time to collect samples.
- b. Prior to arriving, panellists will be given clear instructions on how the collection will take place and where they must wait outside the facility.
- c. Panellists may be asked to quarantine samples at home before use.

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