

Topic Guide

Universal Credit study (12-16 year olds)

Introduction to Interview

- Check participant(s) know what their rights are regarding informed consent:
- Remind them about the information sheet, and ask whether they would like to ask any questions at this stage?
- Preamble on format of interview and approx. length of time (45 mins max).
- Emphasise confidentiality.
- Emphasise there are no right or wrong answers, and they don't have to know a lot about Universal Credit to take part.
- Emphasise they can draw pictures or write words about what they think as we talk.
- Reminder that they don't have to answer any question if they would prefer not to and they can stop the interview at any point without a reason.
- Inform the participant(s) there are resources to support them in case they feel upset due to the discussion. Let them know you will have to stop the interview/activities and discuss their information with members of the CNE or Investing in Children staff in the case of them disclosing any information which makes us concerned about their safety or the safety of others around them. State this is so we can support them as best as possible to ensure they are safe.
- Emphasise (here and again throughout interview/activities) that if they choose to answer any of the interview questions/probes, they do not need to go into great depth if they feel it could be a distressing experience for them in any way.
- Signed consent form or do verbal audio recorded consent.
- Take notes and return to relevant points at the end of interview/activities if there is time.

Opening [Flipchart]:

1. What do you think when you hear the word 'benefits'?
2. What do you think when you hear the word 'social welfare'?
3. What do you think when you hear the word 'Universal Credit'?

[Then present some visual information to the participant(s) about Universal Credit. Explain that another rule you need to follow to claim Universal Credit is the 'Claimant Commitment' rule. You need to follow these "rules" which consist of:

- *Looking for any type of work*
- *Be available for work and attend interviews right away*
- *Work any hours (i.e. evenings, nights, weekends)*
- *Turn up for Job Centre appointments*
- *Accept job offers from the Job Centre]*

- i.* What do you think of these rules?
- ii.* When you claim Universal Credit you have to claim for living and housing costs separately. What do you think of this?

[Parents receive money per child a month, but if they have more than two children they don't get any extra money. For example, a family with five children would receive the same amount of Universal Credit as a family with two children]

- iii.* What do you think of this two-child limit?

ACTIVITIES:

- iv.* What three things do you think are important for a young person to live a **'normal' life**?

Then ask them to prioritise the three things in order of need/necessity.

- v.* Can you think of three things that a young person needs to live a **healthy life**?

Then ask them to prioritise the three things in order of need/necessity.

- vi. What do you think might happen to a young person if they do not have these three things?

[Universal Credit is one way that families can receive money they need]

- vii. Do you think you need money to enjoy life? Can you say why?

IMPROVEMENTS:

- viii. Do you think CYP should be learning about what benefits, social welfare and Universal Credit are? Where?

Prompts:

- *Who do you think should be teaching CYP about Universal Credit? (e.g. home, schools, community settings)*
- *Where do you think is the best place for children and young people to get information on Universal Credit? (e.g. TV, website, school, Instagram)*
- *Which format do you think would like to learn about Universal Credit? (e.g. video, text, class, a range of choices)*
- *How old do you think people should be when they start learning what Universal Credit is?*

- ix. Finally, what would you like to see happen as a result of this research on Universal Credit?