

Templates will not be appropriate for every imaginable study, as different types of studies require different details. Adapt them to fit your research. Feel free to cut and paste from any example in this document.

[Template #3: secondary analysis of personal records]

:
Name, affiliation and contact information

:
Names, affiliations and contact information. Include student supervisor if applicable

: If the study is funded, state name and description of the funder here

[Versioning: After receiving ethics approval, add the date of approval and the consent form version number in the footer. The first approved version is v1.0. If subsequent amendments to the consent form are requested and approved, the date of approval and version number (e.g. v2.0) must be updated.]

State clearly that this is research and participation is voluntary.

Example: "We invite you to take part in a research study being conducted by [lead researcher] who is a [student, postdoc, researcher] at Dalhousie University. Taking part in the research or not is entirely your choice. There will be no impact on [your studies/your employment/your performance evaluation/the services you receive] if you decide not to participate in the research. The information below tells you about what is involved in the research, what you will be asked to do and about any benefit, risk, inconvenience or discomfort that you might experience.

You should discuss any questions you have about this study with [researcher name]. Please ask as many questions as you like. If you have questions later, please contact [Lead Researcher Name]."

This section briefly explains the overall approach of the study in plain language, and what the researcher hopes to achieve. It should provide enough information so that the intent of the study is clear, without unduly influencing the reader toward participation. Include basic study

design. Be clear why the study requires the use of personal records, and cannot be done without access to those. Avoid the use of coercive language (e.g., “ the success of my project relies on your participation”). Research jargon should be avoided, unless it is explained carefully.

This section should explain what characteristics people must have for their records to be included in the study, including any relevant personal history or attributes (the inclusion and exclusion criteria from the research ethics submission form). The language should be simple and direct.

Example:

Privacy: If steps will be taken to ensure others outside of the research team do not know whose data is included in a study this should be explained. Participant anonymity should only be assured if no one, including the researchers, will know who the participants are.

Example:

remove or replace personal information that could identify you before the data (e.g. [describe what this is in the context of this research]) are shared in an effort to ensure that no one will be able to identify you. Despite these measures, I cannot guarantee your anonymity or predict

[Insert study title]

: [Name, affiliation, contact information]

If written consent is being obtained, the signature page should be signed and dated by the research participant or by the person authorized to sign on behalf of the research participant (e.g., a parent or care giver). In the latter instance, the participant's name must also be clearly indicated.

The signature consenting to study participation should indicate anything that is required for participation, and any limits on withdrawal.

Example:

" I have read the explanation about this study. I have been given the opportunity to discuss it and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to allow researchers to use my child's school records for a study about _____. I understand that no one will know whether my child was included in the study, and that participating or not will have no repercussions for me or my child at the school. Once my child's records have been analyzed, there will be no way to withdraw them.

I agree that my child's records can be used for this study.

