

**British Crime Survey – Inter-  
personal violence question  
development**

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## Summary

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Since 2001 the BCS has contained a detailed set of questions which ask respondents whether or not they have been the victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking. These questions are highly sensitive and are asked as part of a self-completion module at the end of the survey. While the current question set was extensively tested prior to its introduction in 2001, it was recognised that both the content and the format of the questions represented particular challenges.

A review of the questions was prompted by the introduction of the child survey in 2009. Anecdotal feedback suggested that the position of the IPV questions at the end of the core survey, just before the interviewer seeks parental permission to carry out the child survey, may be leading to a higher than anticipated refusal rate.

TNS-BMRB was therefore asked to conduct research for the Home Office to review existing questions in the British Crime Survey relating to inter-personal violence (IPV) and also an alternative set of questions which were designed to address some of the concerns with the existing questions.

### Aims and objectives

To review inter-personal violence questions and their presentation on the British Crime Survey, specifically;

- To investigate public views of the current IPV questions on the BCS.
- To explore public views of an alternative set of IPV questions that could be used on the BCS in the future.
- To make recommendations on how the Home Office could take the findings forward.
- To inform the design of a final set of questions to be used in the 2010/11 BCS.

In addition, existing questions on the nature of partner abuse experienced by victims were also tested as part of a separate review of these questions.

### Research methodology

The research consisted of 20 interviews comprising a mix of cognitive and in-depth questions with respondents who had previously taken part in the survey. In order to get views from both those who had experienced IPV and those who had not, participants were recruited who self-identified on the survey as having experienced IPV in the 12 months prior to the survey or not having experienced IPV since the age

of 16. In addition to the split in experience, the inclusion of a good spread of other quotas ensured that views were gathered from a wide range of participants.

### Findings

In comparison to the current set of questions, the alternative version was found to have a number of advantages, including a simpler layout and less explicit and repetitious wording, which may have caused offence or distress for some respondents.

However there were some issues to be addressed around ensuring the preambles that respondents read before answering the questions make clear the purpose and content of the questions as well summarising other key information which may be of concern (e.g. the confidentiality of respondents' answers).

For the most part, concern over the effect of the questions on those who had experienced violence was more likely to be expressed by those who had not. In fact, most of those who had experienced violence stressed the importance of gathering such detailed information.

### Recommendations and outcome

If these issues can be addressed, the alternative version of the IPV questions could be significantly more user friendly for respondents compared with the existing questions. However, the impact of a new (if similar) set of questions on long term time trends cannot be answered by this research.

We therefore recommended that the next step would be to carry out a live trial on the BCS, whereby respondents are randomly allocated to one version of the questions. In this way the impact of the different question on key estimates can be examined before a final decision is made on whether to adopt new questions.

Although the research made a number of recommendations about the existing questions it was not possible to implement immediately any changes to these questions because during 2010-11, when a split sample will be carried out, it is important to keep the existing questions constant to make the results from the split-sample experiment easier to interpret.

However, some changes were incorporated into the alternative questions, which were new to the survey. The main changes included rewording the preambles to ensure respondents have all the information they need in one place, rewording of the definition of sexual assault in related questions and the adoption of a simpler Yes/No format wherever possible in order to make the questions more user-friendly.

In addition, some of the more explicit language used to help distinguish between rape and other sexual assault was put in a separate filtered question, asked only of those who had indicated that they had experienced sexual assault in an earlier screener question. This reduced the number of respondents asked questions containing the most explicit language in comparison with the current version.

Following the split-sample experiment the findings from the research will be re-visited in order to develop a single set of questions for future surveys.

# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Background to the research

TNS-BMRB was recently asked to conduct research for the Home Office to review questions in the British Crime Survey relating to inter-personal violence (IPV).

Since 2001 the BCS has contained a detailed set of questions which ask respondents whether or not they have been the victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking. Respondents are asked about both lifetime victimisation (since aged 16) and victimisation in the last 12 months. An initial set of screener questions is asked on the survey every year to provide prevalence measures. Additionally, respondents who have experienced abuse are asked a set of follow-up questions to obtain more details about the incident(s) (such as whether they reported the incidents to the police or not, whether they were injured or not, etc.). The nature of these follow-up questions alternates from year to year, between focusing on victims of partner abuse and focusing on victims of sexual assault. The most recent<sup>1</sup> complete set of questions for the survey currently available (2008-09) can be downloaded from the UK Data Archive<sup>2</sup>.

Since the questions are highly sensitive they are asked at the end of the survey as part of a self-completion survey (Computer Assisted Self Interviewing - CASI). This is where the interviewer hands over the laptop to the respondent, who then reads the questions to themselves and enters their answers directly into the computer. This ensures them a degree of privacy from both the interviewer and any other people who happen to be in the room during the interview.

When the current set of questions were first developed before the 2001 survey cognitive interviewing was undertaken to help refine the questions. This included conducting interviews with victims of inter-personal violence who were interviewed in refuges. The initial testing was only carried out with women, but in subsequent years an additional exercise was carried out to test the questionnaire among men.

Although the questions were extensively tested prior to being introduced into the survey it was recognised from the very beginning that the content and format of the questions posed a number of challenges. First, the nature of the language used in the questions is extremely explicit. This is particularly true of the questions on sexual assault. The rationale behind using such explicit and detailed language is to try to reflect the law, particularly to distinguish between rape and other serious sexual

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<sup>1</sup> The questionnaire for the 2009/10 BCS will be available from the UK Data Archive in autumn 2010.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/>



assault not amounting to rape. While the value of this was clear from a policy perspective, it was recognised that the use of such explicit sexual terminology ran the risk of alienating and offending respondents.

Although within the self-completion questionnaire there are several warnings about the nature of the language, the context of the survey does not necessarily prepare respondents for the questions they are asked. This may be exacerbated by the fact that the questions are asked in the context of a general crime survey, and not one that is explicitly about sexual victimisation. As such, some respondents might feel they have been misled or misinformed about the nature of the survey, and the self-completion in particular. While the number of complaints or concerns raised by respondents about the explicit nature of the questions has remained low over time it has been recognised that many respondents may be reticent to complain for fear of causing further embarrassment.

Beyond the potential for offending respondents there has also been a (unproven) feeling that the explicit language used in the questions may actually act as a barrier to respondents giving careful and considered answers. If respondents do not understand why they are being asked such explicit questions or feel embarrassed by the questions, often the easiest course of action for them is to skip over the questions as quickly as possible without given them proper consideration. In this way the explicit language may actually be hindering, rather than helping accurate data collection.

The second recognised concern about the questions is to do with their nature. Good practice suggests that self-completion questionnaires need to be as simple as possible for respondents to complete. In practice, this means short, simple questions with simple code frames (ideally Yes/No). The drugs self-completion module which is also asked as part of the BCS is a good example of the sort of questions that are generally considered appropriate for self-completion.

In the case of the inter-personal violence questions there are two obvious problems. First, a lot of the questions have long answer lists, meaning it is not possible to get all the answers on a single screen. This requires the respondent to use the Page Up/Page Down keys to see all the available answers. This makes the task more difficult for respondents and it reduces the chances of them reading all the answer options in full. The second issue is the fact that many of the questions allow the respondent to give multiple answers. Again, this makes the task harder for respondents, especially given the current limitations of the software used.

While all these challenges were acknowledged when the questions were first introduced it was felt that the potential data quality problems that both the content and format of the questions created were outweighed by the benefits of collecting the information in the first place.

After almost 10 years on the survey the Home Office commissioned BMRB to re-visit the questions and carry out further testing. This review was prompted by the start of the introduction of the child survey on the BCS. During the first year of the child survey, the response rate on the survey was slightly lower than anticipated. This was driven primarily by a higher than expected number of parents refusing to allow their child to take part in the survey. Anecdotal evidence from interviewers suggested that having the adult complete the IPV module immediately before being asked to allow a child to take part in the child survey may, in some cases, be leading the parent to refuse to allow their child to take part.

Specifically, the inter-personal violence module is the last part of the core survey. This means that if the interviewer wishes to conduct an interview with a 10 to 15 year old in the household, they will usually be asking parental permission for this immediately after the main respondent (who in most cases will be the parent) has completed the IPV module. While the child survey does not contain any similar questions on inter-personal violence, the hypothesis has been put forward that a link might be created in the minds of some parents. They may worry (without necessarily vocalising this to the interviewer) that their child will be asked the same sort of questions. Although parents are provided with a card which briefly outlines the main topics covered by the child interview, interviewers do not routinely tell parents what is **not** in the child survey.

Even if a parent does not make this association between the content of the adult survey and the content of the child survey, if the IPV questions have embarrassed or offended them, they may simply not be in a particularly receptive frame of mind to allow their child to take part in another survey.

As part of this review the Home Office commissioned this piece of qualitative research to examine some of the issues discussed above.

## 1.2 Research aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the research were:

### Aim

To review inter-personal violence questions and their presentation on the British Crime Survey.

### Objectives

- To investigate public views of the current IPV questions on the BCS.
- To explore alternative IPV questions that could be used on the BCS in the future.

- To make suggestions on how the Home Office could take the findings forward.
- To inform the design of a final set of questions to be used in the 2010/11 BCS.

The findings would be used both to inform the development of the current questionnaire and to explore the possibility of implementing an alternative pilot version.

In addition, existing questions on the nature of partner abuse experienced by victims were also tested as part of a separate review of these questions. Details of this exercise can be found in Appendix 1. Details of the topic guide and question sets can be found in Appendices 2 and 4.

### **1.3 Research methodology**

The research consisted of 20 face-to-face interviews comprising a mix of cognitive and in-depth questions with participants who had completed the British Crime Survey in the 12 months prior to the study, filled in the self-completion module on interpersonal violence and agreed to be followed up. The number of questions completed by each participant differed depending on answers to filter questions. Those who answered no to all the initial filter questions asking if they had experienced IPV read far fewer questions than those who answered yes to one or more of these.

In order to get views from both those who had experienced IPV and those who had not, participants were recruited who had previously completed the survey and self-identified as having:

- Experienced IPV in the 12 months prior to the survey;
- Not experienced IPV since the age of 16.

In addition to the split in experience, the inclusion of a good spread of other quotas ensured that views were gathered from a wide range of participants. The quotas were: age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic group and whether parents of children (aged 13-16). The inclusion of parents was necessary to explore the impact of completing the adult survey on their willingness to let their child participate in the child element of the survey.

Participants were assured that the interview would not focus on any experiences of interpersonal violence, but would instead explore their experience of completing the self-completion module in the 12 months prior to the study, as well as their views on key questions. In order to minimise embarrassment and facilitate deeper reflection than in a survey context, participants were given the key questions to read on paper,

and asked to read them to themselves before discussion of each. The key questions were taken from:

- The current and alternative sets focusing on “Sexual victimisation”;
- The current “Nature of partner abuse” section.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed and then analysed. Analysis consisted of matrix mapping, an iterative process of analysing content, identifying themes, and exploring by sub-group (full details in appendix 3).

It is important to note that the methods employed in this research are qualitative in nature. This approach was adopted to allow for individuals’ views and experiences to be explored in detail. Qualitative methods neither seek, nor allow, data to be given on the numbers of people holding a particular view nor having a particular set of experiences. The aim of qualitative research is to define and describe the range of emergent issues and explore linkages, rather than to measure their extent.

## 1.4 Report structure

**Chapter two** explores participants’ thoughts when reflecting on the self-completion module. **Chapter three** looks at participants’ views of the current questions on sexual victimisation. In **chapter four** views of the current set of questions are compared with those from the alternative set. **Chapter five** sets out the implications of the report’s findings and suggests some changes. Finally, **chapter six** outlines the incorporation of these changes into the two questions sets. This will be piloted through a split sample experiment in the forthcoming round of the BCS.

## 2. Reflections on self-completion module

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Participants were asked to reflect on their experience of completing the self-completion module during their original survey interview.

Varying views were expressed about the explicit nature of the questions, ranging from “*easy and straightforward*” to “*quite shocked at how they came across*”. Views were affected by a number of issues, as outlined below.

### Understanding of survey aims/question wording

A key theme was that participants’ understanding of the aims of the self-completion module and the usefulness of the data impacted on views towards the survey overall, as well as their willingness to answer sensitive questions honestly. For the most part, if participants were confident regarding the need for gathering detailed information about their experiences, they would be willing to answer sensitive questions. However, there was a sense of uncertainty about the aims of the survey and what level of detail was required by the Home Office.

*"Why is anyone asking that?"* (Male, 31-59, not experienced violence since the age of 16).

Confusion over the wording of questions could also have a negative effect. An extreme example of one participants’ misunderstanding of the wording and the effect this had on his responses to the questions, is outlined in **case study one** below.

### Experience of violence

A further issue impacting on views towards the module, raised by both victims and non-victims, related to personal experiences of violence and the amount of time since they occurred. Participants articulated a concern that more recent violence would be ‘*too raw*’ for probing; whereas someone further along in the healing process would be more emotionally ready to reflect on the incident/s.

*"If you had asked me this a few years ago, I probably would have broken down. But because I have kind of gotten over what has happened to me, now I think doing that...is going to help someone. So it is best to do it"* (Female, 16-30, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).

*"...taking me to places I didn't really want to go back to"* (Male, 31-59, experienced sexual assault in 12 months prior to survey).

### Respondent confidentiality

Confidence in the anonymity of the survey also impacted on views, with some concerns highlighted about how carefully anonymity was protected, despite the interviewer's assurances. Related to this, varying levels of trust in the interviewer were expressed, dependant on aspects such as whether they had reported the IPV, views of the sensitive nature of the questions and the interviewer's gender. Gender differences between the participant and the interviewer could cause embarrassment and unwillingness to ask for help, although this was not found to be widespread.

*"... women will answer more to women...and if you can't make sense of the first part, you've got to ask"* (Female, 31-59, not experienced violence since the age of 16).

Although gender-matching interviewers to respondents might reduce unwillingness to ask for help, it is not possible to apply in the survey context as both households and then the eligible person from within the household are randomly selected. This means that the gender of the respondent is not known until the interviewer visits the address.

### Presence of other family members

Finally, participants identified the presence of other family members as a barrier to honest responses due to the potential for embarrassment or fear for respondents. **Case study one** demonstrates the potential impact on survey respondents' behaviour, although this is a very extreme example and this degree of negative reaction was not commonplace. It is included to highlight the importance of ensuring respondents are clear about the aims of the survey, in order to reduce the possibility for confusion.

#### **Case study one**

*Malik<sup>3</sup> is a young Asian male who completed the survey while living at his parents' home. He misread one of the filter questions and thought he was being asked whether he had ever had "gay sex". This caused him to panic and he simply pressed any button to get out of the question, which led to him being asked more detailed questions, which caused him to panic further. He was shocked that the government would be asking such things and was afraid that his father, who was in the house at the time, would see what he was being asked. He agreed to take part in this research in order to make a complaint. However, when given more information about the aims*

<sup>3</sup> Names used in the case studies are not participant's real names.

*of the survey and encouraged to read the questions carefully, he understood what the survey was about and came to the conclusion that it was less offensive than he had believed and was actually gathering important information.*

### 3. Views on current questions

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In this section, participant views on the questions from the current BCS self-completion module question set are discussed (see appendix 2 for full question set). The preambles and questions were explored in detail through an analysis of the layout, question format and language. Differences between the views of those who had experienced violence and those who had not are highlighted where appropriate.

#### 3.1 Preambles

The initial preamble was viewed as key for addressing existing concerns (as discussed in the previous section) and motivating respondents to answer honestly. Although much of what is outlined below has been included at some stage in the preambles, a more detailed initial preamble might help to neutralise concerns, for example regarding the aims of the survey or data handling.

*“If that’s explained at the beginning then the whole questionnaire makes more sense”* (female, 31-59, not experienced violence since the age of 16).

Therefore participants highlighted the need for a more detailed introductory preamble which clarifies the following:

- Question content – warning about explicitness.
- The nature of anonymity and confidentiality.
- Reasons for conducting the survey, such as to gather vital statistics or capture unreported incidents, in order to increase motivation levels.
- Ability to stop at any time if they wish, and how this should be done (ideally an automatic ‘out’ method).
- Questions all relate to both male and female victims and perpetrators.
- Their answers will be merged with others.

In order to ensure a careful reading of the preamble, we would suggest the introduction of an explicit requirement, such as a box to be filled, stating that the respondent has read and understood the introduction.



## 3.2 Questions

### Question one

Question one was generally viewed as fairly clear; although it was suggested that a wide variety of sexual touching could be encompassed by option two, “*Touched you sexually when you did not want it (e.g. groping, touching of breasts or bottom, unwanted kissing)*” and this required clarification.

*“...huge range of things from a bloke in a bar pinching your bum or somebody getting too close you in the tube and touching your boob or your bum to full on sexual assault - so quite a wide one”* (Female, 16-30, not experienced violence since the age of 16).

In addition, the above quote suggests that answers to the question could be affected by a person’s subjective understanding of what sexual touching they “*did not want*”. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

### Question two/four

Question two and four were repeated and most participants felt the meaning was clear; however views were mixed on whether the options were too specific. On the one hand, having a high level of granularity, such as “*husband/wife*” or “*mother/father*”, in order to gather information for the survey was felt to be essential. At the same time, reflecting on the incidents in such detail and identifying the perpetrator so directly, could result in distress or reluctance to respond honestly. Participants perceived that this would be a particular issue for those who had not reported abuse or were still living with the perpetrator. Abstracting the options slightly by creating broader categories was one suggestion for improvement for example by having a broad ‘partner’ category and a ‘close relative’ category rather than more specific options.

- *“I think if I was a victim of a crime like that and I had to answer a question like that, I would feel like upset reading that, very upset”* (Male, 16-30, not experienced violence since the age of 16).

Although with such a small number of interviews, it is difficult to identify trends, concern over the effect of the questions on those who had experienced violence seemed to be expressed more often by those who had not. In fact, many of those who had experienced violence stressed the importance of gathering such information. **Case study two** outlines an example of a woman who viewed the self-completion module as a positive, empowering experience and an opportunity to report her abuse in some form.

**Case study two**

*Margarita is a single mother with a young son, who had experienced partner violence in the 12 months prior to completing the survey. She had not reported this violence to the police. While Margarita admitted to finding some of the self completion module questions slightly shocking, she had answered them honestly. And although she would not go to the police, she found it quite empowering to be able to report it in a different way.*

Question three

It was felt that question three could be mistakenly assumed to refer only to female victims or perpetrators. This confusion arose from: 1) the actions described, which do not lend themselves to sexual violence perpetrated by women; 2) the ordering of the body parts - “vagina” is listed first implying a female victim; and 3) women can be abused vaginally, anally and orally. Though, it should be noted that the laptop version would select text/route according to gender.

A further concern articulated by participants focused on the effect of the explicit language; in particular it was felt that distress or embarrassment could be caused by the repeated listing of sexual body parts. As previously highlighted, explicitly stating the reasons for exploring in such granularity (in the preambles) could reduce the likelihood of distress or refusal to answer.

*“I think if, in your opening statements before these questions, you put the reasons you need the information and what you hope to achieve then you will probably get a bit more“ (Male, 31-59, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).*

Participants felt that reducing the number of options (and therefore the explicit terms) would minimize levels of embarrassment or distress. It was suggested that the first six options, containing the explicit terms, could be condensed into two options by putting all the “attempted” options (4-6) into one option and the “penetrated” options (1-3) into another option.

Question five

Certain terms (see below) were said to be potentially upsetting for victims, this was mentioned by both those who had experienced violence in the 12 months prior to the survey and those who had not experienced IPV since they were 16. The terms highlighted were:

- “*Serious assault*” – could be perceived as minimising other assaults which are by default ‘less serious’. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that

those who had not experienced these kinds of assaults would not view these questions in the survey.

- “ALL” - could cause distress as a stark reminder of the number of assaults a person has experienced.

*“Thinking about ALL the times you have been sexually assaulted” - seems like ramming it down somebody’s throat” (Male, 31-59, white, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).*

- “Once only” – using “only” could be perceived as minimising the effect of experiencing one serious sexual assault.

*“Oh, you’ve only been raped once!” (Male, 31-59, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).*

Having “More than three times” as the largest category for option four was viewed negatively as it could cover anything from four incidents to 100 incidents. The inclusion of additional categories, for example: between three and 20 times; between 21 and 50 times; and more than 50 times, would provide more information about the number of assaults. However, previous research suggests that respondents who are frequently victimised may find it difficult to quantify the exact number of times they had been assaulted.

### Question six

The language of this question was felt to be explicit, overly graphic and memory stimulating and therefore potentially distressing for those who had experienced violence. Concerns were voiced about the reasons for focusing on the “LAST” time an incident had occurred, suggesting that this was the most important or worst time.

*“If you were abused, you were abused. There is no first time, second time, third time. It has happened. You have got the information you need. You don’t have to get someone to then think about the last time because that is obviously going to then upset more people” (Female, 16-30, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).*

To address these concerns, an explanation of the reasons for focusing on the last incident, for example better recall, and for gathering such a high level of detail should be outlined in the preamble.

### **3.3 Parents of 13-16 year olds**

Of the five parents of 13-16 year olds who participated, none of their children had participated. This was mostly due to their absence from the home, either temporarily or permanently, at the time of the survey.

One parent stated that he would have refused to allow his child to participate as a direct result of the explicit questions that he had been asked in the self-completion module,

*"Initially I would be very resistant, if I'm honest. Whether I would get to a point where I would say 'Well, let me look at the questions', I don't know. My initial response would be 'Well no, not really'" (Male, 31-59, experienced other violence in the 12 months prior to the survey).*

Following further explanation regarding the content of the child survey – that it did not contain any questions from the self-completion module - the other parents expressed a willingness to allow their children to participate.

### 3.4 Other

Participants felt that certain phrases, such as “*anal*”, “*penetration*” and “*sexual abuse*” would be difficult for second language speakers and given the nature of the questions, they would be too embarrassed to request an explanation.

*"It would be awkward to have to ask the person who's interviewing you...to explain what the question means...You're probably more likely to make an assumption about what it means rather than ask for clarification" (Male, 16-30, not experienced violence since the age of 16).*

It was felt that having long lists of options for each answer was confusing and repetitive.

Concerns were raised about limiting the age bracket to incidents that had occurred only “*since the age of 16*”. It was felt that the omission of key information about earlier incidents could cause frustration for those wishing to report on abuse at a younger age. Such concerns could be negated by an explanation that this information is captured by studies specifically aimed at gathering child abuse data.

*"This stuff doesn't just happen when you are 16. In my case it happened when I was 12 so it kind of counts me out from that question, whereas I would still want to have a say in it." (Female, 16-30, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).*

## 4. Comparison with alternative questions

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The alternative set of questions was developed to address identified weaknesses with the current set of questions as already outlined in Chapter 3. There were two broad areas of concern. First, the content of many of the questions which contain highly explicit sexual terminology that is likely to offend or embarrass some respondents. Beyond offending or upsetting respondents there was also a concern about the extent to which using such language acts as a barrier to respondents fully engaging with the questions. The second problem identified was around the format, of many of the questions which have long answer lists that do not fit on a single screen and where respondents can enter more than one answer.

The aim in developing the new questions was to produce a set of questions that could collect a similar level of detail as the existing set of questions, while addressing some of the issues outlined above.

In many ways the issue of the format of the questions was the easiest to address. This was done by creating a series of relatively short Yes/No questions, as an alternative to questions where respondents had to choose answers from a long list. Although this approach might result in respondents being asked more questions overall, it was felt that this would be balanced by the fact that each question was simpler to read and understand. As such any time considerations would be largely neutral.

In terms of the explicit language used it was decided to try and address this by restricting the number of respondents who were asked the most explicit questions. With the existing questions all respondents are asked the basic screener questions relating to serious sexual assault. In developing the new questions it was decided to try and develop filter questions that would use slightly less explicit language to ask respondents about their experiences. Only those who answered 'Yes' to these screener questions would then be asked for the specific details of what had happened to them.

In this section, participant views on the questions from the alternative BCS self-completion module question set (see appendix 2 for full question set) are compared with views towards the current set of questions. The preambles and questions were explored in detail through an analysis of the lay-out, question format and language.

## 4.1 Preambles

Many of the same comments were made about the alternative preambles as had been made about the current preambles. The following comments were specific to the preambles included in the alternative question set:

- Participants felt that there should be a clearer warning about the explicit nature of the section. “*Experiences of personal relationships*” implies that the questions will be about nurturing, caring relationships rather than incidents of inter-personal violence.

*“About your experiences of personal relationships, not all personal relationships are bad...the whole thing’s a bit vague”* (Female, 31-59, experienced partner violence in 12 months prior to survey).

- The phrase “*it will be seen by no-one else*” could be taken to mean that it would not be used and should rather explain that it will be merged with other data anonymously.
- Finally, in order to avoid incidents being reported in the wrong section, the preamble should explain that questions will be asked firstly about incidents involving forced sexual activity, followed by incidents when forced sexual activity was attempted.

## 4.2 Layout

There were mixed views expressed about the alternative layout. On the positive side, the layout of the alternative questions was viewed as simpler and therefore more “*user friendly*”. Repeating the same four options for each question was perceived to be much easier to understand and answer than a longer, more detailed list such as the list of perpetrators, which would be different for each question.

In particular, participants felt that the main benefit of this format was the reduction in potential for causing emotional distress for those who had experienced violence. This was for two reasons: firstly, having the explicit terms and graphic language in the question rather than the response categories reduces the usage of terms and removes the need to identify the perpetrator/s directly. Selecting simpler, more neutral options was felt to be less confrontational and would therefore have less of an emotional impact on victims.

*“...a lot easier; doesn’t seem so personal”* (Female, 31-59, not experienced violence since the age of 16).

*"With 'yes' and 'no' answers I don't think you can get emotionally kind of attached to it" (Female, 16-30, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).*

*"I think it works better than the first type of wording for people who have actually had to go through it" (Male, 31-59, experienced other violence in 12 months prior to survey).*

There were concerns, however, that the alternative version was overly superficial and would therefore be unable to replicate the depth of information gathered in the current version. These concerns stemmed from an assumption that the Home Office must have good reason to gather the current level of detail.

A further concern was that the repetition of fairly similar questions together with a possible perception of vagueness, might lead to confusion.<sup>4</sup> To ameliorate this it was suggested that some questions could be amalgamated to reduce fatigue and possible confusion. For example the quote below highlights a participants' frustration at having a number of very similar questions asked about the same topic.

*"The question two is just exactly like question one, because it's just the same too.... It's just the same. The only difference is like...an ex partner, partner, husband or boyfriend, girlfriend or things like that. Apart from that, it's the same....I think the question two should be number one and number one goes to two, it's just the same, so get rid of number one" (Male, 31-59, experienced sexual abuse in 12 months prior to survey).*

### 4.3 Language

Due to the depersonalization, reduction in explicitness, and the removal of the emotive language such as "*fear*" and "*distress*", most participants were confident that both those who had experienced violence and those who had not, would be more willing to answer this version. This was predominantly because of the change from selecting from potentially distressing options containing perpetrators or different sexual acts to more neutral, less "*emotionally challenging*" options.

At the same time, as mentioned previously, participants voiced concerns that this version might omit essential information; for example, that the nuance of detail would be lost between attempted and actual assaults, and the severity of the assault, such as between unwanted touching and rape. In attempting to be less explicit there was a view that the language had become quite non-specific and repetitive. For example, it

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<sup>4</sup> The wording of some questions was similar because there are question loops with separate questions regarding each different sexual activity or type of violence.

was thought that the distinction between sex, sexual touching and sexual activity was unclear.

*"I'm wondering what sexual activity means if it's not sex?" (Male, 16-30, not experienced violence since the age of 16).*

Furthermore, it was felt that there should be an explanation of the meaning of "*when you did not want to*", as this term could be taken to include reluctant involvement in sexual touching/activity rather than forced involvement. One example mentioned was someone grudgingly engaging in sexual activity with their partner even though they did not really feel like it. This was said to be unwanted sexual activity, but it was viewed as questionable whether this should/would be reported. Feelings on what degree of sexual touching is so 'unwanted' that it should be reported here, was said to be subjective, therefore clarification was required to highlight that the questions refer to sexual activity without consent from one of the parties involved.

*"I think the recipient needs to understand what is a crime, what is viewed as being wrong, otherwise things that might just be not pleasant or not acceptable" (male, 31-59, experienced sexual abuse in 12 months prior to survey).*

#### **4.4 Other**

As with the current set of questions there were participants who felt that some terms could be difficult for second language speakers, who might be unwilling to ask the interviewer if they had trouble understanding a question. However, both first and second language speakers stated that this version would be much easier for second language speakers to understand.

There was a suggestion that a mix of the two versions should be used as the current version was said to be "*very in your face*", while the alternative version was said to be "*a little bit confusing*". Therefore there needs to be a version that is less vague and repetitive but without the explicitness of the current version.



## 5. Implications for final questions

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In comparison to the current set of questions the alternative version was found to have a number of advantages, including:

- A layout that is simpler and therefore more “*user friendly*”.
- Only four response options per question repeated throughout thereby improving readability and ease of answering.
- A reduction in explicit wording and repetition of body parts/activities causing less embarrassment or distress for respondents.
- Depersonalised because of choice of more neutral options, therefore potentially less upsetting for those who have experienced violence.
- Less likely to result in parents refusing to allow their child to participate in the child version of the survey.

However there are some issues to be addressed around:

- Ensuring the preamble emphasises:
  - ❑ The nature of anonymity and confidentiality.
  - ❑ The content of the questions – warning about their explicit nature.
  - ❑ Reasons for conducting the survey.
  - ❑ Ability to stop at any time, and how to stop.
  - ❑ Questions relate to both male and female victims and perpetrators.
  - ❑ Answers will be merged with those of others.
- Encouraging respondents to read the preamble carefully, for example by requiring a box to be filled stating that they have read and understood the introduction.
- The potential failure to gather key information required by the Home Office, through the omission of sensitive/explicit wording.
- Clarification that the questions refer to sexual activity without consent from one of the parties involved.
- Potential vagueness of terms and repetition of questions, for example the uncertain difference between the terms, “*sexual touching*”, “*have sex*” and “*sexual activity*”.

For the most part, concern over the effect of the questions on those who had experienced violence was more likely to be expressed by those who had not. In fact, most of those who had experienced violence stressed the importance of gathering such detailed information.

With regard to the current partner domestic abuse questions, participants viewed these as simple and clear, although it was felt that certain terms could be explained

in the follow on questions (such as legal professional). Asking for a helpfulness ranking was considered potentially problematic due to the possibility of receiving varying levels of service within a category. Suggestions for overcoming these issues were to either abstract each category even further, for example to give an overall rating for “statutory services”; or to give each professional from the current categories an individual rating.

If these issues can be addressed we feel the alternative version of the questions could be significantly more user friendly for respondents compared with the existing questions. However, the impact of a new (if similar) set of questions on time trends cannot be answered by this research. We would therefore recommend that the next step is to carry out a live trial on the BCS, whereby respondents are randomly allocated to one version of the questions. In this way the impact of the different question on key estimates can be examined before a final decision is made on which set of questions to use in the survey in future.

## 6. Final question sets

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The section outlines the changes that were made to the two self-completion modules, the current and alternative, for the next round of surveys. During 2010-11 a split sample will be carried out to compare answers to the two different question sets.

### 6.1 Current questions

Although the research made a number of recommendations about the existing questions, it was not possible to implement immediately any changes to these questions because, during 2010-11 when a split sample was being carried out it is important to keep the existing questions constant to make the results from the split-sample experiment easier to interpret.

Therefore, while many of the suggestions and recommendations made by the research were considered sensible these changes were not implemented in the 2010-11 survey. Following the split-sample experiment the findings from the research will be re-visited when developing a single set of questions for future surveys.

### 6.2 Alternative questions

A number of amendments were made to the alternative questions following the research. The main changes are outlined below and a full set of the final question can be found in Appendix 3.

#### Preambles

As the report notes, the existing preambles already covered all of the points raised by participants to address existing concerns. However, all preambles were examined following the research and the wording amended to take account of some of the comments made. As a result, all of the points were collected together into a single preamble which was put at the start of the questions. Since the questions cover different types of abuse (violence, sexual assault, stalking) it was decided to put only generic points in the initial preamble, rather than focusing on specific questions. This was partly done to ensure the initial preamble was not too lengthy, which could deter respondents from reading it.

Specifically the points covered in the preamble:

- Explained why it is necessary to ask these questions by putting them into the context of needing to better understand these types of crimes. It was felt by contextualising the questions in terms of '*crime*', it helps to embed them into the wider survey, which is clearly all about crime;

- Stressed confidentiality and the fact that answers will be grouped together so that no individual can ever be identified; and
- Told the respondent what they should do if they wish to stop or need help at any point

Because the preambles need to cover a lot of different points they are fairly lengthy and the research suggested that some respondents might skim over the text, rather than read it. A tick box option was suggested, but not implemented in the final version of the questions because it was felt this was no guarantee that someone would read the screen carefully. Instead an additional sentence was added at the start of the preamble to encourage respondents to read the rest of the screen

***“Please take a moment to read this screen. It contains important information about the questions you are about to be asked.”***

Prior to the sexual assault questions another preamble was added, which repeated many of the same points made at the start of the question set (it was decided that in this case repetition was beneficial). Apart from the points made above, it was also stressed that sexual offences affected both men and women, to emphasise that the questions were relevant for all respondents.

Finally, another preamble was put immediately before the questions related to serious sexual assaults. This flagged up the fact that there was a set of questions related to actual sexual assaults such as rape, followed by a set of questions related to attempted sexual assaults. It was felt important to flag this up since respondents are not aware of the sequence of questions coming up when they answer them –so might mention the same incidents more than once.

### Sexual assault questions

The research suggested that there was some repetition in the set of questions which were tested. The three question loops (see appendix 2) covered ‘*sexual touching*’, ‘*forced to have sex or take part in some other sexual activity*’, and ‘*forced to have sexual intercourse*’. In particular it was felt the middle question (‘forced to have sex or take part in some other sexual activity’) could overlap with both ‘*sexual touching*’ and ‘*forced to have sexual intercourse*’, depending upon how a respondent interpreted ‘*sexual activity*’.

To prevent this degree of repetition (and to slightly reduce respondent fatigue) it was decided to cut these three question loops down to two, with the middle questions being unnecessary. Thus the first set of questions on ‘sexual touching’ were kept the same, while the second and third set of questions were amalgamated into a single

question worded as *'forced to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act'*

Although it was appreciated that *'some other sexual activity'* was a vague phrase which was difficult to define, participants also felt that was important to keep this in the question so that it was all encompassing. In the end it was decided to leave the phrase undefined, but to change *'sexual activity'* to *'sexual act'* since this was felt to give the phrase an added degree of seriousness. Participants felt that anyone who had been subject to a sexual assault of any kind would be able to understand the phrasing of the question and answer 'Yes' if appropriate.

One of the issues raised by participants to research was whether the new set of questions (by being in a Yes/No format) captured the level of detail of the existing question set. To try and address this, the most explicit aspects of the existing questions were put into the new question set, although these were not tested (see below). However, two important changes were made to the questions compared with the existing question set:

- 1) A statement was put in the question to try and explain why this level of detail was required:

*"We need this level of detail to allow us to classify the exact type of sexual assault experienced."*

- 2) The questions were asked only of those who had said 'Yes' to the more generic question of being *'forced to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act'*. In the existing set of questions, all respondents are asked the detailed set of questions related to sexual assault –whether or not they have been subject to any sexual assault. As such, we are able to collect the same level of detail that is collected by the existing questions, but they are only asked of the relevant people, with most respondents never seeing the additional questions.

Example of question:

You said that someone has forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to in the **last 12 months**. What did they do to you?

If this has happened to you more than once in the last 12 months, please select all those that apply.

We need this level of detail to allow us to classify the exact type of sexual assault experienced.

1. Penetrated your [vagina or anus/anus] with their penis

2. Penetrated your [vagina or anus/anus] with an object (including fingers)
3. Penetrated your mouth with their penis
4. Did some other sex act not described above
5. Don't know
6. Don't want to answer

### Language

Research suggested that the phrase '*when you did not want it*' was not clear to all respondents. Although it was considered challenging to come up with a form of words that could suitably encompass all situations, it was accepted that the phrase needed to be strengthened. In particular the word '*consent*' was considered important, since the notion of '*consent*' (while still open to interpretation) is probably understood by most people in the context of the questions. The form of words used in the final questions was "*when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to*". This is actually broadly similar to the form of words used in the existing set of questions, thus ensuring a degree of comparability between the two sets of questions. It was felt that although this definition was still open to some degree of interpretation; it was sufficiently comprehensive to ensure most respondents would know what it meant.

## 7. Appendix 1 - Views on partner domestic abuse questions

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In this section the final question examples from the current partner domestic abuse set in the module are explored. As in the previous sections, the preambles are discussed first, followed by the language and lay-out of the specific questions.

### 7.1 Background

While the primary purpose of the research was to examine the screener questions with a view to developing an alternative set of questions, it was decided also to use the research to review and develop some additional questions in the partner abuse module. This was, however, a secondary objective of the research and so was not covered to the same depth as the screener questions.

The main focus of testing was on the key question of who, if anyone, the victim had told about the abuse. Previously the question had consisted of a long list of individuals and organisations that that victim may have told, together with a 'told no-one option'. For victims who had told certain people or organisations there was an interest in asking some new follow-up questions about the advice or support they received and about how useful they found this.

### 7.2 Preambles

The comments on the preambles were largely the same as in chapter two. Those specific to this question set are discussed below.

- “*Pestering*” was viewed as too low level in the context of the other options such as harassment and sexual assault.

“...*silly word in the context of all the other serious things that are going on*”  
(female, 16-30, not experienced violence since the age of 16).

- There was some confusion about the wording of “*any current or former boyfriend or girlfriend, as well as a husband or wife*”. It was felt that it implied that someone had been assaulted by both a boyfriend/girlfriend and a husband/wife.

## 7.3 Questions

For the most part, these questions were viewed as clear and easy to understand therefore fewer suggestions for improvements were made. The minor issues which were highlighted are outlined below.

### Question two

Although the list of options was said to be comprehensive, it was suggested that it should incorporate options for: “*church group/religious leader*”; and “*told no one*”.

### Question three

This question was said to be clear although “*Practical support*” could be explained in more detail.

### Question four/six/eight/ten

It was felt to be unusual to categorise help from family in this way, although participants struggled to articulate why. It was viewed as a ranking for formal services received rather than support from loved ones.

The questions were seen as repetitive and could be confusing if a person had received varying levels of help from different persons in this category. It was therefore suggested that, categorising the list of people/organisations into three – people known, voluntary organisations and statutory organisations could be more meaningful. This might help people to consider the help they received from each TYPE of source, so they could then comment OVERALL on how helpful it had been.

### Question five/seven/nine/eleven

Certain terms were felt to need explanation such as: “*Health Professional/counsellor/therapist*”; “*Legal professional*”; “*victim support/helpline/specialist support services*”; “*agency*” and “*assessment of your safety*”.

## 7.4 Other

Suggestions for other questions that could be included were:

- Whether people were treated with respect when they sought help or advice from statutory and voluntary organisations.
- Whether the help met with their expectations.



- Why they did not approach a particular service – reasons for not approaching a particular service, such as a previously negative experience, are not currently captured.

## 7.5 Final question set

The main question tested related to which people or organisations victims of partner abuse had told about the abuse. For those who had told certain people or organisations there were then follow up questions related to practical advice or support, and (if provided) how helpful this advice or support was.

One of the findings of the research was that people might find the questions repetitive (and so confusing) if they had told several different people or organisations –since they could be asked the same questions several times.

To try and address this it was decided to restructure the questions by grouping the various people/organisations into three distinct groups – personal contacts (e.g. family, friends, neighbours); statutory bodies or professionals (police, health service, local council); and voluntary organisations (help lines, Victim Support, etc.). Although this meant asking three questions (instead of one), the three questions were considered easier for respondents since they had shorter answer lists and represented more logical groupings of people/organisations.

For each group of people/organisations that the respondent had told about the abuse, a follow up question on advice and support was asked. The research had identified the fact that '*practical support*' was a fairly vague term which could encompass a range of things. To address this, the answer list for these questions was re-worked to make the answers more specific examples of support (e.g. financial assistance, arranging accommodation, etc.)

## 8. Appendix 2 - Question sets for interviews

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### 8.1 Current question set

The next few questions are about sexual victimisation that can affect both men and women. Although the questions may seem quite shocking to you they are important in helping the Home Office understand more about these types of crime.

The first questions are about feeling afraid, alarmed or distressed as a result of being sexually assaulted, harassed or threatened. These are followed by questions about more serious sexual assault, such as rape and indecent assault.

#### Question 1

Since the age of 16, has ANYONE ever caused you fear, alarm or distress by doing any of the following? This may have been a partner, a family member, someone you knew casually or a stranger.

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing)
2. Touched you sexually when you did not want it (e.g. groping, touching of breasts or bottom, unwanted kissing)
3. Sexually threatened you (e.g. demanded sex when you did not want it, followed or cornered you in a sexually threatening way)
4. None of these
5. Don't know/ can't remember
6. Don't wish to answer

#### Question 2

Thinking about who has touched you sexually when you did not want it since you were 16. What was their relationship to you at the time it happened? If more than one person has done this to you please tell us about all the different people

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Your husband or wife
2. Your partner/boyfriend/girlfriend
3. Your ex-husband/wife
4. A previous partner/boyfriend/girlfriend
5. Your date
6. Your father/mother
7. Your step-father/mother
8. Another relative
9. Friend
10. Neighbour
11. An acquaintance (outside work or school/college/university)
12. Colleague/peer from work or school/college/university

13. Person in a position of trust or authority
14. A stranger
15. Don't know/can't remember
16. Don't wish to answer

### **Serious sexual assaults**

The next few questions are about serious sexual assaults, such as rape and indecent assault that can affect both men and women. Although the language used is very explicit and direct, this is because the Home Office needs to understand how common different types of serious sexual assault are and how best to deal with them.

#### **Question 3**

Since the age of 16, has ANYONE ever done any of the following things to you, when you made it clear that you did not agree or when you were not capable of consent? This may have been a partner, a family member, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Penetrated your vagina or anus with their penis, even if only slightly
2. Penetrated your vagina or anus with an object (including fingers) even if only slightly
3. Penetrated your mouth with their penis even if only slightly
4. ATTEMPTED to penetrate your vagina or anus with their penis, but did not succeed
5. ATTEMPTED to penetrate your vagina or anus with an object (including fingers) but did not succeed
6. ATTEMPTED to penetrate your mouth with their penis but did not succeed
7. None of these
8. Don't know/can't remember
9. Don't wish to answer

#### **Question 4**

Thinking about anyone who has penetrated your vagina or anus with their penis since you were 16 when you made it clear that you did not agree or when you were not capable of consent? What was their relationship to you at the time it happened? If more than one person has done this to you please tell us about all the different people

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Your husband or wife
2. Your partner/boyfriend/girlfriend
3. Your ex-husband/wife
4. A previous partner/boyfriend/girlfriend
5. Your date
6. Your father/mother
7. Your step-father/mother
8. Another relative

9. Friend
10. Neighbour
11. An acquaintance (outside work or school/college/university)
12. Colleague/peer from work or school/college/university
13. Person in a position of trust or authority
14. A stranger
15. Don't know/can't remember
16. Don't wish to answer

### **Nature of serious sexual assault since age 16**

Thank you for completing these questions. The last set of questions is about serious sexual assaults. You can stop at any time if you think these questions may upset you, but we hope you will continue until the end. The information in this section is very important in helping us to understand and deal with these crimes.

#### **Question five**

Earlier you said that since the age of 16 you have suffered some sort of serious sexual assault, such as rape or indecent assault.

Thinking about ALL the times you have been seriously sexually assaulted since the age of 16, on how many separate occasions has this happened to you?

1. Once only
2. Twice
3. Three times
4. More than three times
5. Don't know/can't remember
6. Don't wish to answer

#### **Question six**

You said that you have been seriously sexually assaulted on one/two/three/more than three separate occasions since the age of 16.

Thinking about the LAST time you were seriously sexually assaulted which of the following things, if any, did the person/the people do to you?

**YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH**

1. Penetrated your vagina or anus with their penis, even if only slightly
2. Penetrated your vagina or anus with an object (including fingers) even if only slightly
3. Penetrated your mouth with their penis even if only slightly
4. ATTEMPTED to penetrate your vagina or anus with their penis, but did not succeed
5. ATTEMPTED to penetrate your vagina or anus with an object (including fingers) but did not succeed
6. ATTEMPTED to penetrate your mouth with their penis but did not succeed
7. Something else

8. Don't know/can't remember
9. Don't wish to answer

## 8.2 Alternative question set

The next questions are about your experiences of personal relationships. Again, please answer the questions as honestly as you can. The answers you give are completely confidential and will be seen by no-one else. These questions are important in helping the Home Office understand more about these types of crime.

### Question 1

Since you were 16, has ANYONE ever touched you in a sexual way, when you did not want it (such as unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling)?

This may have been a partner, a family member, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

### Question 2

Since you were 16, has a PARTNER or EX-PARTNER (including a husband/wife, boyfriend/ girlfriend) ever touched you in a sexual way, when you did not want it (such as unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling)?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

### Question 3

Since you were 16, has ANYONE forced you to have sex or take part in some sexual activity when you did not want to?

This may have been a partner, a family member, someone you knew casually, or a stranger. [This excludes any unwanted sexual touching you have already mentioned]

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

### Question 4

Since you were 16, has a PARTNER or EX-PARTNER (including a husband/wife, boyfriend/ girlfriend) ever forced you to have sex or take part in some sexual activity when you did not want to?

1. Yes

2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

#### **Question 5**

You have said that since the age of 16 someone has forced you to have sex or take part in some sexual activity when you did not want to. We would now like to ask you a bit more detail about your experiences.

Since you were 16, has ANYONE ever forced you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to? By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

This may have been a partner, a family member, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

#### **Question 6**

Since you were 16, has a PARTNER or EX-PARTNER (including a husband/wife, boyfriend/ girlfriend) ever forced you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to? By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

#### **Question 7**

Since you were 16, has a PARTNER or EX-PARTNER (including a husband/wife, boyfriend/girlfriend) ever ATTEMPTED to force you to have sex or take part in some sexual activity when you did not want to?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

### **8.3 Partner domestic abuse question set**

For the following questions we would like you to consider ALL the abusive experiences you have suffered over the last 12 months from any partner or partners, including pestering or harassment, physical violence, emotional abuse, sexual assaults or threats. By partner, we mean any current or former boyfriend or girlfriend, as well as a husband or wife.

We want to know about all these incidents, even those that you may not have considered very serious.

You will now be asked some questions about the nature of your experiences. As these questions are being asked of people with a wide range of different experiences, some may not appear relevant to you. Please choose the answer that best fits and move on to the next question.

**Question 1**

What was the sex of the partner/partners who abused you?

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Both male and female
- 4 Don't know
- 5 Don't want to answer

**Question 2**

In the LAST 12 MONTHS, did you personally tell any of the following people or organisations about the/any of the abuse you suffered?

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Friends/relatives/neighbours
2. Someone at work
3. Health professional (e.g. Doctor, nurse, health visitor etc)
4. Police
5. Legal professional
6. Counsellor/therapist
7. Victim support
8. Government agency (e.g. social services, benefit agency, housing department)
9. Helpline (e.g. national domestic violence helpline, a rape crisis line, a men's helpline, gay helpline, Childline)
10. Specialist support service (e.g. Independent Domestic Violence Adviser/ Independent Sexual Violence Adviser/ refuge/ charity)
11. Some other organisation/someone else
12. Don't know/Can't remember
13. Don't wish to answer

**Question 3**

In the LAST 12 MONTHS, did the friends/relatives/neighbours/work colleague you told about the abuse provide any of the following kinds of advice or support?

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Practical support (e.g. financial assistance, arranging accommodation)
2. Emotional support (e.g. listening to your problems)
3. Referral to another organisation/someone else for further advice or support
4. Some other kind of support or advice
5. No support or advice provided

6. Don't know/Can't remember
7. Don't wish to answer

**Question 4 (appears for each element chosen above)**

How helpful was this advice or support?

1. Very helpful
2. Fairly helpful
3. Slightly helpful
4. Not at all helpful
5. Can't remember

**Question 5**

In the LAST 12 MONTHS, did the health professional/counsellor/therapist provide any of the following kinds of advice or support?

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Practical support (e.g. financial assistance, arranging accommodation)
2. Emotional support (e.g. listening to your problems)
3. Referral to another organisation/someone else for further advice or support
4. Some other kind of support or advice
5. No support or advice provided
6. Don't know/Can't remember
7. Don't wish to answer

**Question 6**

How helpful was this advice or support?

1. Very helpful
2. Fairly helpful
3. Slightly helpful
4. Not at all helpful
5. Can't remember

**Question 7**

In the LAST 12 MONTHS, did the legal professional provide any of the following kinds of advice or support?

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Practical support (e.g. financial assistance, arranging accommodation)
2. Emotional support (e.g. listening to your problems)
3. Referral to another organisation/someone else for further advice or support
4. Some other kind of support or advice
5. No support or advice provided
6. Don't know/Can't remember
7. Don't wish to answer

**Question 8**

How helpful was this advice or support?



1. Very helpful
2. Fairly helpful
3. Slightly helpful
4. Not at all helpful
5. Can't remember

**Question 9**

In the LAST 12 MONTHS, did Victim Support/helpline/specialist support services provide any of the following kinds of advice or support?

YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER AT THIS QUESTION IF YOU WISH

1. Practical support (e.g. financial assistance, arranging accommodation)
2. Emotional support (e.g. listening to your problems)
3. Referral to another organisation/someone else for further advice or support
4. Some other kind of support or advice
5. No support or advice provided
6. Don't know/Can't remember
7. Don't wish to answer

**Question 10**

How helpful was this advice or support?

1. Very helpful
2. Fairly helpful
3. Slightly helpful
4. Not at all helpful
5. Can't remember

**Question 11**

As far as you know, did any of the agencies you told about the abuse carry out an assessment of your safety?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Don't want to answer

## 9. Appendix 3 – Amended question set

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Alternative screener questions for inter-personal violence

**DISPLAY [ASK ALL RESPONDENT IF NONRESP=1]**

**Please take a moment to read this screen. It contains important information about the questions you are about to be asked.**

The next set of questions may seem very personal but it is very important that we ask them to help the Home Office and other agencies understand more about certain types of crime and how best to deal with them.

Please remember that all your answers are strictly confidential and your information will be grouped with others in a way that does not identify individuals.

If the questions upset you in any way you can either ask the interviewer for help or pass over the questions by pressing the 'Don't wish to answer' key. However, we hope you will continue to the end.

PLEASE PRESS THE KEY WITH THE RED STICKER TO MOVE TO THE NEXT QUESTION

**NIPV1 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever done any of the things listed below?

By partner we mean a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife or civil partner.

- Prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- Stopped you from seeing friends and relatives
- Repeatedly belittled you to the extent that you felt worthless

1. Yes
2. No
3. Never had a partner/been in a relationship
4. Don't know/can't remember
5. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV2 [ASK IF NIPV1=1]**

And has a **partner or ex-partner** done any of these things to you in the **last 12 months**?

- Prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- Stopped you from seeing friends and relatives
- Repeatedly belittled you to the extent that you felt worthless

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember

4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV3 ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever frightened or threatened you in any way?

For example, they may have threatened to hurt you, to kill you, to use a weapon on you, or to hurt someone close to you [such as your children]?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV4 [ASK IF NIPV3=1]**

And has a **partner or ex-partner** frightened or threatened you in any way in the **last 12 months**?

For example, they may have threatened to hurt you, to kill you, to use a weapon on you, or to hurt someone close to you [such as your children]?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV5 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever used force on you?

For example, they may have pushed you, slapped you, hit, punched or kicked you, choked you or used a weapon against you.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV6 [ASK IF NIPV5=1]**

Have you ever been injured (even if only slightly) as a result of the force used on you?

By injured we mean things such as bruises, black eyes, cuts or scratches, or broken bones.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV7 [ASK IF NIPV5=1]**

Has a partner or ex-partner used force on you in the last 12 months?

For example, they may have pushed you, slapped you, hit, punched or kicked you, choked you or used a weapon against you.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV8 [ASK IF NIPV7=1 AND NIPV6 =1]**

And have you been injured (even if only slightly) in the **last 12 months** as a result of the force used on you?

By injured we mean things such as bruises, black eyes, cuts or scratches, or broken bones.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV9 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

I'd now like you to think about other **members of your family** [apart from your partner]. This might include your parents, your children, your brother or sisters or any other relatives.

Since you were 16 has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever done any of the things listed below?

- Prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- Stopped you from seeing friends and relatives
- Repeatedly belittled you to the extent that you felt worthless

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't have any family members
4. Don't know/can't remember
5. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV10 [ASK IF NIPV9=1]**

And has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) done any of these things to you in the **last 12 months**?

- Prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- Stopped you from seeing friends and relatives
- Repeatedly belittled you to the extent that you felt worthless

1. Yes
2. No

3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV11 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since you were 16, has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever frightened or threatened you in any way?

For example, they may have threatened to hurt you, to kill you, to use a weapon on you, or to hurt someone close to you [such as your children]?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV12 [ASK IF NIPV11=1]**

And has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) frightened or threatened you in any way in the **last 12 months**?

For example, they may have threatened to hurt you, to kill you, to use a weapon on you, or to hurt someone close to you [such as your children]?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV13 [ASK IF RESPONDENT AGED 16 -59 AND NONRESP=1 AND MODULE A OR MODULE B AND NIPV9 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever used force on you?

For example, they may have pushed you, slapped you, hit, punched or kicked you, choked you or used a weapon against you.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV14 [ASK IF NIPV13=1]**

Have you ever been injured (even if only slightly) as a result of the force used on you?

By injured we mean things such as bruises, black eyes, cuts or scratches, or broken bones.

1. Yes
2. No

3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV15 [ASK IF NIPV13=1]**

And has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) used force on you in any way in the **last 12 months**?

For example, they may have pushed you, slapped you, hit, punched or kicked you, choked you or used a weapon against you.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV16 [ASK IF NIPV15=1 AND NIPV14 =1]**

And have you been injured (even if only slightly) in the **last 12 months** as a result of the force used on you?

By injured we mean things such as bruises, black eyes, cuts or scratches, or broken bones.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**+DISPLAY [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

The next few questions are about sexual offences, which can affect both men and women. Although the questions may seem quite intrusive they are important in helping the Home Office to understand more about these types of crime. If the questions upset you in any way you can either ask the interviewer for help or pass over them by pressing 'Don't wish to answer'. However, we hope you will continue to the end.

Please remember that all your answers are strictly confidential and your information will be grouped with others in a way that does not identify individuals.

PLEASE PRESS THE KEY WITH THE RED STICKER TO MOVE TO THE NEXT QUESTION

**NIPV17 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since you were 16, has **anyone** ever indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing)?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No

3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV18 [ASK IF NIPV17=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing)?

Remember by a partner we mean a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife or civil partner.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV19 [ASK IF NIPV17=1 AND NIPV9 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing)?

Remember a family member might include your parents, your children, your brother or sisters or any other relatives.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV20 [ASK IF NIPV17=1]**

You said someone has indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing). Has **anyone** done this to you in the last 12 months?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV21 [ASK IF NIPV20=1 AND NIPV18=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner** indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing) in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV22 [ASK IF NIPV20=1 AND NIPV19=1]**

Has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing) in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV23 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since you were 16, has **anyone** ever touched you in a sexual way (e.g. touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling), when you did not want it?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV24 [ASK IF NIPV23=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16, has a **partner or ex-partner** ever touched you in a sexual way, (e.g. touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling), when you did not want it?

Remember by a partner we mean a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife or civil partner.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV25 [ASK IF NIPV23=1 AND NIPV9 NE 3]**

Since you were 16, has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever touched you in a sexual way (e.g. touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling), when you did not want it?

Remember a family member might include your parents, your children, your brother or sisters or any other relatives.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV26 [ASK IF NIPV23=1]**

You said someone has touched you in a sexual way (e.g. touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling), when you did not want it. Has **anyone** done this to you in the **last 12 months**?



This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV27 [ASK IF NIPV26=1 AND NIPV24=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner** touched you in a sexual way (e.g. touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling) in the **last 12 months**, when you did not want it?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV28 [ASK IF NIPV26=1 AND NIPV25=1]**

Has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) touched you in a sexual way, (e.g. touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling in the **last 12 months**, when you did not want it?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**+DISPLAY [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

The next questions are about sexual assaults such as rape and attempted rape or being forced into some other sexual act when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to.

We will ask first about actual sexual assaults and then about attempted sexual assaults.

PLEASE PRESS THE KEY WITH THE RED STICKER TO MOVE TO THE NEXT QUESTION

**NIPV35 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since you were 16, has **anyone** ever forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV35AA-NIPV35AF [ASK IF NIPV35=1]**

You said that someone has forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to. What did they do to you?

If this has happened more than once since you were 16, please select all those that apply.

We need this level of detail to allow us to classify the exact type of sexual assault experienced.

1. Penetrated your [vagina or anus/anus] with their penis
2. Penetrated your [vagina or anus/anus] with an object (including fingers)
3. Penetrated your mouth with their penis
4. Did some other sex act not described above
5. Don't know
6. Don't want to answer

**NIPV36 [ASK IF NIPV35=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16, has a **partner or ex-partner** ever forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

Remember by a partner we mean a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife or civil partner.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV37 [ASK IF NIPV35=1 AND NIPV9 NE3]**

Since you were 16, has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

Remember a family member might include your parents, your children, your brother or sisters or any other relatives.

1. Yes
2. No

3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV38 [ASK IF NIPV35=1]**

You said someone has forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to. Has **anyone** done this to you in the **last 12 months**?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV38AA-  
NIPV38AF [ASK IF NIPV38=1]**

You said that someone has forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to in the **last 12 months**. What did they do to you?

If this has happened to you more than once in the last 12 months, please select all those that apply.

We need this level of detail to allow us to classify the exact type of sexual assault experienced.

7. Penetrated your [vagina or anus/anus] with their penis
8. Penetrated your [vagina or anus/anus] with an object (including fingers)
9. Penetrated your mouth with their penis
10. Did some other sex act not described above
11. Don't know
12. Don't want to answer

**NIPV39 [ASK IF NIPV38=1 AND NIPV36=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner** forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act in the **last 12 months**, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV40**

**[ASK IF NIPV38=1 AND NIPV37=1]**

Has a **member of your family** forced you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act in the **last 12 months**, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV47  
NONRESP=1]**

**[ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF**

[Apart from anything else you have already mentioned] since you were 16 has **anyone** ever **attempted** to force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV47AA-  
NIPV47AF**

**[ASK IF NIPV47=1]**

You said that someone has **attempted** to force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to. What did they do to you?

If this has happened to you more than once since you were 16, please select all those that apply.

We need this level of detail to allow us to classify the exact type of sexual assault experienced.

1. Attempted to penetrate your [vagina or anus/anus] with their penis
2. Attempted to penetrate your [vagina or anus/anus] with an object (including fingers)
3. Attempted to penetrate your mouth with their penis
4. Attempted some other sex act not described above
5. Don't know
6. Don't want to answer

**NIPV48 [ASK IF NIPV47=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever **attempted** to force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV49 [ASK IF NIPV47=1 AND NIPV9 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever **attempted** to force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV50 [ASK IF NIPV47=1]**

You said someone has **attempted** to force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to. Has **anyone** done this to you in the **last 12 months**?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV50AA-NIPV50AF [ASK IF NIPV50=1]**

You said that someone has **attempted** to force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to in the **last 12 months**. What did they do to you?

If this has happened to you more than once in the last 12 months, please select all those that apply.

We need this level of detail to allow us to classify the exact type of sexual assault experienced.

1. Attempted to penetrate your [vagina or anus/anus] with their penis
2. Attempted to penetrate your [vagina or anus/anus] with an object (including fingers)
3. Attempted to penetrate your mouth with their penis
4. Attempted some other sex act not described above
5. Don't know
6. Don't want to answer

**NIPV51 [ASK IF NIPV50=1 AND NIPV48=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner attempted to** force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act in the **last 12 months**, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV52 [ASK IF NIPV50=1 AND NIPV49=1]**

Has a **member of your family attempted to** force you to have sexual intercourse or take part in some other sexual act in the **last 12 months**, when you were not capable of consent or when you made it clear you did not want to?

By sexual intercourse we mean vaginal, anal or oral penetration.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**+DISPLAY [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

People may sometimes be pestered or harassed, either by someone they know or a stranger. This person might do things like phoning or writing, following them or waiting outside their home or work place.

**NIPV53 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since the age of 16 has **anyone** ever sent you unwanted letters, emails, text messages or cards that were either obscene or threatening?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV54 [ASK IF NIPV53=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever sent you unwanted letters, emails, text messages or cards that were either obscene or threatening?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV55 [ASK IF NIPV53=1 AND NIPV9 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever sent you unwanted letters, emails, text messages or cards that were either obscene or threatening?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV56 [ASK IF NIPV53=1]**

You said someone has sent you unwanted letters, emails, text messages or cards that were either obscene or threatening. Has **anyone** done this to you in the **last 12 months**?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV57 [ASK IF NIPV56=1 AND NIPV54=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner** sent you unwanted letters, emails, text messages or cards that were either obscene or threatening in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV58 [ASK IF NIPV56=1 AND NIPV55=1]**

Has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) sent you unwanted letters, emails, text messages or cards that were either obscene or threatening in the last 12 **months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV59 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since the age of 16 has **anyone** ever made any obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent phone calls to you?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV60 [ASK IF NIPV59=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever made any obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent phone calls to you?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV61 [ASK IF NIPV59=1 AND NIPV9 NE 9]**

Since you were 16 has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever made any obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent phone calls to you?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV62 [ASK IF NIPV59=1]**

You said someone has made obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent phone calls to you. Has **anyone** done this to you in the **last 12 months**?

This may have been a partner, a family member, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer



**NIPV63 [ASK IF NIPV62=1 AND NIPV60=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner** made any obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent phone calls to you in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV64 [ASK IF NIPV62=1 AND NIPV61=1]**

Has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) made any obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent phone calls to you in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV65 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF NONRESP=1]**

Since the age of 16 has **anyone** ever waited or loitered outside your home or workplace?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV66 [ASK IF NIPV65=1 AND NIPV1 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever waited or loitered outside your home or workplace?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV67 [ASK IF NIPV65=1 AND NIPV9 NE 3]**

Since you were 16 a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever waited or loitered outside your home or workplace?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV68 [ASK IF NIPV65=1]**

You said someone has waited or loitered outside your home or workplace.  
Has **anyone** done this to you in the **last 12 months**?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague  
someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV69 [ASK IF NIPV68=1 AND NIPV66=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner** waited or loitered outside your home or  
workplace in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV70 [ASK IF NIPV68=1 AND NIPV67=1]**

Has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) waited or loitered  
outside your home or workplace in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV71 [ASK ALL MODULE C AND D RESPONDENTS IF  
NONRESP=1]**

Since the age of 16 has **anyone** ever followed you around and watched you?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague,  
someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV72 [ASK IF NIPV71=1]**

Since you were 16 has a **partner or ex-partner** ever followed you around  
and watched you?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV73 [ASK IF NIPV71=1]**

Since you were 16 has a **member of your family** (other than a partner) ever followed you around and watched you?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV74 [ASK IF NIPV71=1]**

You said someone has followed you around and watched you. Has **anyone** done this to you in the **last 12 months**?

This may have been a partner, a family member, a friend or work colleague, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV75 [ASK IF NIPV74=1 AND NIPV72=1]**

Has a **partner or ex-partner** followed you around and watched you in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

**NIPV76 [ASK IF NIPV74=1 AND NIPV73=1]**

Has a **member of your family** followed you around and watched you in the **last 12 months**?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/can't remember
4. Don't wish to answer

## 10. Appendix 4 - Qualitative recruitment and research methodology

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The recruitment was managed by TNS-BMRB's internal field team. Field managers were fully briefed on the project and provided with detailed recruitment instructions and a screening questionnaire in order for recruiters to assess respondents' eligibility to participate in research. All recruiters are members of the IQCS (Interviews Quality Control Scheme).

All participants were selected from BCS sample who had agreed to be re-contacted and recruitment was conducted by telephone. Recruiters asked screener questions to assess eligibility before inviting respondents to participate in the research. The quota requirements are outlined below. Twenty respondents were invited to be interviewed. They were sent a letter after agreeing to participate and confirmation calls were conducted 24 hours before the interview was due to take place.

### Primary quotas

Age: 10 x 16-30; 10 x 31-59

Experienced IPV:

- 5 x experienced partner violence in 12 months prior to survey (including at least one sexual assault victim).
- 5 x experienced other types of violence in 12 months prior to survey (including at least one sexual assault victim).
- 10 x not experienced any violence since 16 years of age.

### Secondary quotas

Gender: roughly 50:50 split between men and women

Socio-economic group: roughly 50:50 split between ABC1/C2DE

Parents of children (aged 13-16): approximately 5 respondents

Ethnicity: approximately 2 people from BAME

The following tables outline the recruitment quotas achieved:

	Victims of partner violence	Victims of other inter personal violence	Non-Victims	Total
<b>Primary Quotas</b>				
Aged 16-30	1	2	5	8 4 Male, 4 Female
Aged 31-59	3	5 (incl 2 victims of sexual abuse)	4	12 7 Male, 5 Female
<b>Total</b>	4	7	9	<b>20</b>

<b>Secondary Quotas</b>			Total
Gender	Male 11	Female 9	
SEG	ABC1 12	C2DE 8	
Ethnicity	BME 5	White 15	
Parent of 13-16 yr old	Yes 6	No 14	
<b>Total</b>			<b>20</b>

Fieldwork was carried out by four experienced qualitative researchers, trained in the techniques of non-directive interviewing. Interviews took place in London at community centres, recruiter's homes and the offices of TNS-BMRB.

Verbatim quotations are used throughout this report to illustrate points made; such quotations are referenced according to relevant quota characteristics.

### Qualitative analysis

Qualitative analysis is essentially about detection and exploration of the data, making sense' of the data by looking for coherence and structure within the data. **Matrix Mapping** works from verbatim transcripts and involves a systematic process of sifting, summarising and sorting the material according to key issues and themes.

The process begins with a **familiarisation stage** and would include a researcher's review of the audio tapes and/or transcripts. Based on the coverage of the topic guide, the researchers' experiences of conducting the fieldwork and their preliminary review of the data, a **thematic framework is constructed**. The analysis then proceeds by **summarising and synthesising the data** according to this thematic framework using a range of techniques such as cognitive mapping and data matrices. When all the data have been sifted according to the core themes the analyst begins to **map the data and identify features within the data**: defining concepts, mapping the range and nature of phenomenon, creating typologies, finding associations, and providing explanations.

The mapping process is similar for both individual interviews and group discussions. The analyst reviews the summarised data; compares and contrasts the perceptions, accounts, or experiences; searches for patterns or connections within the data and seeks explanations internally within the data set. Piecing together the overall picture is not simply aggregating patterns, but it involves a process of weighing up the salience and dynamics of issues, and searching for structures within the data that have explanatory power, rather than simply seeking a multiplicity of evidence.

# 11. Appendix 5 - Topic guide

## 1. Introduction

- TNS-BMRB independent research agency; working on behalf of the Home Office
- Purpose of the interview - The Home Office is currently reviewing questions in the British Crime Survey that relate to inter-personal violence (IPV). These questions are asked as part of a self-completion module during the survey interviews (filled in without the interviewer). Participants have completed the BCS in the past 12 months; therefore they will have already completed the self-completion module on interpersonal violence. The discussion will focus on the content of the questions, for instance, the ways in which they are worded. They will not be asked to answer the questions, but to give their views on them.
- Recording interviews; explain recordings are only available to the research team
- Confidential – their views will be used, but not identifiable
- They can stop the interview at any time
- Duration of interview (1 hour)

## 2. Background

- Explore personal circumstances
  - household composition
  - number of children, age (s)

## 3. Reflections on completing IPV self-completion module

**Researcher note:** *If they do not remember completing the self-completion module, remind them of the content, such as partner violence. If they still cannot remember then move on to next section. If possible, return to this section at the end and check if they then remember completing it.*

- Explore memories of / feelings about taking part in the BCS – what do they remember.
  - Probe on feelings towards self completion section (the IPV questions)
  - Spontaneous views and then probe fully:

- Views on the questions asked (ie subjects asked about), in particular explicit nature of questions and their feelings about this
- Usefulness of questions (helpful/not helpful to obtain this information for public/police/government)
- Any difficulty answering (due to: language; reluctance; lack of clarity; using handheld device)

#### 4. Views on current BCS question set; draft alternative IPV questions; 'Nature of Partner Abuse' questions

**Researcher note:** Explain to the participant that you will be asking them to read questions from the current set of BCS self completion questions. They will not be asked to answer these but to talk about the meaning and format. These questions use explicit language and may cause embarrassment but it is very important to get their views so that the modules in the BCS work well in order to gather information so that the Government has proper knowledge about inter-personal violence in Britain.

Make clear to respondent that they may or may not have had the experiences discussed in the questions, but we want to get their views on the question wording etc.

For each survey question, ask participant to read it to themselves and talk through their views/feelings as they read. Then explore the probes below for each survey question. As well as probing on the verbal response, please be aware of any body language cues, long pauses or obvious confusion when reading the survey questions.

PRESENT IN THIS ORDER:

- IPV QUESTIONS (BCS current)
- DOMESTIC ABUSE, SEXUAL VICTIMISATION AND STALKING MODULE (Alternative questions)

Then go to section 5 of the topic guide to reflect on the differences between these two versions

- NATURE OF PARTNER ABUSE QUESTIONS (BCS Current)

Then on to section 6 of the topic guide

Note: The emphasis is on the IPV current and the set of Alternative questions

#### For each element:

- Thoughts on preamble/notes – do they make sense to them, are there any issues, is language used appropriate



## **For each question – ask people to think aloud**

- Probe first thoughts when reading question.
  - initial thoughts/feelings about the question
  - where appropriate, sensitive nature of question (does this cause embarrassment or reluctance to answer – nb probe here if people are embarrassed, what would they do if confronted with this question – do they actually read it, or do they skip over it)
  - Why they find them distressing/embarrassing etc (effect this would have if they were to come across the questions in the survey – would they just skim read for example, or answer in the 'don't know' or 'don't want to answer' categories)
  - relevance of question (useful/not useful information for public/police/government)
- Explore understanding of meaning.
  - think aloud about their immediate understanding of the question
  - more considered response after initial thoughts (did their understanding change; if so, in what way).
- Explore clarity of language.
  - Easy/difficult to understand (clear language; one meaning; more than one meaning; difficult wording; second language speaker)
  - possible alternative wording to improve clarity and understanding
- Probe difficulties answering question.
  - reasons for difficulty (embarrassment; language; lack of understanding; personal information)
  - suggestions for overcoming difficulty (change wording; less explicit language)
- Explore views of overall structure.
  - order of questions
  - anything viewed as 'out of place'

## **5. Overall reflection**

**After going through the alternative question set ask respondent to think about the different versions they have seen and probe on whether they have any concerns about using one set rather than the other, whether they think that one set seems to work better – and WHY.**

- Explore views/feelings about the self completion section (the IPV questions) overall after looking at the questions more closely.

- Spontaneous views and then probe fully:
  - whether their views have changed during the interview
  - whether they think the two sets would elicit different answers
  - views on the questions asked (ie subjects asked about), in particular explicit nature of questions and their feelings about this
  - usefulness of questions (helpful/not helpful to obtain this information for public/police/government)
  - any difficulty answering (due to: language; reluctance; lack of clarity; using handheld device)

**6. FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN 13-16 AT THE TIME THEY COMPLETED BCS**  
**Views towards giving permission for their child to complete 13-16 years survey**

***Researcher note:** The main BCS survey is for over 16s and has the IPV self-completion module. Parents' are asked permission for children aged 13-16 to complete a different version of the survey which does not contain the IPV section. We are interested in exploring whether the explicit nature of the IPV section discourages parents from allowing their children to participate, in spite of the fact that they are informed about its content by the interviewer.*

- Explore whether the interviewer asked about letting their child take part in the child year study
  - how was this introduced; what did the interviewer say
- If yes, explore whether or not they gave permission for their child to take part.
  - reasons for this (e.g. concerned they would be asked explicit questions as in the adult version)

**7. Closing**

**NB If respondent could not remember doing the self-completion section of BCS at the beginning of the interview (Section 3), go back to this now, if there is time.**

- Incentive – As a thank you for taking part in this research, we are offering all participants a gift of £25. This will not affect any benefits you are claiming and you do not need to declare it as earnings.
- As the interviews may raise uncomfortable and distressing issues for respondents; there is a sheet with helpline numbers included in the envelope with the incentive in case they wish to talk to someone after the interview. Tell the respondent this is in the envelope for people who might find it useful.