Ofcom/ICO - Age Assurance Annex One: In home interviews

Ofcom/ICO - Age Assurance

Sample specification and screener- household immersions

Project overview

Revealing Reality are looking to conduct **half-day household immersions with 18 families across the UK** as part of a project investigating family media use and attitudes around age assurance.

Taking part will involve completing a diary task, followed by a half-day household immersion and interviews. Respondents will be asked to complete a **3-5 day diary task**, covering their media use and day-to-day lives as a family.

The half-day immersions will involve **observation and separate 1.5 hour interviews** with one lead child and one parent.

Each family will receive an incentive payment of £175 as a thank you.

Sample specification

This spec aims to set an outline for the sample we hope to recruit into the project. It is intended to be used flexibly, and recruitment by researchers will consider the broad range of experiences and familiarity with AA methods/techniques

High Priority	
Household characteristics	
Age of lead child	- Min 2x 8-10 - Min 4x 11-12 - Min 2x 13-15 - Min 2x 16-17
Family make-up	Range of family make-ups, including: - Min 2x single parent household - Min 1x household with a step-parent or guardian who is not a biological parent - Min 2x child living between two homes (e.g. separated parents) - Aim for 1x family unit that includes mixed stepchildren
Siblings	- Min 2x only child households - Min 2x households with lead child the eldest sibling - Min 1x with sibling(s) below 8 years old

	• Min 2x households with lead child the youngest sibling • Min 2x households with both older and younger siblings (middle child) • Min 1x with siblings aged 18+
Potential Vulnerabilities	Include min 6x households with at least one of the following characteristics: • Financial vulnerability (e.g. loss of job, financial hardship, free school meals - full list included in screener) • Parent with mental health condition, health condition or accessibility needs • Child with mental health condition, health condition or accessibility needs • Lead child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) • Lead child identifying as LGBT+
Geography	Regional spread across the UK, including: • Min 10x England • Min 2x Scotland • Min 2x Wales • Min 2x Northern Ireland Aim for spread of urban, rural and suburban areas Max 2x households from the same county

Oversight of children's online worlds	Aim for a spread of parental oversight levels:
	
	• Low-medium management
	  ○ e.g. some guidelines around screentime, some concern or uncertainty around child's online activity
	
	• Medium-high management
	  ○ e.g. parenting control apps, set screen time, more confidence in / awareness of what the child is doing online

Ethnicity	Aim for at least 4 families from BAME backgrounds • Min 2x from Black backgrounds • Min 2x from Asian backgrounds (including South, East, Mid-East)
SEG	Include a spread of social grades: • Min 2-3x AB families • Min 4-6x C1 / C2 families • Min 2-3x DE families

Medium Priority	
Online savviness of parent	Aim for a split between: • Feel confident in online activities • Feel less confident in online activities
Child's primary device usage	Aim for a spread of number of devices that the child owns or regularly uses: • Min 3x 1 device • Min 3x 2-3 devices • Min 3x 4+ devices
Child's primary device type	Aim for a spread of types of primary device used by lead child: • Smartphone • Desktop/laptop • Gaming console • Tablet • Other
Gender of lead child	• Equal split of boy and girl • Min 1x lead child who doesn't identify with their gender assigned at birth
Shared Family Devices	Include households with shared family devices: • Min 2x families where lead child shares devices with parents/guardians/siblings
Child's online usage and activity	Spread of lead child usage outside of education, weighted towards medium and high: • High (5 hours+ daily) • Medium (3-4 hours daily) • Low (2 hours or less)
	Spread of lead child's primary usage of devices: • Social media • Video platforms (e.g. YouTube, TikTok) • Gaming • Messaging / speaking with friends (e.g. WhatsApp, text) • Searching for content (e.g. Google) • Accessing news or educational content (outside of school)
Attitudes to data sharing	Aim for a spread of attitudes: • Medium-high levels of concern about data sharing • Low-medium levels of concern about data sharing
Other considerations – record only	
Attitude to authorities/government	Record only: • Medium-high trust in authorities / wider government • Low-medium trust in authorities / wider government

Attitudes to online safety	Record only: • Medium-high levels of concern about online safety • Low-medium levels of concern about online safety
Attitudes to institutions	Record only: • Medium-high levels of trust in tech institutions • Low-medium levels of trust in tech institutions
Religious belief	Include families with different religious beliefs (record only)

Screener

There are three types of considerations for the sample. Some quotas are high priority, some are medium, and others are preferable so only need to be recorded. The different type of priority will be clearly signposted.

This project asks for a 'lead parent' and a 'lead child' who will be taking part in the interview and completing the diary task. Where families have multiple children, they will be asked to choose one child aged 8-17 to take part in the interview.

Demographics and household

We want to include people with a range of different experiences in the research, so would like to know a bit of information about you. You don't have to answer questions if you don't feel comfortable.

High priority

1. **What is your marital/relationship status?**

[ ] Married / civil partnership

[ ] Co-habiting

[ ] Single

[ ] Divorced / separated

[ ] Widowed

[ ] Other

Min 2x single parent household

2. **Who do you live with? (tick all that apply)**

[ ] No one

[ ] With friends

[ ] With partner

[ ] With child / children – record how many children

[ ] With step child / children – record how many children

[ ] With parents

[ ] With any other family member (please specify)

[ ] With anyone else (please specify)

Screen out if not 'with children' or 'with step children'

N.B. Only ask (2b) if selected 'with partner' above

2b. Is your partner the parent of the children you live with?

[ ] Yes, they're the parent of all the children I live with

[ ] They are the parent of some of the children I live with

[ ] They are not the parent of the children I live with

Min 1x household with a step-parent or guardian who is not a biological parent

N.B. Only ask (2c) if selected 'Single or Divorced / separated' above

2c. Does your child – or children – split their time between your home and another parent's?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

Min 2x lead child living between two homes (of divorced / separated parents)

3. **How many children are there in the household?**

Please Specify _____

Min 2x single child families

4. **What are the ages of the children in your household?**

Please Specify _____

All families to have at least one child between the ages of 8-17

5. **What is your relationship with the lead child who will be taking part in the research?**

[ ] Parent

[ ] Step-parent

[ ] Foster parent

[ ] Guardian

[ ] Relative (uncle, aunt, sibling) Record_____

N.B. Only ask (6) if living with more than one child

6. **Which of the following best describes your child's relationship with other children in the household?**

[ ] They're the oldest child

[ ] They're the oldest child with a sibling aged 8 or under

[ ] They're the youngest child

[ ] They have both older and younger siblings

[ ] They're step-siblings

[ ] They have siblings aged 18+

Min 2x lead children to be the oldest sibling

Min 2x to be the youngest sibling

Min 2x to have both younger and older siblings

Aim for 1x family unit that includes mixed stepchildren

Min 1x with siblings aged 18+

7. What is the lead child's age?

[ ] 8-10

[ ] 11-12

[ ] 13-15

[ ] 16-17

Min 2x 8-10. Min 4x 11-12. Min 2x 13-15. Min 2x 16-17

Screen out if 18+

8. What is the child's gender?

[ ] Boy

[ ] Girl

[ ] Non-binary

[ ] Other

9. Is your child's gender the same as the one on their birth certificate?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

Min 1x lead child who doesn't identify with their gender assigned at birth

10. Where do you live?

[ ] England

[ ] Scotland

[ ] Wales

[ ] Northern Ireland

Min 10x England. Min 2x Scotland. Min 2x Wales. Min 2x Northern Ireland

Ensure spread across England – to include north, midlands and south. No more than two households within the same county

11. Which town/city/area do you live in?

Record: _____

12. How would you describe the area where you live?

[ ] Urban

[ ] Rural

[ ] Suburban

Aim for spread

13. Which one of these groups best describes your ethnic group or background?

[ ] White – British

[ ] White – Irish

[ ] Any other white background

[ ] White and Black Caribbean

[ ] White and Black African

[ ] White and Asian

[ ] Any other mixed background

[ ] Asian – Indian

[ ] Asian – Pakistani

[ ] Asian – Bangladeshi

[ ] Any other Asian background

[ ] Black – Caribbean

[ ] Black – African

[ ] Any other Black background

[ ] Chinese

[ ] Any other, please record

14. And your child?

Recruiter to record _____

Min 4 household where parent and/or child is BAME. Min 2 households from Black backgrounds. Min 2 households from Asian backgrounds (

15. Do you follow a particular religion?

Record only: _____

From questions 16 to 19 include min 6x households with at least one of those characteristics

    16. Are you currently receiving / using any of the following?

[ ] Free school meals

[ ] Universal Credit

[ ] Healthy Start vouchers

[ ] Warm Home Discount

[ ] Food banks

[ ] Disability benefits

[ ] Prefer not to say

Code: financial vulnerability

    17. Do you have a physical and or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities?

[ ] A mental health condition (e.g. Generalized Anxiety disorder, depression, schizophrenia)

[ ] A health condition (e.g. diabetes, cancer, asthma)

[ ] A physical disability or long-term health condition which restricts your mobility (e.g. difficulty walking, need of wheelchair)

[ ] A hearing or visual impairment

[ ] Special educational needs, learning difficulties or a developmental disorder

[ ] Prefer not to say

Code: parent disability/vulnerability

    18. Does the lead child taking part in the research have a physical and or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities?

[ ] A mental health condition (e.g. Generalised Anxiety disorder, Depression, schizophrenia).

[ ] A health condition (e.g. diabetes, cancer, asthma)

[ ] A physical disability or long-term health condition which restricts your mobility (e.g. difficulty walking, need of wheelchair

[ ] A hearing or visual impairment

[ ] Special educational needs, learning difficulties or a developmental disorder

Code: child disability/vulnerability

    19. How would you describe your child's sexual orientation?

[ ] Heterosexual

[ ] Gay/Lesbian

[ ] Bisexual

[ ] Pansexual

[ ] Asexual

[ ] Other

[ ] Don't know / Prefer not to say

Code: LGBTQ+ child

20. How would you describe your current employment situation?

[ ] Part-time employed

[ ] Full-time employed

[ ] Flexible employment/zero-hour

[ ] Recently unemployed

[ ] Unemployed for 3+ months

[ ] Retired

[ ] In education

[ ] Unable to work

21. What is your highest level of education?

Please record:_____

22. Which of the following brackets does your average annual household income fall under?

[ ] Under £20,000

[ ] Between £20,000 and £30,000

[ ] Between £30,000 and £40,000

[ ] Between £40,000 and £50,000

[ ] Between £50,000 and £70,000

[ ] Above £70,000

[ ] Prefer not to say

For recruiter: SEG Groupings					
	Unemployed	Low-skill e.g. cleaner, labourer, grocery clerk	Semi-skilled e.g waiter, retail assistant, security, driver	Skilled e.g, machinist, engineer, plumber, nurse	Highly-skilled e.g professional, managerial or admin worker
Degree or equivalent	C1	C1	C1	C1	C1/B/A
A-level/Apprenticeship/Equivalent	C2	C2	C2	C1	C1/B/A
GCSE	D	D	C2	C1	C1/B
None	E	E	D	D	C2/C1

AB / higher income– min 2-3x

C1C2 / medium income – min 4-6x
DE / lower income – min 2-3x

Lead child's online use and safety measures

Medium priority

23. How many devices does your child own or have access to?

[ ] 1 device

[ ] 2-3 devices

[ ] 4+ devices

Aim for spread - Min 3x 1 device; Min 3x 2-3 devices; Min 3x 4+ devices

24. Which of the following types of digital activity does your child engage with most often?

[ ] Social media

[ ] (Online) gaming

[ ] Video sharing platforms (e.g. YouTube)

[ ] Search e.g. google

[ ] Messaging (e.g. WhatsApp)

[ ] Accessing news or educational content

[ ] Other, please specify

Aim for spread

25. What devices does your child use for these online activities?

[ ] Smartphone

[ ] Gaming console

[ ] Desktop/laptop

[ ] Tablet

[ ] Smart speaker (i.e. Alexa, Amazon echo, Google assistant)

[ ] Other – please specify

Aim for spread

26. Which of these devices do they own?

Record: _____

27. Are any of the above devices shared with parents / guardians / siblings?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

Min 2x households where lead child shares devices with parents / guardians / siblings

28. On average, how much time does your child spend online (including online multi-player gaming) that isn't related to education, per day?

[ ] Low - less than 2 hours

[ ] Medium - between 2 and 6 hours

[ ] High - more than 6 hours

Spread between low, medium and high

Parental knowledge / confidence of online activity

Medium priority

29. How confident do you feel using digital devices, apps and the internet?

[ ] I feel very confident using digital devices

[ ] I feel fairly confident using digital devices

[ ] I do not feel particularly confident using digital devices

30. Which of the following things can you / do you do online?

[ ] Sign up for social media accounts

[ ] Book travel tickets & make purchases

[ ] Send and receive emails

[ ] Change account settings (e.g. passwords, privacy controls)

[ ] Deactivate / delete online accounts

[ ] Searching for information online (e.g. Google, Wikipedia)

[ ] Set up parental controls on my child's accounts or devices

Answer 'very confident' to Q29 and select 4+ options for Q30- screen as confident in online activities

Answer 'do not feel particularly confident' to Q29 and select up to 3 options for Q30 - screen as less confident in online activities

Aim for a spread of confident and less confident

31. How do you feel about sharing your personal data with organisations online?

[ ] I feel very concerned about sharing my data

[ ] I feel quite concerned about sharing my data

[ ] I don't have an opinion on sharing my data / I don't mind

[ ] I am quite happy to sharing my data

[ ] I am very happy about sharing my data

'Very concerned' or 'quite concerned': screen as medium-high levels of concern

'Very happy' or 'quite happy': screen as low-medium levels of concern

Aim for a spread

32. How much do you trust the government or other public services?

[ ] I trust them a lot

[ ] I trust them quite a lot

[ ] I feel indifferently

[ ] I don't trust them much

[ ] I don't trust them at all

Record only

High priority

Parental engagement and oversight

33. **I'm going to read some pairs of statements. Please select for whether you feel strongly or somewhat strongly for either, or if you feel neutral.**

	Feel Strongly	Feel Somewhat Strongly	Neutral	Feel somewhat strongly	Feel strongly	
I am very concerned about my child's online safety						I am not very concerned about my child's online safety
I worry about what my child is doing online						I don't worry about what my child is doing online
I wouldn't set up parental controls on my child's devices						I would / have set up parental controls on my child's devices
I wouldn't look at what my child posts online						I view my child's social media profiles to check what they post publicly
I don't worry about my child's screentime						I worry about my child's screentime
I worry about my child's online privacy						I don't worry about my child's online privacy

Parental oversight score

	Total scores	Notes
2 points		Maximum score of 12
1 point		Medium-high parental oversight (8 points or more) Low-medium parental oversight (6 points or less)

Spread of medium-high and low-medium parental oversight levels

Ofcom-ICO Age Assurance

Consent Forms and Information Sheets

Information Sheet - immersion interview

Parents

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this project for Ofcom and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)! This sheet will provide you with information about the project and your involvement. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our researchers.

About the project

This project is about:

- Understanding how people, especially children, are currently using online platforms

- Exploring the attitudes of parents/guardians and children towards the different ways online platforms might use 'age assurance'. Age assurance refers to measures that try to establish the age of an individual when they access particular online services. This is done to ensure that they get an age-appropriate experience online, and in the case of children, to protect them from potential online harms.

We have been commissioned to carry out this research by Ofcom, the communications regulator, and the ICO, the information rights regulator, who protects the UK public's privacy and information rights.

The research will help both Ofcom and the ICO to perform their duties around media safety and data protection.

We will be speaking with 18 children, aged between 8 and 17, and their parents/ guardians across the UK.

Who are we?

Revealing Reality is a research company based in London. We specialise in spending extended periods of time with people to understand what life is really like. All of our researchers have up-to-date enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") checks and have done a lot of work with children and young people.

If you have any further questions about the research, want to exercise your data protection rights, such as accessing your data or requesting this is deleted or wish to submit a complaint, feel free to get in touch with:

[Revealing Reality researcher contact details]

Ofcom is the communications regulator in the UK. The Government has appointed Ofcom as the regulator for online harms in the UK, which means Ofcom will work to ensure that online platforms are taking the necessary precautions to protect their users from harm.

If you have any further questions about Ofcom or how it will handle your data, feel free to get in touch with:

- Corporation Secretary

- Email: corporationsecretary@ofcom.org.uk

The ICO is the Information Commissioner's Office, the UK's independent information rights regulator that promotes and enforces various legislation including data protection laws and the Freedom of Information Act.

If you have any further questions about the ICO or how it will handle your data, feel free to get in touch with the ICO's Data Protection Officer, Louise Byers. You can contact her at dpo@ico.org.uk or via our postal address. Please mark the envelope 'Data Protection Officer'.

Purpose of the research and use of data

Ofcom and the ICO have asked for this research to be done:

- To help the ICO and Ofcom carry out their roles as regulators around children's use of online services by exploring attitudes towards online safety and age assurance across a mix of parents/guardians and children
- To gather evidence to inform policymaking by exploring how parents/guardians and children feel about age assurance across different contexts
- To ensure we're speaking to a wide range of people from a range of backgrounds

What will taking part involve?

This research involves the following activities:

An in-home visit

A Revealing Reality researcher will spend up to four hours with you and your child at your home. This will include separate 1-1.5 hour interviews with you and your child (with parental consent), and some additional time for observation and group discussion. There will be ample opportunities for breaks!

- We'll be observing general family time and activities, and we will discuss your online habits and family life as a whole household in a group conversation – this will involve showing the researcher things you do online on a day-to-day basis (e.g. using your family devices).

With your consent, we will audio record this visit, take video clips of your child's online activities, and take photographs. We will also take notes during the visit, to fully capture answers and discussions more fully.

Pre-task activity

We'll ask you and your child (with your support if needed) to complete a 3-day diary task before the visit. This will involve you and your child completing a printed diary and uploading accompanying images, videos and screen record clips to our secure online platform, called Connect.

This will also involve:

- Recording a selfie video together telling us about your family and interests.
- Keeping two 3-day diaries, one for you and one for your child, where you and your child will describe your daily routines and the devices and platforms you use.
- We'll also ask you and your child to upload any photos or videos of the things you log in the diary and screenshots of the things you do on the devices you use.

On Connect, if you choose to have a shared family log in, all the information you submit to Connect can be viewed by other members of your family. If you choose to have individual sign in accounts for children and parents/guardians, only the individual with the login for that account will be able to view the information submitted. Before creating the accounts, we will check with both parents/guardians and children what their preference is.

You do not have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can choose to stop the conversation or activity at any point without giving a reason, without any negative consequences.

You will receive £175 as a thank you for taking part in these activities. Only those who complete participation in the research (completing the diary task and interview) will receive this payment, but you can still withdraw

your consent after receiving this if you would like to. If you do withdraw, the data you have submitted will be erased, unless anonymised.

How will the research data be used?

Revealing Reality is carrying out this work for Ofcom and the ICO. In brief, this means that we will collect the information Ofcom and the ICO ask us to collect from a set of individuals and for a specific purpose (outlined above).

Revealing Reality's privacy policies are available on our website https://www.revealingreality.co.uk

What data will we collect?

Personal data we collect from you during the research may include:

- Information to allow us to contact and visit you: names, addresses including postcode and contact details. This information will not be shared with Ofcom or the ICO.

- Information to help us understand your life (e.g. hobbies and routines, demographic information about the household), and information to help us understand your attitudes and opinions about age assurance and your use of online services. This will include written notes, photographs, video and audio recordings. This information will be shared with Ofcom and the ICO.

How will information be stored?

Information will be kept secure, password protected and handled with care. Revealing Reality will keep your information for the duration of our contract with Ofcom and the ICO. Once the contract has ended, we'll then keep it for a further six months. At the moment, the contract is likely to end in late-August 2022 which means we are likely to keep your data until late-February 2023. Your information will not be kept for longer than necessary.

How will you and your child's information be used?

As part of our work for Ofcom and the ICO, Revealing Reality will be handing over information about you and your child, for example in presentations and reports. Any information about you or your child will not include any information that will identify you or your child in any way.

When we pass information onto Ofcom and the ICO, it will be pseudonymised. This means that it won't include anything that would directly identify you or your child, and a false name will be used. However, we will also pass on photographs, video, screenshots and screen records and audio to Ofcom and the ICO that won't be blurred or altered. These may subsequently be shared by Ofcom and the ICO with other people who work at Ofcom and the ICO as part of presentations or meetings. You are welcome to get in touch with [researcher name] to review the photos, video and audio before we send these to Ofcom and the ICO.

When the information is used in reports or other outputs that will be published (i.e. in the public domain), the information will be anonymised. This may include any quotes from you or your children, with a pseudonym, with any identifying information in the quote removed. It won't include anything that would directly identify you, and it won't include any photos, video or audio. To ensure that data is anonymised, we may change some details we include, such as location or occupation.

What happens if you want to withdraw your consent?

Ofcom and the ICO will use the information we provide for the purposes you have consented to, but you and your child may withdraw your consent at any time before the publication of the report – this would mean that the information gets deleted at the earliest opportunity. After publication, we will not be able to delete the data published in the report, but we would still be able to delete the other information we have collected about you. The report will only contain anonymised data, and so will not be in a format where you or your child may be identified.

Confidentiality

As noted above, Revealing Reality places high importance on maintaining confidentiality in all relevant aspects of our work:

- We will not disclose what you as a parent tell us in confidence about your child during the interview (e.g. if you tell us you are worried about how long your child spends online, we will not mention this to your child when we speak to them)
- We will not disclose what your child says to us in confidence to you (e.g., if your child tells us they sometimes spend more time online than they are allowed to, we will not mention this to you when we speak to you), except where there may be safeguarding concerns (see below)
- We will not disclose to external organisations other than to Ofcom and the ICO any identifiable data about you or your child, except where there may be safeguarding concerns (see below)
- If you do choose to have a shared account on Connect, the data uploaded to Connect will be visible to all family members. However, as above, information shared in the interview will be confidential.

How we will respond to safeguarding concerns

In line with The Children Act (2004), where a child discloses information that gives the researcher reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the researcher must inform the Project Manager / Managing Director and follow Revealing Reality's Safeguarding Policy. In these cases, a referral must be made to the appropriate authority without delay and in order that the child can be protected if necessary.

How we choose to act and whether it constitutes a safeguarding concern will depend on the severity of the risk of harm, the age of the child, and any additional risk factors. Actions might include:

- Signposting a child to support services (e.g., Childline, Mind, etc.)
- Alerting you as a parent to our concerns
- Alerting third party services (the Local Authorities' Child Safeguarding Board)

If you would like to discuss this in more detail or would like to see our Safeguarding Policy in full, please just ask the researcher and/or Project Manager.

[researcher contact details]

Child information sheet

Hello!

We would like to talk with you about your experiences when you're online (such as on social media websites, chatting with friends, playing games, and so on). We are carrying out research for organisations called the Office of Communications (Ofcom) and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

With this research, Ofcom and the ICO want to understand what young people and families do online and in their day-to-day lives. This could include experiences you've had on your phone, social media, the TV, your tablet or during gaming.

Who are we?

We work for a company in London who do research to find out more about how the world works and what people think about different things. We're called Revealing Reality.

The people you might meet are called [researcher names]- they are our researchers. They work on lots of projects talking to young people about different things.

What are we doing?

We would like to come and spend some time with you and your family at your home. We'll be voice recording our chat with you. We will take some written notes and take some photos and videos too. If you feel uncomfortable during the recordings, you can ask us to stop at any time and we will.

In the interviews, we'll be asking you different questions, but if there's anything you want to ask us when we chat, we'll be happy to answer any questions you have for us! If there are any questions you don't want to answer when we're talking, that's okay. No one will be annoyed or upset if you decide you don't want to answer.

You can tell us what you like and we won't tell your parents or guardians 😊. But, if you tell us something we think a grown up needs to be told about you to help you, or because we think there is a danger to you, we might have to tell somebody else to make sure you are protected. If this happens, we'll talk about it with you and this might include telling your parents, or telling someone who protects children for their job (this is called a 'local authority').

If you have a shared account on Connect with your parent/guardian, they will be able to see the things you upload. If you have your own account, they won't be able to. We will ask you and your parent/guardian what you prefer before we create your accounts. However, we won't share anything you tell us in the interview with your parent/guardian unless we think we need to for your safety.

What will we be asking you to do?

As well as chatting to you in the interviews, there is an extra task we'd like you to help us with to understand what you do online even more fully.

We're really interested in how the websites and apps you use might try to work out how old you are. This might help to make sure that you're doing things online that are meant for people your age, and to protect you from material and contact that may be harmful. These age checks will probably happen more in the future, so we want to know what you think about how you might like these to work.

Diary task and screen record

We'd like you to complete a 3-day diary telling us the things you do online and offline. As part of this, we'd like you to share some pictures and screen record clips to show what you get up to every day and on your devices (such as your laptop or phone).

We'll provide you with some separate instructions, but we'd only like you to share things that you want to and that you're comfortable with.

If we share this with Ofcom and the ICO, we won't use any pictures that show your friends or any personal information that they post about themselves. We will also remove or hide any contact information or account names before we share it with Ofcom and the ICO.

What happens after the research?

We will report back to Ofcom and ICO about the things you do online. We may share with them photos and screen record clips you send to us, a note of some of the things you told us, and video clips from our interviews with you (you will be shown in those video clips).

We will always remove your name before sharing and give you a fake name (you're welcome to choose it if you like!). In the diary tasks we also won't include any account or contact information for you and your friends, or any personal information of your friends on social media.

The information you share with us during this research will be safe and handled with care. After collecting everything (your answers, video footage, screen record, and any screen grabs you agree to us having) this material will be used to prepare a written report and presentation for Ofcom and the ICO. However, we'll remove your personal information such as your name, account name and address. We, Ofcom and the ICO will use your information only for the things you have said we're allowed to use it for.

The video clips will include your face and voice but won't include your real name or where you live. The video clips might also include screenshots from your social media activities and screen recordings (if you agree to this).

Annex: additional information

We will be relying on your consent to collect and use your personal data. When we collect information such as about your health, political opinions, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or ethnic origin, we also need your explicit consent as this type of information is classed as special category data in data protection law and needs added protection.

What information will we collect?

Information to help us contact you:

- This will include names, addresses (including postcode) and contact details. Revealing Reality will receive these details from their recruitment partners, Acumen Field and Research Opinions, who will share these details in secure, password-protected documents. This information will not be shared with Ofcom or the ICO.

Information to help us understand your life:

- This will include parents' and children's age at the time of recruitment, gender, marital status (parents only), educational attainment, background information (hobbies, employment (parents only), financial attitudes), family life (members of the household and household routines) health, additional needs including mental health issues (where relevant), racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or sex life of the individual, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs.

- Information to help us understand your attitudes, opinions and comments about age assurance, your use of online services, and related social issues.

How will data be stored and used?

- Revealing Reality, Ofcom and the ICO act in accordance with their respective obligations under data protection legislation. For the purposes of the information we collect as part of this research, Revealing Reality is the processor and Ofcom and the ICO are joint controllers. To recruit people into the project, Revealing Reality will be using external recruitment partners, Acumen Field and Research Opinions who will be sub-processors.
- This means that Revealing Reality and our sub-processors will only be collecting and using your personal data according to instructions from Ofcom and the ICO which decide why and how your personal data is processed.

- To enable this research, Revealing Reality will store all personal data in relation to organising the fieldwork (such as your names and contact details) confidentially and securely and this will not be passed to any external agency including Ofcom or the ICO. To reassure you, we would like to note that we are registered with the ICO[1], and are required to maintain secure and protected systems to protect your information.
- Revealing Reality's data protection policies state that personal information from participants is deleted from our systems once it is no longer necessary to use it; and as noted above, your personal information will only be kept by Revealing Reality for as long as Ofcom and the ICO require it for the purposes of delivering this research.

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[1] [Your right to be informed if your personal data is being used | ICO](#)

- The ICO and Ofcom will have access to pseudonymised data (data where personal identifiers have been removed) from the Connect platform and will be able to save this on their own systems. According to the respective organisations' retention schedules, data saved will be reviewed to ensure it remains relevant and will not be kept for longer than is necessary.

- The ICO will retain information from the research according to its published retention schedule for 6 years before a review. Ofcom will retain information in line with Ofcom retention policies, more information on which can be found here.

- The pseudonymised information, audio, images and video that we share with Ofcom and the ICO may subsequently be shared by Ofcom and the ICO with other people who work at Ofcom and the ICO as part of presentations or meetings.

Research findings in the forms of anonymised reports or outputs may be shared more widely with external stakeholders, such as government departments, and industry bodies, to aid discussion about potential technical solutions for age assurance and future development in this area. This may include any quotes from you or your children, with a pseudonym, with any identifying information in the quote removed. Any videos, images or audio showing your face will not be shared externally by Ofcom and the ICO.

Your data protection rights

You have a number of rights under data protection law:

- **Your right of access**

You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal information. This right always applies. There are some exemptions, which means you may not always receive all the information we process. You can read more about this right here.

- **Your right to rectification**

You have the right to ask us to rectify information you think is inaccurate. You also have the right to ask us to complete information you think is incomplete. This right always applies. You can read more about this right here.

- **Your right to erasure**

You have the right to ask us to erase your personal information . You can read more about this right here.

- **Your right to restriction of processing**

You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your information in certain circumstances. You can read more about this right here.

- **Your right to data portability**

This only applies to information you have given us. You have the right to ask that we transfer the information you gave us from one organisation to another, or give it to you. You can read more about this right here.

You are not required to pay any charge for exercising your rights. We have one month to respond to you.

As the ICO and Ofcom will not have access to personal identifiers such as your full names and contact details, Revealing Reality will be handling your information rights requests. Please contact [researcher contact details] if you wish to do so.

- **Your right to complain**

As the ICO is the data protection regulator, if you are unhappy about the way we have used your/ your child's personal data in this research, you can complain to the ICO. More information is available here.

Privacy policies and key contacts

Revealing Reality is registered with the ICO and is required to maintain secure and protected systems to protect your information.

Ofcom is the communications regulator in the UK. It regulates the TV, radio and video-on-demand sectors, fixed line telecoms, mobiles, postal services, plus the airwaves over which wireless devices operate. The Government has appointed Ofcom as the regulator for online harms in the UK, which means Ofcom will take on new responsibilities to ensure online platforms are taking the necessary precautions to protect their users from harm.

Ofcom's handing of personal data is overseen by our Corporation Secretary, who is Ofcom's Data Protection Officer. Further information on how Ofcom handles your personal data and respond to your data protection rights is set out in Ofcom's privacy notice. The Ofcom privacy notice can be viewed at: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/foi-dp/general-privacy-statement.

If you have any further questions about Ofcom, should you wish to query the way Ofcom is handling your personal data or submit a complaint about this, you should address this to our Data Protection Officer at:

- Corporation Secretary
  Ofcom
  Riverside House
  2a Southwark Bridge Road
  London
  SE1 9HA

- Email: corporationsecretary@ofcom.org.uk

The ICO is the Information Commissioner's Office, the UK's independent information rights regulator that promotes and enforces various legislation including data protection and the Freedom of Information Act. They have published a statutory Children's code (aka the Age-Appropriate Design Code or AADC) that articulates 15 standards of age-appropriate design that providers of online services likely-to-be-accessed by children must conform to. Standard 3 of the Code – age-appropriate application – states that platforms need to have a good understanding of the profile of their users, and ensure that services are appropriate to their age, or ensure that standards of the Code are applied to all users.

- Further information on how the ICO handles your personal data and respond to your data protection rights is set out in and the ICO's privacy notice. The ICO privacy notice can be viewed at: ICO Privacy notice | ICO

- If you have any further questions about the ICO or how it will handle your data, feel free to get in touch with the ICO's Data Protection Officer, Louise Byers. You can contact her at dpo@ico.org.uk or via our postal address. Please mark the envelope 'Data Protection Officer'.

- You can find more information about the role of the DPO here.

Links

- For further information, help, and support, please see:

- Safer internet: https://saferinternet.org.uk/
- Net aware: https://www.net-aware.org.uk/
- Childnet: https://www.childnet.com/
- Internet Matters: https://www.internetmatters.org/
- ParentZone: https://parentzone.org.uk/home
- Mind: https://www.mind.org.uk/
- NSPCC: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/

Links

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- Safer internet: https://saferinternet.org.uk/
- Net aware: https://www.net-aware.org.uk/
- Childnet: https://www.childnet.com/

Consent forms

Thank you for agreeing to take part in Ofcom and the ICO's research project about how people, especially children, use online platforms – and their attitudes towards age assurance methods. This document is to obtain your and your child's consent for taking part in the research and should be read alongside the project information sheet which you have been provided.

Throughout your involvement in the project, you and your child will be asked to take part in an in-person visit at your home and to complete a diary task ahead of this. Your child will also be asked to share some information about their day-to-day life and online routines via tasks that include a media diary and sharing of screenshots and screen record clips.

By selecting 'yes' on this consent form, you agree to take part in this project and are happy for us to include your and your child's personal data in the research in the ways outlined in the information sheet.

Please note that each box needs to be consented to individually by selecting 'yes' next to the statement. There is a section for you, as the parent/ guardian, to consent to followed by three sections for your child to consent to.

Overarching parental/ guardian consent

Thank you for contributing to our research. It's important to us that we are transparent with you about the process of collecting and using your data.

PARTICIPANT FULL NAME: _____

PLEASE CONFIRM BY DELETING YES/NO IN THE BOXES HIGHLIGHTED BELOW:

YES/NO	**I am happy to share information for this research project**
	By selecting 'yes' on the left you confirm:
	• You have read and understood the project information sheet and understand the purpose of the research
	• You have asked all of the questions that you need to at this time, and have had them answered to your satisfaction
	• You understand you, and your child, are able to withdraw from the project at any time by informing a member of our research team
	• You understand that your, and your child's, personal identifiers (such as name and address) will not be revealed to Ofcom, the ICO or any third-parties, and that any information you give will be anonymised or pseudonymised in line with what is set out in the information sheet
	• You understand that for the purposes of the information we collect as part of this research, in terms of data protection law **Revealing Reality** is the processor and **Ofcom** and the **ICO** are joint controllers.
	• You would be open to further involvement as the research project progresses, such as our researchers getting in touch if they have any further questions for you.

YES/NO	**I am happy for Revealing Reality to access and store my pseudonymised/ anonymised data for insight and research reporting purposes**
	By selecting 'yes' on the left you confirm:
	• You understand that the pseudonymised/ anonymised data gathered could be used to illustrate the research findings for **Ofcom** and the **ICO** in presentations and written reports.
	• You understand the nature of the personal information that will be collected as part of this research and you agree to its use by **Ofcom** and the **ICO** for the purposes explained in the project information sheet. This may include internal and external communication purposes for example, presentations, reports, publications and at conferences.
	• You give your consent for **Ofcom** and the **ICO** to share the anonymised information (which will not include images, video or audio) with selected partners or third parties
YES/NO	**I am happy for Revealing Reality to access a recording of the interview for Ofcom and the ICO's quality assurance purposes**
	By selecting 'yes' on the left you understand:
	• You understand that recordings of the interview may be temporarily shared (via Revealing Reality's online platform Connect) with **Ofcom** and the **ICO** to enable them to observe the interview.
	• We will pseudonymise this as far as possible, but **Ofcom** and the **ICO** team will not record or capture personal identifiers such as your real name, if mentioned in the interview)

Child Consent

Thank you for taking part in our research about your experiences online!

This form helps us make sure you're happy to take part in the research and share your information with us. We will ask you to take part in an in-person interview at your home and to share some screenshots and screen record clips to show what you get up to every day and on your devices.

By ticking the boxes below, you agree to take part in this project and are happy for us to include your personal data in the research in the ways outlined in the information sheet. You can ask your parent / guardian or the researcher you meet if you have any questions.

PLEASE CONFIRM BY DELETING YES/NO IN THE BOXES HIGHLIGHTED BELOW:

	I am happy to take part in the research
	I am happy to take part in the diary tasks

	I agree to the collection and use of my data as set out in the information sheet

Your name: _____

Thank you for all your help!

Ofcom / ICO Age Assurance
Discussion guide

Project objectives

- Explore parents, guardians and children's attitudes towards online safety and AA measures, including how they perceive the benefits and risks of current and future AA solutions.
- Explore household dynamics around online safety and AA assurance – how they engage with AA in different contexts, and how they balance different considerations such as safety, privacy, usability, convenience and social impact across contexts and depending on the technique used.

How this document will be used

This is a guide of the topic areas and questions that researchers will be asking to participants. Interviews will be semi-structured, and some flexibility will be needed to adapt to the individual's or family's needs. However, the different question areas will be covered across all interviews.

We'll aim to have separate interviews with the parent(s) and the children (we will ask for them to be private if possible). Triangulating the data between the parent and their children allows researchers to pick up on any contradictions or differences in attitudes within the household. The questions for each topic will be framed differently for parents and children, adapting these to their level of understanding.

Note: Researchers will carry out the observation of the family dynamics and the interviews on the same visit. A specific observation guide will be developed.

Household Immersions – Topic Overview

Parents:

- Introduction (5 mins)
- Background and household roles (20 mins)
- Digital devices and use (15 mins)
- Parental oversight (15 mins)
- Introduction to age assurance (15 mins)
- Testing of age assurance methods (30 mins)
- Scenario testing (20 mins)

Child / young person:

- Introduction (5 mins)
- Background and household roles (20 mins)
- Digital devices and use (15 mins)
- Parental oversight (10 mins)
- Introduction to age assurance (15 mins)
- Testing of age assurance methods (25 mins)
- Scenario testing (15 mins)

Parent Topic Guide

Introduction (3 mins)

Objective: Recap on project, provide information about the use of data collected and gather consent

- About the research
- What taking part involves
- How personal data will be used
- You can stop the interview any time you want to
- There's no obligation to answer questions. If you don't want to answer a question, just let us know
- There are no right or wrong answers
- You can interrupt and ask questions at any point
- You can withdraw at any time
- Confidentiality and Safeguarding
- Consent and incentive

Background and household roles (20 mins)

Objective: Build trust with family and gain an understanding of the household set-up; start to understand how rules and responsibilities fit within the wider household

LEAD QUESTION: Can you tell me a bit about where you live?

- How long have you been living here?
- What do you like about living here?
- What do you dislike about living here?
- What do young people like to do around here?
    - Are there many activities for young people?

LEAD QUESTION: Can you tell me what a typical week looks like for you?

- What do you currently do?
    - How long have you been doing that for?
    - How do you find it?
    - Do you work from home?
- Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of work?
    - Can you tell me a bit more about them?
    - Do you do these with anyone else? Who?
    - How long have you been interested in that?
    - When do you do these?
- What do you usually do in your free time / weekends?
    - Who with?

LEAD QUESTION: Who lives in this household?

- How old they are?
- Have they always lived here?
- What's the relationship between you?
- How would you describe them?
- Do all the members of your family live here?
    - *PROBE: ex-partners, other care givers or partners/children outside the home*
    - Where do other members of the family live?
- What other family do you have nearby?
    - How often do you see them?

If separated families

- How often does X visit/stays with other family members?
- How often does X stays here?

LEAD QUESTION: How well does everyone get on?

PROBE: relationships between siblings, parents, parents and siblings and other household members

- How have things changed over time?
- How do you split the different responsibilities at home?
    - Does everyone contribute. Why/why not?
- What sort of things do you do together?
    - What are your favourite things to do together. Why?
    - What are your least favourite things to do together. Why?
    - Does this differ to what people prefer to do apart?
- What sort of things do you talk about together?
    - Are there any things that you try to avoid talking about. Why?
- How was it living together in the pandemic?
    - Were there any challenges?
    - What did you like the most?

LEAD QUESTION: Can you tell me a bit about your children?

- What do they like doing?
- How are they doing at school?
- How much would you say you know about them/their life?
- How do your children behave?
- How much do you trust what they say they'll do / won't do?

Researcher to probe more on lead child, if not covered above

- What do they like doing?
    - How does this compare to their siblings?
- How much would you say you know about them/their life?
    - How much do they talk to you about things happening in their life?
- How do they behave?

LEAD QUESTION: What kind of rules do you have at home, if any?

PROBE: chores, socialising, bedtime, etiquette, money, food, permission to go out

- How did you decide these rules?
    - Why did you choose these rules instead of others?
    - What kind of issues did these rules respond to?
- How long have you had these rules in place?
- How do these differ depending on your children's age?
- How well are these rules followed at home?
    - Are there any rules that are particularly difficult to enforce?
    - What do your children think about these rules?
- What happens if your child/children does not follow these rules?
    - How stringent are these rules?
- How do you imagine changing these rules as your child/children grows up?
- How would you describe your parenting style?
    - How do these rules compare to other households you know?

Digital devices and use (15 mins)

Objective: Understand devices and platforms used in the household, particularly for the lead child.

LEAD QUESTION: Can you talk me through the different digital devices you have in your house?

- Where in the house are these different devices?
- Who do these belong to?
- Which of these are shared/everyone has access to?
    - How do people have access to these?
    - How do you use these? *Probe: use it together, take turns*
    - How often do different people use them?
- What do different members use them for?

LEAD QUESTION: How do you feel about using digital devices?

- How confident do you feel using digital devices?
- Which of the devices do you prefer to use? Why?
- What do you use them for?
- How much time do you spend on these devices?
- What would you not use digital for?

LEAD QUESTION: Which devices do your children use?

- Which devices do your children use the most?
- When did your children start using these devices?
    - How did they acquire them?
- How often do your children use these devices?
- When do they use these devices?

- [If known] How much time do they spend on these devices?
    - On school days?
    - On weekends / holidays?
    - How has this changed over time?
    - How do you think this will change as they get older?
- How do you feel about the amount of time they spend on their devices?

- How does the usage of devices and applications vary across your children?
    PROBE: time of day, as a reward, after homework?
- What do they use them for?
- How confident do you feel you know when/how they are using these devices?
- Which devices do they use outside the house?
    PROBE: at friend's house, at school
- Who supervises their use?

LEAD QUESTION: What applications, games or online platforms do your children use?

- What do they use these for?
    PROBE: entertainment, socialising, learning, school, homework, shopping
- Which ones do your children like the most?
- Which ones do they use the most?
    - How much time do they spend on it?
- Which platforms/website/applications do your children have accounts and/or profiles on?
    - How long have they used it?
- How did they get access to these applications, games or online platforms?
    PROBE: were these embedded/downloaded in the device, child downloaded them, parents helped?
    - What age are they registered at on the platforms they use?

- o   What privacy settings do they have?
- Which platforms/apps do they use outside the house?

LEAD QUESTION: What do you think about your children's use of online platforms?

- Who does your child/children interact with online?
  PROMPT: mention range of experiences of different parents to provide security for parent about not knowing.
- How do you think your child/children's online activity benefit them?
- Do you have any concerns around your child's online activity?
  - o   What about their online safety?
- Do you know if there is a required minimum age to use these platforms/apps?

Parental oversight (10 mins)

Objective: Understand current behaviours around house restrictions and parental control

LEAD QUESTION: Do you have any rules/restrictions around how your children use their devices or the internet on their devices?

> *PROBE: Different devices, websites and applications already discussed*

- How and when did you decide these rules?
  PROBE: response to specific incidents, precondition for use
- Why did you put these rules in place?
  PROBE: maturity, capability, concerns, specific behaviours or external drivers (news, government guidance, advice from other parents)
- How stringent are these rules? Are they quite hard or are they more flexible?
- How have they changed over time?
- How well are these rules followed at home?
  - o   How do you know?
  - o   Are they easy/difficult to enforce? Why?
  - o   Have there been times when these rules haven't worked?
- What consequences are there for when/if these rules are broken?
  - o   Have you had to make any compromises around these rules?
- How do your children feel about these rules?
  - o   What are the risks of not having these rules in place?
  - o   Does your child/children have any ways to get around these rules?
- Are these rules the same across all children in the household?
  - o   Are there any differences between the rules you set for your first child compared to later children?
- How do you imagine changing these rules as your child/children grow up?

If there are no rules or mention of rules that parents would like but felt unable to enforce:

- What's led you to adopt this approach?
- How do you find making rules for your children?
- What kind of things make it more/less difficult to make rules around devices/internet?
  PROBE: lack of confidence using digital technologies, not concerned about effects, trust in children, lack of time, energy; refer to barriers in lifestyle and family dynamics that may make making and enforcing rules difficult.

LEAD QUESTION: Do you use any parental controls or restrictions on your children's devices or on platforms (e.g. Sky, Netflix, Amazon, Hulu) they use?

- What settings do you use?
  - o   How easy is it to use these settings?
- Do you use any content filters on your network?

- o   How does this work?
- o   What settings do you use?
- What made you use these settings in the first place?
- Do these settings work?

LEAD QUESTION: How confident do you feel about being able to oversee how your children use the internet?

- Are there any rules you would like but which are too difficult to enforce?
  - o   Is there anything you'd like to change?
- Do you have any concerns about your children's online use?

LEAD QUESTION: How do you think the rules you have at home compare to other families?

Introduction to age assurance (15 mins)

Objective: Explore their awareness and understanding of age assurance methods

LEAD QUESTION: What restrictions/ controls/ safety measures are there on the site/platforms/apps that your child uses, if any?

PROBE: Parental control, passwords, proof of age

- What do these measures do?
    PROBE: restrict access, tailor content, alter language
- How do these measures work?
  - o   What works well about them?
  - o   What is good/bad about them?
- How do you feel about having to share your/your child's age online?
- Why do you think these measures are in place?
- How do these measures affect you/your child?
- What other safety measures or restrictions are there on these sites/platforms/apps?

LEAD QUESTION: Have you heard of age assurance or age verification?

- Where have you encountered this before?
- How do you think it affects your/your child's experience?

LEAD QUESTION: What do you think about having to provide your/your child's age whilst using the internet?

- What are the positives/benefits of having to provide your age whilst using the internet?
  - o   In what way do you think websites/platforms checking your/your child's age is good?
- What are the negatives/draw backs of having to provide your age whilst using the internet?
  - o   In what way do you think websites/platforms checking your/your child's age is bad?
- What do you think about the privacy intrusion into the lives of adults online in order to protect the safety of children online? How important do you think it is?
  - o   *PROBE: everyone would have to use an AA measure, not just children*
- When do you think age assurance/verification is more or less important?
  - o   Type of platform / website?
  - o   Age of child?
  - o   Activity they are trying to do?
  - o   Other factor?

LEAD QUESTION: How would you feel about age assurance in these scenarios? Why?

- What's good/bad about using age assurance here? Why?

Researcher to introduce additional prompts for pros and cons if needed to aid discussion (e.g. if respondent is overly positive or negative):

- *Pros:*
    - *Protection from potentially inappropriate content*
    - *Aligning with other families about what child can and can't access*
- *Cons:*
    - *Potentially missing out on experiences with peers*
    - *Accessing a smaller range of online content*
    - *Requirement to insert data / information online*

LEAD QUESTION: Who do you think is responsible for protecting children online?

> *PROBE: Online platform providers, parents, children, government*

- How 'flexible' do you think online measures should be?
    - *PROBE: Allow some workarounds / parental intervention*
- How much would you like to be able to intervene in these measures?
- If something bad happens to a child online, who do you think should be responsible for that?

Testing of age assurance methods (30 mins)

Objective: Understand attitudes and concerns towards age assurance methods

INTRODUCTION: There are a number of different techniques that can be used for checking the age of internet users, we're interested in finding out what you think about these different techniques. There are few different techniques. These might often be applied to all users, because otherwise platforms can't tell who is a child or not. We'll go through each individually, but these are the different kinds of techniques that exist…

LEAD QUESTION: Have you heard of any of these? Which of these seem more/less appealing to you?

- Why?

Go through each of the age assurance techniques, offer an explanation and then ask the following questions. Researcher to ask key prompts in the table and capture responses in this, before asking technique-specific probes below.

Researcher to show respondents explanation slide and examples for each method	*Researcher to record in data capture grid for each method*

Self-declaration

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable doing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Self-declaration involves giving your age or date of birth, or confirming you are over the minimum age to use an app, platform or service.

Key probes for self-declaration specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- How effective do you think this would be?
- How do you think you or others would try to get around using this technique?
  - Have you or your child lied about your age?
  - Have you tried to get around this technique or helped you child get around it?
- Who do you think it wouldn't work for?
- How often would you want to input your / your child's details?
- How would your feelings about this technique change over time?
  - PROBE: As your child gets older? If they were younger?
- How often would you want to input these details?
- In which situations would you be happy for you / your child to do this?
  - *PROBE: which context, in which platforms or services*
  - In which situations wouldn't you be happy to do this?
- How effective do you think this might be in different situations?

Hard identifiers

This is the submission of official documentation (or a scan of such documentation) such as a passport or driving licence. You could upload it to the platform / website you're using directly, or use a third party provider.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable providing this? Why?	**What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?**	**Any other reflections?**

Key probes for hard identifiers specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- How effective do you think this would be in different situations?
- Do you have the documents they're asking for? (e.g. passport, driving licence)
    - Would any of these be easier or more difficult than others for you to use?
    - Would you prefer to use any of these over the others?
- How do you think you or others would try to get around using this technique?
    - What would you do if you couldn't use this technique?
    - Who do you think this wouldn't work for?
- Does your child have the documents they're asking for?
    - How do you think it would work for them?
- Is there anyone you think this wouldn't work well for?
- How often would you want to share your ID?
    - How would you want to do it? (e.g. upload a photo to the platform, use another third party platform)
        - *Explanation: some third-party platforms act as a secure digital ID. You can add your ID to the app and show the app when you would like to prove your identity. The third-party platform will then provide a yes / no answer to the service you are trying to access without giving your date of birth. This means you wouldn't have to show/upload your ID every time.*
    - How do you feel about this?
        - Probe: ease of use / level of data given to each platform / security of data

- How important do you think it is for companies / platforms to have this information as well as your age?
- In which situations would you be happy for you / your child to do this?
    - In which situations wouldn't you be happy to do this?
- How do you feel about sharing your ID / documents with platforms?
    - *PROBE: About each type of ID / documentation?*
    - How would you feel about at the same time sharing more information than your age via your ID documents?
- How do you feel about sharing your child's ID / documents with platforms?
- How would this change over time?
    - PROBE: as your child gets older? If they were younger?

Payment methods:

Services could also use your credit or debit card details to verify your age.

- How would you feel about verifying your age using a payment method?
    - What would the pros and cons be?
- Do you have a payment method (credit or debit card) that you could use for this?
    - What would you do if you didn't?
    - How do you think this would work for your child?
- In what situations would using a payment method be good?
    - In what situations would it be bad?
    - When would and wouldn't you want to use it?
- How would you feel about using this method in situations when you were VS weren't making a payment?
- What concerns would you have about this method?

Facial image analysis

A facial image is analysed by an AI system that has been trained on a database of facial images of known ages - this could include uploading a selfie or selfie video showing your face

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable providing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for facial image analysis specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- [If encountered before] What did you have to do?
    - PROBE: Upload a selfie, upload video clips, facial scanning tool on an app
- How effective do you think it would be at assuring someone's age? Why?
- Do you have everything you need for this? (e.g. a cameraphone, webcam etc)
    - Does your child have everything they need for this?
- What would you do if you didn't have a camera?
    - How do you think you or others would try to get around using this technique?
- Which situations does this method feel more or less suitable for?
    - In which situations would you be happy for you / your child to do this?
    - In which situations wouldn't you be happy to do this?
- How effective do you think this might be in different situations?

- How do you feel about sharing images of yourself with platforms / services?
    - PROBE: for different platforms / services?
    - How would you feel about uploading a selfie vs a video of yourself?
    - What do you think they do with the images you provide?
- How do you feel about sharing images of your child with platforms / services?
    - PROBE: for different platforms / services?
- How would this change over time?
    - PROBE: as your child gets older? If they were younger?
- How often would you want to upload your image?
    - PROBE: when signing up for an account, every time you log in, when downloading the app for the first time etc
    - How would you want to do it? (e.g. upload a photo to the platform, use another third party, clip stored on your phone)
- What do you think services / platforms do with the images you upload?
- How would you want your images to be reviewed?
    - PROBE: by a person working for the company, by a third party app or company, by AI / computer with no human element
- How would you feel about sharing your image for different types of services?
    - Social media
    - Online banking
    - Video streaming

Behavioural profiling

Behavioural profiling based on your online behaviour, such as mouse and keyboard analysis, browsing and purchasing habits, things you post and the age of people you are friends with. It's a little like how platforms search for content that breaks their rules already, like bad language and rude images.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel this is appropriate? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for behavioural profiling specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- [If encountered before] How did you know behavioural profiling was being used?
    - How was it communicated?
- What do you know about this as a technique?
    - What do you think they look at?
- What do you think is good about it? What would the benefits be?

- What do you think is bad about it? What would the drawbacks be?
    - *PROBE: volume of data being collected/tracked*
- Do you think the benefits outweigh the drawbacks?
- How do you think platforms / services get this information about your behaviours?
    - How do you think this would be used?
    - How do you think this would be stored?

- What activity / content would you feel most comfortable being analysed?
    - What about for your child?
- What activity / content would you feel least comfortable being analysed?
    - What about for your child?

Researcher to probe around distinction between public / private content being monitored:

- How would you feel about…
    - The language in your public posts being analysed?
    - Your follow / friend lists being analysed?
    - Your search history being analysed?
    - The language in your private messages being analysed?
    - The language / content in your group chats being analysed?

- How do you think being analysed would impact your behaviour, if at all?
    - And your child's?
- How regularly would you expect them to analyse your behaviour?
    - PROBE: constantly, at regular intervals, every now and again etc
    - How often would you feel comfortable with them analysing your behaviour?
    - How do you feel about the idea of them analysing your behaviour all the time?
- How would you feel about this technique change over time?
    - PROBE: as your child gets older? If they were younger?

Authentication by parent / guardian

The child's age is confirmed by another connected account-holder (such as a parent or guardian). The parent could receive an email or notification asking them to click on a link to provide verification that their child is above a certain age, or to grant permission for them to access the requested content.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable doing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for parent / guardian authentication specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- How would you want to verify your child's age?
  - PROBE: email, text, app notification
- How often would you want to verify your child's age?
- Do you feel as though it should be your responsibility to do this, or somebody else's?
- How would this change over time?
  - PROBE: As they get older? When they were younger?
- How do you think platforms / services establish the relationship between a parent / guardian and a child?
- How robust do you think a measure like this is?
- How well do you think this kind of measure would work?
  - Can you think of any problems that using it could involve?
  - Can you think of any ways that it might not work in practice?
  - How appropriate do you think this measure is for families?

Cross-platform authentication

A person could provide their age on one account using one of the techniques mentioned previously (e.g. hard identifiers, facial analysis). They could then log into another service by using this account.

- How would you feel about logging into one service using another account?
  - Do you currently do this for any of the services you use?
  - What do you think about it?
  - What are the pros?
  - What are the cons?
    - Prompt: privacy / not having to share data with second service / ease / lack of clarity around data sharing

PROMPT: <u>Overview of all age assurance techniques discussed.</u>

LEAD QUESTION: Are there any of these techniques you prefer more than others?

- Which do you think would work best?
  - In which environment or online service?
- Which do you have concerns about?
  - What concerns do you have and why?
- Which do you feel most comfortable with using?
  - How so and why?

LEAD QUESTION: How do you think these techniques would affect your family?

- How do you think they would affect you as an adult?
- How do you think they would affect children?
- What do you think the risks are without these kinds of technologies?

LEAD QUESTION: Do you think any of these techniques are more/less appropriate for different areas of the internet?

- How would you want these kinds of techniques to differ depending on website and/or content?
- Who do you think would be unable to use these different techniques?

- Who do you think might be unable to use an online service with these different techniques?

Scenario testing (20 minutes)

We have a few different scenarios of situations where age assurance and age verification techniques might be used, I'll go through each one and we can discuss what you think about this situation, what your preferences would be if you were in that situation and what problems you think different techniques could create.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCHER:

Researcher to adapt scenarios to the age of the respondent's child and choose 2-3 scenarios that most closely matches their child's online activities to relate reflections back to their child's activities. Researcher to probe around the respondent's child's online activities and types of preferred age assurance where similar to the scenarios.

Researcher to probe in depth into the preferred AA method mentioned by respondents for each scenario.

Scenarios to include:

- Daniel, [age], wants to play an 18+ rated game
- Annie, [age], wants to join Instagram as she is interested in art
- Jessie, [age], wants to join Snapchat to talk to friends
- Jordan, [age], wants to watch age-restricted videos online

For each scenario and for respondent's own children, researcher to ask:

General reflections on type of age assurance:

LEAD QUESTION: What type of age assurance method would you prefer here? Why?

- What type of age assurance would method you not like here? Why?
- How might this change with your child's age?
  - o What if they were younger?
  - o What if they were older?
- How do you think they might get around this restriction/ safety measure?
- What could be in place to prevent children/young people to get around these?

For preferred type of age assurance:

- Why is this your preference?
  - o What are the benefits over other age assurance measures in this situation?
  - o How effective do you think it would be compared to the other options?
  - o What are the downsides for this type of age assurance in this situation?
- How comfortable would you feel using this type of age assurance if it were you / your child?
  - o How might this change over time?
- What concerns would you have about this type of age assurance in this situation?
  - o How would you feel about the information you would share?

- At what points would you want this type of age assurance to happen in this situation?
  - o PROBE: when they open their phone, when they download the app, when they sign up for an account, every time they log in
- How often would you want this type of age assurance to happen?
  - o PROBE: every time they do it, every time they sign up for an account etc

- What role would you want to have in the age assurance in this situation?
    - PROBE: verifying information inputted by your child, verifying their age through your accounts, leaving responsibility to online websites/platforms
    - How often would you want to be involved in age assurance in this situation?

Across the case studies take the opportunity to ask questions and tease about different tensions around:

- Confidence in different techniques for assuring age (high / low)
- Privacy of the technique (amount of information required / anonymous information / personal identification)
- Suitability of the technique to the scenario (proportionality to risk)
- Data processing and storage (one-time use / long-term storage)
    - Level of security of storage of information
    - Transparency about methods used and how information is processed/stored
- Convenience (ease of use / lack of friction / single usage)
- Accessibility (inclusive / exclusive) to certain people
- Context (service or product being used and ideas of severity)

Child Interview

Questions in this section have been simplified from the parent questions, but researchers will adapt tone and language further where needed for younger respondents.

Introduction (3 mins)

Objective: Recap on project, provide information about the use of data collected and gather consent

- About the research
- What taking part involves
- How personal data will be used
- You can stop the interview any time you want to
- There's no obligation to answer questions. If you don't want to answer a question, just let us know
- There are no right or wrong answers
- You can interrupt and ask questions at any point
- You can withdraw at any time
- Confidentiality and Safeguarding
- Consent and incentive

Background and household roles (15 mins)

Objective: Build trust with family and gain an understanding of the household set-up

LEAD QUESTION: What have you been up to recently?

- Are you looking forward to the summer holidays?
- What are you going to be doing over the break?
- What do you like to do around here?

LEAD QUESTION: What do you usually do each day?

- Do you have any hobbies?
    - What do you like to do?
    - How long have you been doing that?
    - Do you do that with anyone else?
- What do you like to do at the weekends and after school?
- Do you go to school?
    - What do you like about it?
    - What do you dislike about it?
    - Do you have any subjects you like/dislike?

LEAD QUESTION: Who do you live with?

- How old are they?
- What do they do?
- Do all your family live here or do some of them live somewhere else?
    - *PROBE: ex-partners, other care givers or partners/children / relatives outside the home*
        - Do you always stay here or do you stay at other houses sometimes?
        - When do you stay here/there?

LEAD QUESTION: How well does everyone get on?

PROBE: relationships between siblings, parents, parents and siblings and other household members

- What is it like living with your family?
    - Do you get along well?
- What sort of things do you do together?

- o What are your favourite things to do together. Why?
- o What are your least favourite things to do together. Why?
- What do you like to talk to your family about?
- How was it being here in the lock-down?
  - o What was good about it?
  - o What was difficult about it?

LEAD QUESTION: What kind of rules are there?

PROBE: chores, socialising, bedtime, etiquette, money, food/snacks, permission to go out

- When did these rules start?
  - o What do you think about the rules?
  - o Do you know why the rules were made?
- What kind of chores do you have to do at home?
  - o Do you always do these?
- Do your siblings have the same rules or are they different?
- How easy is it to follow the rules?
  - o Do you ever break them?
- What happens if you break the rules?

If child lives across multiple households:

- What are the rules like in your other house?

Repeat above questions

Digital devices and use (15 mins)

Objective: Understand devices and platforms used in the household

LEAD QUESTION: Can you show me the different devices you use?

- Where in the house are these?
- Who do these belong to?
- When did you get this/were you allowed to start using this?
- Which of these are shared/everyone has access to?
  - o When do different people use them?
  - o How do you use these with others? *Probe: use it together, take turns*

LEAD QUESTION: What do you use your different devices for?

- PROBE: social media, gaming, looking things up, YouTube, video calling, other ways of messaging
- Which do you use the most?
- Which do you prefer using?
- Which if the devices do you least like?
- How much time do you spend on your devices?
- Where do you tend to use them?
  - o PROBE: in your bedroom, in the living room, in a playroom etc
- Are there any websites/apps/games that you can use at friends' houses but not at home?
  - o What do you like about these?
  - o Why can't you use these at home?

LEAD QUESTION: What would it be like if you couldn't use these?

- How would it make you feel?
- What would you do instead?

LEAD QUESTION: Do other people in your family also use these websites/apps/games?

- Who else do you know that uses them?
- Do your friends use the same ones?
  - Which friends are these?
    PROBE: made in real life or made online

LEAD QUESTION: Do your friends have any devices or websites they use that you don't?

- How does that make you feel?
- What kind of websites/applications are you allowed to use at friends' houses that you can't use at home?
  - Do your parents know you do this?

LEAD QUESTION: What websites/apps/games do you use?

- What do you do on these different platforms?
  - What is good about them?
  - What is bad about them?
- What platforms/websites do you have accounts on?
  - When did you set these up and how?
- How often do you use these?
- Who do you speak to/interact with through these platforms?
- Do you ever have any problems on these platforms?
- Do you talk to your family members and friends about what you do on these?
  - What kind of things do you tell them about? How come?
  - Is there anything you definitely don't tell them about? How come?

LEAD QUESTION: How much do you think your parents understand about the websites/games you use?

- Have they ever used them?
  - Do you ever play with them, or when they're in the room?
- How often do your parents ask about what you do online?
  - How much do you tell them about what you do online? How come?
  - What things would you feel happy telling them about the things you do online?
  - What things wouldn't you want to tell them about the things you do online?

Parental oversight (10 mins)

Objective: Understand current behaviours around house restrictions and parental control

LEAD QUESTION: Do your parents have any rules around your devices and what you do on them?

> *PROBE: Different devices, websites and applications already discussed*

- When did they make these rules?
  - Do you know why they made them?
  - Have the rules changed at all?
- Are these rules the same for your siblings?
  - Why? Why not?
- Do you ever break these rules?
  - How often does this happen?
  - How come you break the rules?
- What happens if you break the rules?
  - How do your parents find out?
  - Have you ever gotten in trouble about it?
- What do you think about these rules?

- Can you find ways to get around these rules without your parents finding out?
    - Do any of your siblings have any ways of getting around these?
    - Do any of your friends have any ways of getting around rules their parents have?
- How do you think these rules will change as you get older?

LEAD QUESTION: Do your parents have any parental controls set up on your devices?

PROBE: time limits on usage, only letting you use them at certain times, screen time limits on certain apps, restricting access to certain apps / websites

- Who set these?
- What do the controls stop you from doing?
    - How do you feel about this?
- Do they have these set up for your siblings too?
- Have you found out how to get round them?
    - How do you do this?

LEAD QUESTION: Do other people your age have rules like this too?

- What rules do they have?
- Do any of your friends have different rules to you?
- What do you think about this?
- Do you think these rules are better/worse than the ones you have at home? Why?

Introduction to age assurance (15 mins)

Objective: Explore their awareness and understanding of age assurance methods

LEAD QUESTION: Are there any age limits on the websites you use?

PROBE: websites / apps mentioned by respondents above

- What are these?
- Why do you think these exist?
- How do you think these affect what you can do on the website?
- What age are you registered as on these platforms?
- Do you have public or private accounts on these platforms?
    - What difference do you think this makes?
- Have you noticed any things on websites that are meant to make it safer?

LEAD QUESTION: Have you had to say how old you are when using any websites or apps?

- Where have you had to do this?
- How did it work?
- What age do you give? Why?
    - What do you think having your age on the platform means?
    - What difference, if any, do you think your age makes?
- What websites have you asked your parents for help?
    - What did you ask your parents to do?
- What websites did you not need your parents for help?
    - How did you set these up by yourself?
- Have you heard of the words 'age assurance/verification'?

LEAD QUESTION: What do you think about having to give your age online?

- When do you think websites should check people's age?
- When do you think websites shouldn't check people's age?
- What is good about websites checking people's age?

- What is bad about websites checking people's age?

LEAD QUESTION: How would you feel about age checking in these scenarios? Why?

- What's good/bad about checking people's age here? Why?
- Have you tried to do this?
    o Have your siblings or friends?
- What happened when you did?
    o Were you asked to prove your age?
    o How?
- How important do you think it is for young people like you to prove how old they are when they do this?
    o What do you think is good about doing this?
    o What do you think is bad?
    o Overall, do you think having to prove your age in this situation is good or bad?
- How would it compare if they were older or younger?
    o How would it compare if they were your age?

Researcher to introduce additional prompts for pros and cons if needed to aid discussion (e.g. if respondent is overly positive or negative):

- *Pros:*
    o *Protection from potentially inappropriate content*
    o *Aligning with other families about what child can and can't access*
- *Cons:*
    o *Potentially missing out on experiences with peers*
    o *Accessing a smaller range of online content*
    o *Requirement to insert data / information online*

LEAD QUESTION: Who do you think should make sure that bad things don't happen online?

PROBE: Online platform providers, parents, yourself or friends, government

LEAD QUESTION: If something bad happens online, what would you do?

Testing of age assurance methods (25 mins)

Objective: Understand attitudes and concerns towards age assurance methods

INTRODUCTION: There are a number of different ways websites can check the age of people who use them. We want to find out what you think about these different age checking methods. We'll go through each one, but first I want to show you all the different kinds that exist…

LEAD QUESTION: Have you heard of any of these before? Which of these seem more/less appealing to you?

- Why?

PROMPT: <u>Go through each of the age assurance techniques, offer an explanation and then ask the following questions:</u>

Self-declaration

Self-declaration involves giving your age or date of birth, or confirming you are over the minimum age to use an app, platform or service. You might have been asked to do this if you have signed up to a social media platform, like Instagram or TikTok.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable doing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for self declaration specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- How well do you think putting in your age / birthday would work?
  - Are there any platforms / apps where it would work better?
- How do you think you or your friends would try to get around using this?
  - Note for researcher: using a different age to your own, using someone else's birthday, using your parent's details
  - [If mentioned they use a different age on platforms above] How did you do that?
- How often would you want to put in your age / birthday?
  - PROBE: every time you login, every time you try to do something (e.g. post, message), when you sign up
- On which websites / apps would you be happy to do this?
  - PROBE: websites / apps mentioned by respondent
  - On which websites / apps wouldn't you be happy to do this?

Hard identifiers

Submission of official documentation (or a scan of such documentation) such as a passport or, for your parents, a driving licence. This would help the website prove who you are.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable providing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for hard identifiers specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- How well do you think this would work?
- How do you think you or other people would try to get around doing this?
  - Who do you think this wouldn't work for?
- Do you have the things they're asking for, like a passport?
- How much help do you think you would need from your parents?
  - What would you want their help with?
- How would you feel about sharing your ID with apps or websites?
    PROBE: including the information on ID – e.g. images, address, nationality and other details
- Which apps / websites would you feel most comfortable sharing your ID with?
  - Which would you feel least comfortable with?
- How often would you want to upload your ID?
  - How would you want to do it? (e.g. upload a photo to the platform, use another third party platform)
    - *Explanation: some third-party platforms act as a secure digital ID. You can add your ID to the app and show the app when you would like to prove your identity. The third-party platform will then provide a yes / no answer to the service you are trying to access without giving your date of birth. This means you wouldn't have to show/upload your ID every time.*
  - How do you feel about this?
    - Probe: ease of use / level of data given to each platform / security of data

Facial image analysis

A facial image is analysed by an AI system that has been trained on a database of facial images of known ages - this could include uploading a selfie or selfie video showing your face. It's a little bit like if you have used face swap photo apps, or using Face ID to log into your phone.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable providing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for facial image analysis specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- [If encountered before] What did you have to do?
    - PROBE: Upload a selfie, upload video clips, facial scanning tool on an app
- How well do you think this would tell someone's age?
    - Is there anyone you think this wouldn't work well for?
- Do you have everything you need for this? (e.g. a cameraphone, webcam etc)
    - What would you do if you didn't have a camera?
    - How do you think you or your friends would try to get around doing this?
- Are there websites / platforms where you think this would work better?

- Do you ever upload photos or videos of yourself on other websites/platforms?
    - Where have you done this before?
    - What for?
    - If not, what's the reason for that?
    - [If no, researcher to show related worlds stimulus] Here are some similar things - have you ever done any of these?
        - What do you think about these?
- How often would you want to upload your image to check your identity?
    - PROBE: when signing up for an account, every time you log in, when downloading the app for the first time etc
    - How would you want to do it? (e.g. upload a photo to the platform, use another third party, clip stored on your phone)
- Who would you want to look at your pictures?
    - PROBE: by a person working for the company, by a computer
- How would you feel about sharing your picture for different types of services?
    - Social media
    - Video streaming (e.g. Netflix, YouTube)
    - Gaming (e.g. downloading an age-restricted game)

Behavioural profiling

Behavioural profiling based on your online behaviour, such as mouse and keyboard analysis, browsing and purchasing habits, things you post and the age of people you are friends with.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable providing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for behavioural profiling specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- What do you think the websites would do with the information they collect about what you do online?
- What activity / content would you feel most comfortable being tracked?
    - PROBE: your follow lists, things you post, people you talk to / interact with
- What activity / content would you feel least comfortable being tracked?
    - PROBE: your follow lists, things you post, people you talk to / interact with

Researcher to probe around distinction between public / private content being monitored:

- How would you feel about…
    - Your public posts being tracked?
    - Your follow / friend lists being tracked?
    - Your search history being tracked?
    - Your private messages being tracked?
    - Your group chat messages / content being tracked?

- How regularly do you think they would look at what you're doing?
    - PROBE: constantly, at regular intervals, every now and again etc
    - How often would you feel comfortable with them looking at it?
    - How would you feel about them tracking what you do all the time?
- If you knew that websites were monitoring how you behaved on them to check your age, would that affect what you did online?

Authentication by parent / guardian

Your parent or guardian might be asked to confirm how old you are. They could receive an email or notification asking how old you are, or to give you permission to access the website / app you are trying to log into.

Have you encountered this before? Where? How was it?	What do you think about it? Pros and cons? (Probe for children and adults)	How easy would you find it to use? What would you do if you couldn't?
In which situations would you feel comfortable providing this? Why?	What concerns would you have? How do you feel about information being collected?	Any other reflections?

Key probes for parent / guardian authentication specifically [researcher to ask in addition to probes in table above]

- How do you think platforms / websites might know who your parent is?
- How would you want your parent to tell platforms / websites how old you are?
  - PROBE: they get an email or text, they get a notification on their app, they log into your app
- How often would you want your parents to tell the platforms / websites how old you are?
- How would you feel about your parents being involved like this?
  - Do they do / help you with anything else that you do online?
  - How does this compare with your siblings?
- Are there any websites you wouldn't want your parents to be involved in?
  - How would you feel about it if your parents had to confirm your age on these websites?

Cross-platform authentication

A person could prove their age on one account using one of the techniques mentioned previously (e.g. hard identifiers, facial analysis). They could then log into another service by using this account.

- How would you feel about logging into one service using another account?
  - Do you currently do this for any of the services you use?
  - What do you think about it?
  - What are the pros?
  - What are the cons?
    - Prompt: privacy / not having to share data with second service / ease / lack of clarity around data sharing

PROMPT: <u>Overview of all age assurance techniques discussed.</u>

- Do you think this is good or bad overall?
- Which of these things we've spoken about would you like best for you?

Researcher to ask preference of AA methods across different contexts:

- What type would you prefer for…

- o Signing up for / info social media?
- o Gaming?
- o Watching videos online? (e.g. YouTube, Netflix)

Scenario testing (15 mins)

INTRODUCTION TO SCENARIO TESTING

We have a few different scenarios of situations where age assurance and age verification techniques might be used, I'll go through each one and we can discuss what you think about this situation, what your preferences would be if you were in that situation and what problems you think different techniques could create.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCHER: for each of the scenarios, probe about what respondents would prefer if they were in the scenario. Researcher to amend to age of the child. Scenarios to include:

- Daniel, [X], wants to play an 18+ rated game
- Annie, [X], wants to join Instagram
- Jessie, [X], wants to join Snapchat
- Jordan, [X], wants to watch age-restricted videos online

General reflections on type of age assurance:

- What method for proving your age would you prefer here? Why?
- What method of proving your age would you not like here? Why?
- How do you think you / your friends would get around it in this situation?
- How would this change if this person was a different age?
    - o Older? Younger?
    - o In your family, how would it compare for your siblings?

For preferred method:

- How happy would you feel doing this when trying to do X?
- What would you be worried about when doing this?
    - o How would you feel about the information about yourself you would share?
- When would you want this type of age assurance to happen in this situation?
    - o PROBE: when they open their phone, when they download the app, when they sign up for an account, every time they log in
    - o How often would you want this type of age assurance to happen?
- How would you want the age assurance to work?
    - o PROBE: inputting details directly into the app, using a trusted third party service
- What, if anything, would you want your parents to have to do in this situation?
    - o PROBE: checking your information is correct, giving you permission to sign up, approving it on their own phone
    - o How would this change if you were older or younger?

Across the case studies take the opportunity to ask questions and tease about different tensions around:

- Confidence in different techniques for assuring age (high / low)
- Privacy of the technique (anonymous information / personal identification)
- Data processing and storage (one-time use / long-term storage)
- Convenience (ease of use / lack of friction / single usage)
- Accessibility (inclusive / exclusive)
- Context (service or product being used and ideas of severity)

Thanks and close (3 mins)

- Thank respondent for taking part
- Answer any questions
- Organise consent and incentive

Ofcom/ICO - Age Assurance

Observation guide

Project objectives

- Explore parents, guardians and children's attitudes towards online safety and AA measures, including how they perceive the benefits and risks of current and future AA solutions.
- Explore household dynamics around online safety and AA assurance – how they engage with AA in different contexts, and how they balance different considerations such as safety, privacy, usability, convenience and social impact across contexts and depending on the technique used.

How this document will be used

- This guide provides an overview of the observations researchers will make throughout the immersion interviews, and in particular during the observational activity. This guide is designed to be used flexibly - researchers will observe and probe around additional areas where observed.
- This activity could include a family mealtime or regular family activity, such as playing games or watching TV together.
- Researchers will record observations and ask additional questions during the observation around the things family members are doing, or things they see in the home.

Home Environment	Observations
What is the atmosphere at home like? • Does it feel calm, busy, chaotic? • How would you describe it? **How 'lived in' does the house feel?** • Is there a lot of *stuff* or is it quite bare? • How used are the items in the house? • How is the home decorated? (e.g. are there family pictures on the walls?) **How is the home organised?** • How is space shared by the family? • Are most spaces shared or are some spaces for one person only (e.g. an office or playroom)? • How do these spaces differ? • What are the children's bedrooms like? • Do they have their own rooms, or shared? • What technology do they have in their rooms? **What are different rooms used for?** • Where do they spend time together? • Which areas of the home are used the most and by who? • Where do people use their own devices? • Where are games played? (e.g. games consoles)	

Where is technology distributed across the home?
 	
• Are there rooms where there is no technology?
    o What's the reason for this?
    o Are there any weak wifi / internet spots around the house?
    o How does this affect where people use their devices?
• Is there a screen in most rooms?
• Where do devices 'live'?
• Do phones and other devices sleep with their owners or in a separate space?
• Do they switch their devices off at night? Or use a 'do not disturb' function?
• Which rooms do people use their devices in?	

Family Interactions	
How do the family seem to get along? **What do they talk about?** • What do the children talk about together? Do they talk about anything that they don't share with their parents? • What do the parents talk about together? **How do parents speak to their children?** • Are they strict or relaxed about what their children do? • Do you sense any anxiety around their child's behaviour? • How much attention do the children receive? • Does this differ with different children? **How do children interact with each other?** • What do they talk / joke about? **How do children speak to their parents?** • *[Two parent households]* how do they speak to each of their parents? o Are there differences in how each parent treats the child? • *[Where child splits time between households]* how do the talk about the other parent / guardian? • Do they ask for permission to do things? • Are they polite or a bit naughty? • How 'well behaved' would you describe them, do they seem like 'hard work'? *[Non-parent / child relationships]* **How do they interact?** • Are there any barriers to contend with in their relationship? (e.g. cultural, language, behavioural) • What impact do these have? • How does the child perceive the relationship? How do they treat their guardian? • How does the guardian perceive the relationship? How do they treat the child? • *[If applicable]* how do they speak about the child's parents?	

Are there any arguments or disagreements, what about?

- Are there any interactions that seem particularly warm/cold?
- How do you feel your presence as a researcher is affecting these interactions?
- How much control do parents / guardians have over what the child does?
  - Online? Offline?
- How much do they enforce this?

Devices and Technology	

What devices do family members use, when and how often?

- How much attention do these devices receive?
- How much time do they spend on them?

Do they have any 'no screen time' (dedicated time in which tech / devices aren't allowed)?

- How do different family members feel about this?
- How are the rules enforced?
  - Are they enforced by parents themselves, or using parental controls on devices?
- How well do family members follow the rules?

Do family members share devices?

- Does this happen smoothly or is there friction?
- Do they use them individually, or for shared activities?
- How do they log onto these? Do they have their own logins or shared?
- Do they stay logged in?

How do different family members interact with their devices?

- What do they use them for?
- What role do they have in offline activities they do? (e.g. supporting hobbies)
- What role do these have in their overall wellbeing? (e.g. staying in touch with friends and family)

In what way do devices factor in family interactions?

- How much do they do online activities together vs offline?
- Do they share things they see online with one another (e.g. sending each other posts)
- Do devices interrupt interactions between family members?

Do family members ask about what others are doing on their devices?

Note: important for researchers to make parents feel at ease if there is a lack of knowledge about child's online activities

- How much do they show / tell each other about things they do or see on their devices?
- Does it seem like they're hiding anything?

• Do the children share things with one another that they don't with their parents? • How do parents seem to feel about what they know about their child's online activities? **Do family members use devices whilst doing other things together?**	

About the activity	

How often do they do this together?
 	
What do they like about doing it?
 	
What do they dislike about doing it?
 	
• What would they rather be doing instead? Would this be an online activity?
 	
Whose idea was it to do this activity?
 	
• Was it a joint decision, or an individual?
• What was the discussion around doing this like?
 	
How do different social issues / topics feature?
 	
• Do they talk about politics or government? (e.g. frustration expressed by parent/ joke or comment made towards to govt or something that's been in the news)
• Do they talk about the news?
• Do they talk about religion, or do any religious activities?
• Do they talk about their local community or local issues?
• *[If in public]* how does this change family dynamics?
 	
If a meal:
 	
• What presence of devices is there?
   ○ Are they allowed devices at the table?
   ○ Is there any other technology involved (e.g. TV on in the room)
• Where do they eat?
• Do they all sit down together?
• How much do they talk? What about?
 	
If TV:
 	
• What do they watch?
• How do they decide what to watch?
   ○ Who takes a lead in the decision making?
• How often do they watch this?
• What platform is it on?
   ○ Are there any age restrictions on the TV?
• Does it feel age appropriate?
   ○ Are there any discussions around age appropriateness?
• How do they interact with one another as they watch it? Do they talk about it?
• Do they use other devices whilst they watch?
 	
If a game:	

• How do they decide what to play? • What format is it in - digital or board / card game? • How often do they play this? • How are rules enforced? ○ Does anyone cheat? How do others respond to this?	