**Natsal-4 questionnaire content consultation**

Welcome to the consultation on the questionnaire for Natsal: a survey of the British population’s sexual health and wellbeing. Please read the [short summary](http://www.natsal.ac.uk/online-consultation/background-to-natsal-4.aspx) about Natsal before taking part.

You may also want to look at the [frequently asked questions](http://www.natsal.ac.uk/online-consultation/consultation-faqs.aspx) about the consultation.

**Natsal consultation #addyourvoice**

The fourth Natsal will take place in 2021. We need to make sure the questions we ask are relevant to today’s society and meet the needs of the people who use the survey’s results.

**About this consultation**

This consultation will run from 30th June to 22nd July 2019. We will use the findings to help decide what information should be collected by the next Natsal. Please take part and add your voice as to the questions *you* think this valuable national resource should ask.

**The results**

The results of this consultation will be published in a short report on the Natsal website later this year. If you would like to be informed about the results of the consultation, please leave your contact details in the questionnaire.

**Getting in Touch**

If you have queries or comments about the consultation process, please email [natsal@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:natsal@ucl.ac.uk)

**Confidentiality and data protection**

When we report the results of the consultation, we intend to keep all individual responses anonymous. With your permission, we may publish some of the comments we receive, but we will not attach names to these. We will also give you the option to be kept up to date about Natsal – if you agree we will only contact you about things you have agreed to, and we will not share your contact details beyond the research team. You can complete the consultation without leaving your name and contact details. For UCL’s privacy notice please click [here](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice).

**Alternative ways to have a say**

If you prefer, you can also give feedback over the phone – email us and we will arrange to call you.

*Please note that the consultation questions and the Natsal questionnaire include language of a sexual nature. Please only continue with this consultation if you are comfortable with this.*

**Consultation questions**

**About you**

1. Please tell us a bit about yourself. Are you taking part in this consultation as an individual, or on behalf of an organisation?

Individual Go to question 3

Organisation Go to question 2

***For those taking part on behalf of ORGANISATIONS***

* 1. Name of organisation you are completing this consultation on behalf of:

**DECIPHer: Centre for the Development and Evaluation of Complex Interventions for Public Health Improvement (Cardiff University).** DECIPHer brings together leading experts from a range of disciplines to tackle a range of public health issues, with a particular focus on developing and evaluating multi-level interventions that will have an impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people. We also lead the School Health Research Network, which is a policy-practice-research partnership between Cardiff University, Welsh Government (both health and education), Public Health Wales and Cancer Research UK. Over a 6-year period SHRN has recruited all maintained secondary schools in Wales and established a data collection and reporting infrastructure that meets health and wellbeing data needs at local, regional and national levels.

* 1. Type organisation (*Please select the option that best describes your organisation)*

Research

Clinical/Health service

Charity/voluntary sector

Community/grassroots

Local or regional government

National government department

Private sector

Other (please say what)

* 1. Focus of organisation *(select all that apply)*

Sexual health

Reproductive health

General public health

Education

Human rights / advocacy for particular population groups

Other (please say what)

Development and evaluation of public health interventions; co-production of research; health and wellbeing of children and young people.

De

* 1. Are you happy for us to list this organisation as having taken part in the consultation when we report the findings?

Yes

No

***For those taking part as INDIVIDUALS***

1. Are you taking part as a *(choose the option most relevant to you):*

Member of the public

Researcher

Clinician/public health practitioner/therapist

Representative of a charity, community group, or collective

Service commissioner / Policy maker

Teacher/Lecturer/Educator

Other (please say what)

1. How did you hear about this consultation? *(select all that apply)*

Email from the study team

At the British Association of Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) conference

International Society for Socially Transmitted Diseases Research (ISSTDR) conference

Twitter

Other social media (please say what)

Word of mouth e.g. friends or colleagues

Other

1. Had you heard of Natsal before taking part in this consultation?

Yes Go to question 6

No Go to question 8

Not sure Go to question 8

***For those who HAD heard of Natsal before taking part in this consultation***

1. Have you ever used Natsal? *(select all that apply)*

Yes – for my own personal interest]

Yes – to inform policy or practice]

Yes – to monitor / evaluate policy]

Yes – to compare local data with national figures]

Yes – for planning services]

Yes – data used for research purposes (own analyses)]

Yes – published findings used for research purposes]

Yes – questionnaire or methodology used for research purposes]

Yes – for public engagement]

Yes – for advocacy purposes]

Yes – for teaching / training]

Yes – other (please say what)]

No Go to question 7

***Qu.6. a, and b. For those who selected ANY of the yes options at Qu.6.***

**a.** If any specific Natsal questionnaire data or findings have been particularly useful to you it would be helpful to know more about what these were and how you used it. Otherwise please leave the box blank.

We have used the published findings in several projects across the work of DECIPHer. In particular we have used the findings to form the basis of a paper currently in preparation exploring young people’s sources of information and advice about sex and relationships (particularly the use of the internet for sexual health advice), and the association of these sources with particular outcomes as part of the data collected for The JACK Trial. We have also linked to the findings in our work focusing on teenage pregnancy and sources of contraception. It has also been particularly useful in developing our work on young people and ‘sexual competence’ and perceived timing of sexual intercourse (e.g., Moreau, N., Kolto, A., Young, H., Maillochon, F. & Godeau E. (2018) Negative feelings about the timing of first sexual intercourse: findings from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study. International Journal of Public Health. [10.1007/s00038-018-1170-y](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s00038-018-1170-y)), as well as supporting our wider research into young people and dating/interpersonal violence through the data captured regarding non-volitional sex (e.g. Project Respect, Positive Choices). We have also found the survey useful for developing our own research tools for the SaFE project, which involved developing and evaluation an intervention to improve young people’s sexual health in further education settings (see Young, H. *et al*., (2019) [Formative mixed method multi-case study research to inform development of a safe sex and healthy relationships intervention in Further Education (FE) settings: The SaFE Project](http://orca.cf.ac.uk/123655). BMJ Open).

**b.** If you have used the results of the biological samples from Natsal before, it would be helpful to know more about how you used them. Otherwise please leave the box blank.

1. Do you expect to use the results of the next survey? *(select all that apply)*

Yes – for my own personal interest

Yes –to inform policy or practice

Yes –to monitor / evaluate policy

Yes – to compare local data with national figures

Yes – for planning services]

Yes – for research purposes (own analyses)]

Yes – for research purposes (published findings)]

Yes – for research purposes (questionnaire or methodology)]

Yes – for public engagement]

Yes – for teaching / training]

Yes – other (please say what)]

No Go to question 7.a

Not sure Go to question 7.a

***For those who selected NO or NOT SURE for Qu.7***

**a.** Please let us know if there’s anything we could do to make the results or data more useful to you, otherwise leave blank.

**What should the next Natsal survey cover?**

1. The table on pages 6-8 shows the topics covered in the previous Natsal surveys, and new topics planned for the next survey. For each topic, please choose how important **you or your organisation** think it is for Natsal to include, as a survey that represents the views and experiences of the general population in Britain.

Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not very important and 5 is very important, or choose don’t know. Mark your answer by placing an x in your chosen box.

| **Questionnaire topic** | 1  Not very important questions to include | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  Very important questions to include | Don’t know |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning about sex**, including: how you learned about sex, things you wished you’d known more about, how you would have liked to learn about them |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Sexual attraction, experience, and identity** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Gender identity** *(NEW)* |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **First sexual experiences** (for both same and opposite-sex partners) including: age, partner’s age, own willingness, partner’s willingness, use of contraception, relationship to partner, how long you had known each other, reasons for having sex, whether you feel it happened at the right time |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Contraception**, including methods used (ever, past year, currently), services used |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Periods, menopause and use of hormone replacement therapy** |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| **Experience of different sexual practices** (vaginal, oral and anal intercourse, genital contact) |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Masturbation** |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| **Number of occasions of sex and condom use, in the last 4 weeks** including whether any of these partners were new partners |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Number of sexual partners in different time periods** (lifetime, 5 years, 1 year, 3 months), including numbers of partners without using a condom. |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Having sex with people from other countries** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Having sex while abroad** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Experience of sex against your will** (sexual coercion / violence) |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Paying money for sex** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Pornography** *(NEW)* |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Use of technology (e.g. internet, apps) in sexual lifestyles** *(NEW)* |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Pregnancy history** (women): including dates of each  pregnancy and its outcome |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Unplanned pregnancy in the past year** |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Children, including step and adopted** (men and women) |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Fertility intentions and infertility** |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| **Previous STI diagnoses** |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Use of sexual health services and STI and HIV testing** |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **HPV vaccination and cervical screening** |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Perceived risk of HIV and other STIs** |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Circumcision** |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| **Sexual function** including  experience of sexual difficulties, the relationship context, satisfaction with sex life, sources of support and medication (e.g. Viagra). |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Sexual wellbeing** (a feeling of psychological wellbeing in relation to your sex life) *(NEW)* |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **Attitudes to different kinds of relationship and sexual lifestyles** |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| **General health** including a measure of how good health is in general, disability and limiting illnesses |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Mental health** including treatment for depression and mood/feelings about life in general |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Smoking, drinking, and drug use** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Household** including marital status, who you live with, whether you own or rent the house |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Details of previous live-in partnerships** including dates, why relationship ended |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| **Economic activity** (e.g. whether you are working and if so type of work, looking for work, studying etc), |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Live-in partner’s economic activity** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Household income** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Education and qualifications** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Who you lived with when growing up** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Parents’ occupation** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Ethnicity and country of birth** |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| **Religion** |  |  |  | X |  |  |

1. Are there any **additional** **questions** that you think it is important for the next Natsal to ask about? This could be a new topic not listed above, or new questions that you think should be added to an existing topic.

Please bear in mind that Natsal cannot explore in detail rare behaviours or experiences (those that affect less than around 2% of the population).

*You can look at the full Natsal-3 questionnaire* [*here*](http://www.natsal.ac.uk/natsal-3/questionnaire.aspx)*.*

Yes Go to question 9.a

No Go to question 10

Don’t know Go to question 10

***Qu. 9a. For those who selected YES for any additional questions on Natsal***

**a.** Please tell us which other questions or topics should be included in the next Natsal, and why.

Please bear in mind that we have limited space to include new questions in the survey, as we need to keep the interview a reasonable length for people who take part. So please give as much information as you can about why these new questions are important.

**Additional Questions:**

As a research centre, DECIPHer focuses on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, particularly in relation to sexual health and interpersonal relationships. As such, we value the data collected by this questionnaire: in particular, we would like to emphasise the importance of retaining questions relating to the topic of learning about sex and relationships given the recent developments in England and Wales proposing to make Relationships and Sexualities Education a statutory requirement. We would therefore suggest the addition of a question(s) relating to people’s experiences of RSE in school to the learning about sex section of the questionnaire. In the section about learning about sex, it could also be important to ask about sources of information they thought were unhelpful or inaccurate, and why they didn’t use particular sources. In addition, we would suggest the following additional questions to existing topics:

* In the section on first sexual experience where respondents may report it was not consensual, it could ask if they disclosed or reported it to anyone at all (including friends/family).
* The contraception section could ask why no contraception was used if they answered no method at all was used. This question could also be added to the contraception questions in the sexual experience section.
* It is unclear as to whether the question about overlap in sexual partners is only asked about same sex encounters, in which case it should also be asked of those reporting heterosexual encounters.
* In the section about having sex abroad it is important to also ask if these encounters were consensual and if not did they disclose/report it to anyone?
* The non-consensual sex section could add questions to cover *any* form of sexual activity against their will, as currently it seems to imply only sexual intercourse. It could also ask how many times people have tried or actually forced them into (any form of) sexual activity.
* It may be useful to add a question in the unplanned pregnancies section asking if any were the result of non-consensual sex. The questions in this section on pregnancy planning could also benefit from the addition of questions about different factors that played a part in planning the timing of their pregnancies.
* The attitudinal questions could ask also about whether they feel pornography is normalised in society, whether it encourages us to be open about sex, perceptions of other people’s consumption of porn etc. as a separate section to the questions that will focus on respondent’s personal use of pornography.

**New topics: Pornography**

We agree that the addition of Pornography as a topic in the survey is very important, especially given the limited but developing evidence base of young people’s engagement with pornography and its impact on their sexual and emotional health and wellbeing and the conduct of their sexual relationships. There is a vast amount of literature that explores young people’s perceptions of sex and relationships in the context of a climate of ‘concern’ about how this is influenced by the “‘the rise of porno chic’, the ‘pornification’ of society or the ‘sexualisation of culture’– namely the perception that Western societies are becoming increasingly saturated by representations of sex” (Gill, 2012). In particular there is a significant body of research that highlights how the discourses of porn (e.g. expectations about appearance, sexual experiences and behaviour) have become widespread, mainstreamed and normalised among young people (Ringrose *et al*., 2012). This can be seen in the widespread concern about young people and sexting and how this links to wider societal sexual pressures (Ringrose *et al*., 2012). In relation to this topic, we feel it is essential

that questions under this topic consider issues relating to circumstances of first use of pornography, frequency of use, where/when/for what purposes they use it, which ‘types’ of pornography they use and which sites they most frequently use and why. Given the recent debates about balancing protection from online harms and ensuring young people’s right to information about their bodies and sex, it is important to gather evidence on how young people learn about navigating sexual material online and how/what they learn about sexual respect and consent through engagement with this content. Therefore, the inclusion of some questions about the perceived messages of the content of porn and the way they feel when engaging with sexually explicit content online is important. Equally it is important that questions under this topic are not ‘sex-negative’: as Ringrose, Jenkinson and Whitehead (2019) argue, the proposed ‘porn block’ will not entirely restrict young people’s access to pornographic content and is a stigmatising and sex-averse stance which closes off opportunities for young people to have open, honest and critical engagement with narratives about sex and relationships. For example, while pornography has some undeniably problematic messages, Ringrose, Jenkinson and Whitehead (2019) point out that porn can sometimes provide reassurance to young people about their sexual feelings, desires or identities. Therefore, questions should ask in an unbiased way about engagement with pornographic content, giving response options that provide opportunities for respondents to report the positive and negative aspects of their engagement with pornographic content.

**New Topics: Image Sharing/Sexting**

Relatedly, our own research in schools (the JACK Trial and SHRN survey in particular) highlights the importance of gathering more evidence about young people’s image-sharing and sexting practices. There is some qualitative research about sexting (see for example Ringrose *et al*., 2012; Ringrose *et al*., 2013), but a more widespread understanding of people’s sexual image-sharing practices is necessary given the level of concern about the impact of this on young people’s emotional wellbeing. Our SHRN survey administered to all secondary school pupils in Wales Biannually includes several questions about whether students have ever sent someone a sexually explicit image of themselves, and whether anyone has ever sent, forwarded or shared a sexually explicit image of them to other people without asking**.**

Questions about image sharing/sexting should be included in the new proposed ‘use of technology’ topic in order to widen the evidence base of people’s practices around digital intimacies. Questions on sexting should focus on the frequency of both sending and receiving of sexual images, who to and why (i.e. were they requested/did you ask), where images were sent whether they felt coerced into sending the image, and whether the image was forwarded without their permission. Similarly, questions about people’s use of dating apps should also be included under this topic, asking which apps people use and why, whether they meet people from the apps in real life (and their experiences of this, positive and negative and potentially the outcomes in terms of sexual activity and length of any relationship) and whether/how online dating is different to meeting someone in real life (and for what reasons).

**New Topics: Dating, Relationships and Interpersonal Violence and Abuse**

Finally, given the focus of our work here at DECIPHer we feel the questionnaire would benefit from including a discrete topic/section with specific questions on dating and interpersonal violence. At DECIPHer, we are particularly interested in dating and relationship violence in young people’s relationships (see **Young, H.,** Turney, C., Bonell, C., Lewis, R., White, J. & Fletcher A. Dating and relationship violence among 16-19 year olds in England and Wales: a cross sectional study of victimisation. Journal of Public Health. https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdx139 and Young *et al*., Journal of Public Health in press), which evidence shows can take different forms to violence and abuse in adult relationships (see Barter *et al*., 2009). Indeed the concept of ‘relationships’ and abuse within them can be understood very differently by young people. We feel that the survey would benefit from a section that explores *all forms* of interpersonal abuse and violence, both within and outside ‘relationships’. While the questionnaire currently (and rightly) asks about non-volitional sex and coercion, we feel data about people’s experiences of *all forms* of interpersonal violence is important to capture. This is particularly the case in relation to young people’s experience of violence and abuse, which does not always occur in the context of what they would understand to be a ‘relationship’ or ‘sexual’. We would suggest asking questions that are based on the extended Home Office definition of domestic abuse (2013) and ask about experiences of psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse, as well as controlling and coercive behaviour, and who the perpetrator of these harms was. Furthermore, capturing whether they reported this abuse (and if not why not) or whether they took any other action against it would be useful. We would also suggest a question aimed to capture people’s experiences of sexual harassment, and whether they took any action. It may also be worth considering asking a question about whether they consider they have perpetrated any of the above forms of interpersonal violence in any of their dating or interpersonal relationships. Our research focuses on the experiences of all forms of VAWDASV in young people’s relationships, which highlights this can take different forms and be experienced in different ways to violence and abuse in adult relationships. Therefore, a section that captures data on experiences of all forms of violence and abuse (including sexual harassment in everyday life) not just within traditional ‘relationships’ but in all types of dating/interpersonal relationships, would be important not just for the research we conduct here at DECIPHer, but also developing a clearer understanding of violence and abuse in young people’s relationships in order to develop effective interventions and policy responses.

In our SHRN survey we ask questions to pupil about their experiences of victimisation and perpetration of a range of abusive behaviours including; how often have participants been called sexually offensive names, how often they have been unwantedly touched or kissed in school, and while ‘seeing, dating or going out with someone’ how often they have perpetrated or been victim of behaviours such as: making hurtful comments; pushing, shoving or slapping or; punching, kicking or beating up. While these are young-person centred, some of the questions may be useful for developing additional questions about people’s experiences of a range of abusive behaviours.

1. Are there any **existing questions** that you think need changing or updating (e.g. changes to the question wording or answer options)?

*You can look at the full Natsal-3 questionnaire* [*here*](http://www.natsal.ac.uk/natsal-3/questionnaire.aspx)*.*

Yes Go to question 10.a

No Go to question 11

Don’t know

**Qu. 10.a. For those who selected YES for any existing questions that are thought to need changing or updating**

**a.** Please tell us what changes need to be made and why.

We have already suggested that the definition of non-consensual sex needs to be adapted and questions reworded to make it clearer that it can relate to any sexual activity against their will. Similarly, we have also suggested updating the interpretation of interpersonal violence throughout the existing questions on this issue, and adding questions that cover all aspects and forms of abuse included in the 2013 expanded Home Office definition.

In addition, we also suggest that school/college or teacher/lecturer is added to the options of places a respondent may seek help for sexual wellbeing/health issues, given that some of the respondents are likely to be aged 16-18 and still in education. Furthermore, University could also be a response option for those in Higher Education, given the provision of sexual health services in University settings. We would also suggest asking whether respondents attended a school that had a religious ethos and if so which faith school it was.

We would like to say that on reviewing NATSAL 3 we found the questions in the survey to be very well worded, and response options very comprehensive.

1. To make room for new questions in the next survey, we will have to remove some existing questions. Which questions would **you** choose to **remove** from the survey to make room for new questions? Please explain why if you can.

*You can see the list of broad topics again* [*here*](http://www.natsal.ac.uk/online-consultation/background-to-natsal-4.aspx)*, or you can look at the full Natsal-3 questionnaire* [*here*](http://www.natsal.ac.uk/natsal-3/questionnaire.aspx)*.*

*Please leave blank and move on to the next question if you don’t know or aren’t able to comment.*

We have rated the importance of the topics in our response on the basis of their value and alignment to the work we undertake in DECIPHer. As you can see, we feel that most of the existing and proposed topics and questions are important to retain in order to capture data that is valuable to research and intervention and policy development, particularly in relation to the work we do here focusing on the health and wellbeing of children and young people. We have rated the following topics as ‘3’ in question 8 of this consultation, and therefore consider questions on these topics as less relevant to the research and intervention development work we do: 1) Periods, menopause and use of HRT 2) Masturbation 3) Fertility intentions and infertility 4) Circumcision 5) Details of previous live in partnerships and why the relationship ended. Whilst we understand that these can be important for those conducting research in those specific areas, we feel there is currently a greater social and policy/practice need for research and evidence in relation to understanding people’s attitudes, knowledge and practices around sexual relationships, and emerging sexual harms impacted by new relationship practices/formations and the use of technology and the digital sexual intimacies (particularly in relation to young people). Given the recent policy developments focussing on Relationships and Sexualities Education, Domestic abuse and VAWDASV, and Pornography and sexting/image sharing, we consider it vital to include these questions as they have more relevance than the topics we have rated as less important to the policy and intervention development activity that is currently happening. It is important to collect robust evidence on these topics in order to ensure the policies/interventions are relevant to people’s own understandings and experiences of sex, dating and relationships.

1. If there are any other suggestions you’d like to make to the research team, please use this box:

On reviewing the survey, we would like to commend the team on producing such a comprehensive questionnaire. We value the contribution to the evidence base this survey makes, particularly in relation to young people’s sexual practices, experiences and attitudes on which our research and intervention development activity is focused.

**Contact details and communication preferences**

It would be helpful for us to know who has taken part in this consultation. We will not publish individuals’ names in any results summaries, they will only be seen by the Natsal research team. You don’t have to complete these details if you prefer not to.

1. Name:

Professor Simon Murphy

1. Questions regarding contact preferences
   1. Are you happy for us to email you to discuss your answers to this consultation?

Yes

No

* 1. Would you like us to keep you updated by email about the results of this consultation?

Yes

No

* 1. Would you like us to keep you updated by email about Natsal more generally?

Yes

No

***For those who answered YES for questions 14.a, b, and c***

1. Email address *(optional)*:

*This is so that we can keep you updated as you have indicated – we will not publish your email address or share it with anyone outside the research team.*

Email: murphys7@cardiff.ac.uk

1. Are you happy for us to anonymously report any comments you made in this consultation (for example if we publish a summary of the consultation results on our website)? We will not attach your name/your institution’s name to these comments.

Yes

No, I would prefer my comments to remain confidential

**Thank you**

Thank you for taking part in this consultation, we really appreciate you taking the time to give us your thoughts. If you have any questions about the study, please email the team on [natsal@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:natsal@ucl.ac.uk), and follow [@NatsalStudy](https://twitter.com/NatsalStudy) on twitter for updates.