



FROM INSIGHT TO INFLUENCE

Moderation process for qualitative and
quantitative research

NIA Project: LIV Segmentation

Prepared for Electricity North West

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Project No. 1282

All projects are carried out in compliance with the ISO 20252
international standard for market, opinion and social research and GDPR.

Qualitative research

Conducting qualitative research online

The focus group sessions will take place online, using online meeting software, Zoom. There will be 10 sessions conducted in total.

Over the past two years, Impact has developed expertise in conducting qualitative research online, due to restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, Impact has developed best practice procedures to ensure online sessions run smoothly and respondents are engaged. These include the following:

- Sending out zoom invites and session details well in advance of the session, allowing respondents to download the relevant software, if required
- Asking respondents, where possible, to join on a laptop or desktop computer, rather than a phone or tablet
- Having a backup lead moderator (part of the Impact team) at the session to both help respondents if they have technical issues or moderate briefly if the moderator has Wi-Fi issues
- Having a backup phone option, in case of Wi-Fi issues (with details circulated to participants in advance)
- Posting stimulus material to respondents in advance of sessions, so it can be viewed separately whilst the on-screen discussion takes place.

Moderating the sessions

Each focus group will be led by a highly experienced moderator from the Impact team, with other colleagues on hand for note taking and support, if required. The role of the moderator will be to introduce the topics to respondents, and the reason why this research is being completed. They will also be responsible for ensuring the discussions stay on topic, and explain the 'rules' of such discussions, e.g., not talking over each other, or shouting.

The moderator will follow a discussion guide for each session that outlines the key topics to review and areas to probe on. Impact will develop the discussion guide and stimulus material for the sessions, with input and final sign off from the LIV working group. This will follow the Market Research Society (MRS) guidelines for questionnaire writing, and questions will be asked in a way that does not bias, or influence the way respondents would answer.

The session will last 90 minutes.

In-depth interviews

The focus groups are supplemented by 50 in-depth telephone interviews, for those that are unable to join the focus group sessions.

The moderation of these interviews will be split between the Impact and Energy Systems Catapult team, all of whom are trained in qualitative interviewing. The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes and cover the same topic areas as the focus groups, using a shortened version of the discussion guide, that will be developed and approved in the same way as above. The interview will be recorded, with the consent of the participant (the moderator will also take notes throughout the session). In line with Impact's ISO accreditation, and GDPR requirements, the recordings, and sample data on each participant (e.g., telephone number used to call them), will be deleted within 12 weeks of project completion.

Quantitative research

Online survey

Our primary method of data collection will be online surveys. This method provides a format where customers can complete the survey at a time and place convenient for them.

We will complete 1,000 online interviews with energy customers across the UK. They will be achieved via an online panel provider, who will also be responsible for scripting the survey.

The same design and approval process will be used for this survey as for the qualitative research, with Impact drafting in line with MRS guidelines before sending to the working group for approval. The survey will also contain a brief overview of the reason the research is being conducted, and ways to contact the Impact team if respondents have any questions, or concerns.

Face to face interviews

We acknowledge that whilst an online approach is a cost-effective approach to reaching a large volume of customers, certain domestic customers may be under-represented in an online only survey. With this in mind, as with the qualitative research, we plan to supplement the online interviews with 100 telephone interviews. The same survey instrument will be used as for the online interviews.

This method will be offered to customer groups that prove to be more difficult to reach through online surveys such as those who are digitally disengaged, the eldest customers or those on particularly low incomes, whilst still allowing the ability to show stimulus on screen.

These interviews will be conducted by fully trained telephone interviewers, who have extensive experience conducting interviews with those customer groups listed above. Respondents will be recruited using customer sample lists, and will be screened to ensure they fit the required criteria.