Understanding Society – Innovation Panel (IP)

Understanding Society is a UK longitudinal household panel study consisting of annual interviews with 40,000 households, making it the largest household panel study in the world. The Innovation Panel (IP) sample is a part of these 40,000 households and is used to test innovations in questionnaire content and design to inform how we develop this study.

Understanding Society is an initiative of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), with scientific leadership from the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex. NatCen has been commissioned to deliver the study in its first five waves. The fifth wave of the Innovation Panel (IP5) will be used to inform the development of future main stage waves to make sure that we are designing the best possible study.

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Social Research that works for society

How to read domestic meters

SAFETY NOTICE:

To read the meter you may have to open a meter cupboard with a meter cupboard key. However, to read the meter, you never have to open the meter itself.

It is dangerous to try to open the meter.

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Introduction

The pictures and instructions in this booklet will help you read participants' gas and electricity meters. Section 1 is for gas meters and Section 2 is for electricity meters. We need a reading from both meters.

By comparing the pictures of the meters in the guide, to the meters in the participant's home, you can work out exactly which type of meters they have. The guide will then explain how to read that type of meter.

Contents

Paygo Electricity Meter with Two Displays

Ignore the LCD screen.

If the non-LCD display is a numeric or dial display, turn back to pages 13 or 15 for instructions how to read this type of meter.

If the non-LCD display shows one row of numbers or dials, write them in CAPI.

If the non-LCD display shows two rows of numbers or dials, write the top row in the *Low (Rate 1)*, and the bottom row in the *Normal (Rate 2)* in CAPI.

Write down all the numbers in CAPI:

- Include all zeros.

- Ignore any red numbers.

- Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like:

Total   3   4   3   7   8

Two Display LCD Electricity Meter Without Buttons

If the meter has two LCD screens marked *Low (Rate 1)* and *Normal (Rate 2)*, write down the lower number where prompted and the higher number where prompted in CAPI.

If you meter has two unmarked LCD screens, write down the lower number where prompted and the higher number where prompted in CAPI.

Write down all the numbers in the electricity section in CAPI:

• Include all zeros.

• Ignore any red numbers.

• Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like:

Low (Rate 1)	0	2	5	4	2
Normal (Rate 2)	0	5	2	5	4

How to use this guide:

Find the gas and electricity meter.

The gas and electricity meters are usually hidden away in a cupboard or somewhere outside.

Typical Places for meters are:

• Under the stairs, in the basement, or in the cellar

• On the front or side outside wall of the participant's house in a white box (you will need a triangular key to open this white box)

• In a cupboard in a communal entrance way

• In a porch or entrance way

• In a garage or car port

How to tell which meter is which

The electricity meter should have kWh marked on the front.
The gas meter should have either **ft3** (cubic feet) or **m3** (cubic meters) marked on the front.

Look through the whole of this booklet

Each page shows a different type of meter and instructions for how to read that type. Decide which meters in the booklet look most like the gas and electricity meters in the participant's home. Note that the gas meter may be different to the electricity meter.

Follow the instructions for reading the type of meter in the participant's home.

If you have the manufacturers' handbook, refer to that. The instructions will be specific to the meter.

Confidentiality

If participant's have any concerns about providing this data please re-assure them that the data collected from the meters is completely confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no-one's home can be identified. Participants' names and addresses will never be connected to their meter readings in any way.

Single Display LCD Electricity Meter Without Buttons
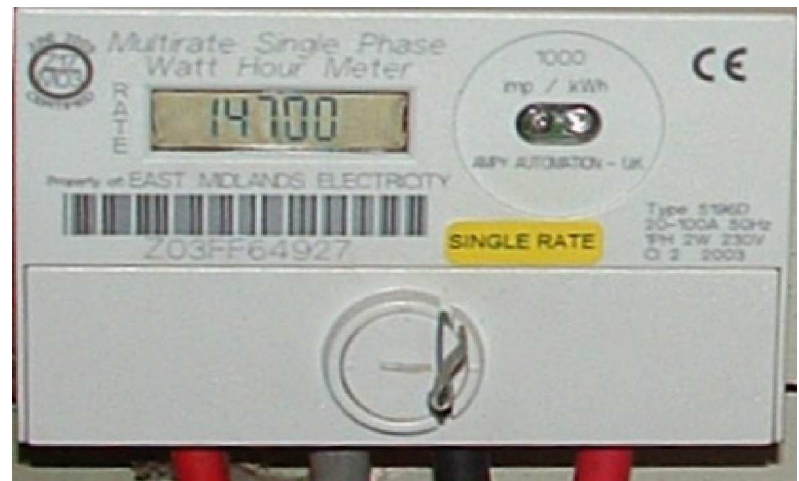
If the meter has one LCD screen showing one row of numbers, write down the numbers in the slot provided in CAPI.

If the meter has one LCD screen which automatically changes its display every few seconds AND one of the displays is marked *t* for total, write down that number in CAPI.

If the meter has one LCD screen which automatically changes its display every few seconds AND **none** of the displays are marked *t* for total, write down the lower number where prompted and the higher number where prompted in CAPI..

Write down all the numbers in the electricity section in CAPI:

- Include all zeros.

- Ignore any red numbers.

- Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like:

Total: | 1 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |

LCD Electricity Meter with Buttons

If the meter automatically changes its display every few seconds, write down the numbers marked *t* in CAPI.

If the meter does not automatically change its display AND it has one or more buttons on the front, press the button marked *cycle* until *t* for total is displayed. The cycle button is usually the blue or black button. Write down the numbers displayed in CAPI.

If the Total rate is not available, write the Low (Rate 1) and Normal (Rate 2) readings in the *Low (Rate 1)* and *Normal (Rate 2)* sections in CAPI.

If the readings are not marked, contact us.

Write down all the numbers in the electricity section in CAPI:

- Include all zeros

- Ignore any red numbers

- Ignore any numbers after a decimal point

This example would look like:

Total: | 0 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 3 |

Section 1

Gas Meters

Numeric Gas Meter

Write down all the numbers in the gas section in CAPI:

- Include all zeros.
- Ignore any red numbers.
- Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like:

Total: | | *9* | *0* | *6* | *9* |

Numeric Electricity Meter - Single Rate

Write down all the numbers in the *Total* box in the electricity section in CAPI:

- Include all zeros.
- Ignore any red numbers.
- Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like:

Total | *3* | *4* | *3* | *7* | *8* |

Numeric Electricity Meter - Two Rate

If the meter has two rows of numbers marked Low (Rate 1) and Normal (Rate 2) write them in the *Low (Rate 1)* and *Normal (Rate 2)* sections in CAPI.

If the meter has two unmarked rows of numbers, write the top row in the *Low (Rate 1)* section and the bottom row in the *Normal (Rate 2)* section in CAPI.

Write down all the numbers in the electricity reading question in CAPI:

• Include all zeros.

• Ignore any red numbers.

• Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like:

Low (Rate 1) | 4 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 7 |

Normal (Rate 2)   3   4   3   7   8

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LCD Gas Meter WITH BUTTONS

If the meter automatically changes its display every few seconds, write down the numbers marked *t* for total in CAPI.

If the meter does not automatically change its display AND it has only one button on the front, press that button until *t* for total is displayed. Write down the numbers displayed in CAPI.

If the meter does not automatically change its display AND it has two or more buttons, press the buttons marked *cycle*. The cycle button is usually the blue or black button. Press the cycle button until *t* for total is displayed. Write down the numbers displayed in CAPI.

Write down all the numbers in the gas reading question in CAPI:

• Include all zeros.

• Ignore any red numbers.

• Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like this:

Total   0   0   0   4

LCD Gas Meter WITHOUT BUTTONS

Write down all the numbers in the gas reading question in CAPI:

• Include all zeros.

• Ignore any red numbers.

• Ignore any numbers after a decimal point.

This example would look like this:

Total   *0*   *1*   *1*   *3*

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Section 2

Electricity Meters

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