

## Protocol for GQ Student Housing Qualitative Interviews - Apartments

Participant ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ End Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Section 1: Interviewer: Read/ Paraphrase the following text:

Greeting: Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I work for the Census Bureau.  
Thank you for agreeing to talk with me today.

What: As you may know, the Census Bureau takes a count of the U.S. population every 10 years. Additionally, the Census Bureau conducts many other surveys on a more regular basis. In the time between surveys and leading up to each census, the Census Bureau conducts research to improve the way we count people. One area we are researching is the counting of college/university students. Today I'm going to be asking you some questions about **your building**. There are no right or wrong answers, because you are the expert in housing.

Confidentiality: Our session today is completely confidential. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can decline to answer any particular question.

Recording: So I don't have to rely on my memory later on, I'd like to audio record this interview. That way, I can focus today on what you're saying rather than having to concentrate on taking notes. Is that ok with you?

**\*\* HAVE PARTICIPANT READ AND SIGN CONSENT FORM\*\***

**\*\*TURN ON TAPE RECORDER\*\***

**\*\* BEGIN QUESTIONS\*\***

*[INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS: AS YOU ADMINISTER THE PROTOCOL, NOTE ANY HESITATION OR CONFUSION FROM THE RESPONDENT.]*

**\*\*RECORD END TIME\*\***

## Section 1. Characteristics of Apartment-Style Housing

[INTERVIEWER: MAKE SURE INFORMATION IS CAPTURED FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. USE AS MANY WORKSHEET PAGES AS NEEDED.]

1. Our first set of questions pertain to this building/place. Who owns or manages this building/place?

*(If needed:)* Is it managed by the college/university? By a private entity or organization? By a seminary or other organization?

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2. Does this place have any sort of affiliation with the college/university?

**If yes:** Can you tell me how it is affiliated with the college/university?

**Probe:** What does “affiliation” mean to you?

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3. Would you consider this on-campus or off-campus housing?
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4. Is roommate matching available for this place?

*(If needed:)* Is it through the university?

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5. What kinds of amenities are provided in this place?
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6. Tell me about the types of leases that are offered at this place.

*(If needed:)*

- Does this place offer individual leases?
  - Is the lease by-the-bed?
  - What length of lease is offered (9-month or 12-month)?
  - Do students apply through the college/university or directly through the management company?
  - Is the application completed online?
  - Do residents have individual access to a resident portal or other similar online system?
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7. How do residents receive their mail?

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8. Are there staff members such as resident assistants or community assistants?

*(If yes to community assistants:)*

- Are the community assistants students?
  - What is their role in the apartment community?
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9. How would a student interested in living in this place apply to live here? Does assignment occur through something such as a housing lottery?

**Probe:** How do students typically find out that (this place) offers student housing?

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10. Are students living at this place governed by the same residence life rules, code of conduct, or regulations as students who live in residence halls/dormitories?

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11. Are the rooms furnished?

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12. Does the building have a central entrance? Does the entrance have a front desk?

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13. Does this place only house college/university students?

**If yes:**

- Which colleges and universities do your residents attend?
- If the building was not filled to capacity, would you accept non-students?

**If no:**

- Does it primarily house students? What does “primarily” mean to you?
- What percentage of residents here are students? (*If needed:* Is it more than 90%?)
- Who else lives here? Can students’ spouses and/or families live here?

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14. Does this place ever contract out rooms or beds to any school or college? *(If necessary:  
For example, cosmetology schools, beauty schools, and trade schools)*

**If yes:**

- How many students are from these types of schools?
- Are these students ever paired with students from the local college/university as roommates?

## **Section 2. Other Buildings**

Here's a list of some other housing properties in this area. Please tell us how this place is similar to [MENTION NAME FROM LIST]? And how is it different?

[INTERVIEWER: PROBE TO LEARN ANSWERS TO ITEMS 1-14]

Let's compare this place to another from the list, say [MENTION OTHER NAME FROM LIST]?

### Section 3. GQ versus HU

Thank you for your answers. Now I'd like to give you a little more background on the Census Bureau. As you may know, a census of the population is conducted every 10 years. We also conduct other surveys more regularly, like the American Community Survey, or ACS. Because there are so many different types of living arrangements, the Census Bureau has two different ways of counting everyone in the census and these surveys.

One way is to count everyone in a housing unit. This might be what you would typically think of when you think of the census. One form goes to a housing unit, and that form collects information on everyone in that unit, such as their names, ages, sexes, and how this people are related to each other.

The other way is to use a method of counting people called group quarters. This is generally used when the housing unit approach doesn't work so well. For example, sending a housing unit form to a nursing home would not work well because typically the patients are not related.. In the group quarters method, each individual person fills out a form with information only about themselves.

In the past, most college/university student housing has been counted using the group quarters method. Students in housing such as residence halls/dormitories and fraternities or sororities are generally asked to fill out their own individual forms.

However, the types of place where students live are changing. There are increasingly more unique arrangements, including housing in apartments or apartment-style housing. The Census Bureau is trying to figure out whether this place should be counted for the next census in 2020, and in other surveys like the ACS, using the housing unit method or the group quarters method. Part of this decision involves deciding whether this place should be considered "student housing."

**Probe:** What does the term "student housing" mean to you?

**Probe:** Do you consider "university recognized student housing" to be the same thing?

[INTERVIEWER: YOU MAY SHOW THE HOUSING UNIT DEFINITION IN THIS SECTION ONLY IF ASKED]

1. Would you consider this place “student housing”?

**If no:** What characteristics of this place would need to change for you to consider it student housing?

**If yes:** What makes you consider this place student housing?

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2. We spent some time talking about different characteristics of housing that could possibly help the Census Bureau decide if a place should be considered student housing. These characteristics included amenities, location of building, and lease type.

Are there any other features about your building we were missing?

What about other buildings in the area?

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3. Are you aware of other types of student housing options that may become more or less popular in the next few years?

What other changes do you anticipate coming to student housing in the next few years?

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4. Currently, the Census Bureau uses this definition to classify student housing. [\[HAND RESPONDENT DEFINITION\]](#). Please take a minute to read this definition.

*Includes residence halls and dormitories, which house college and university students in a group living arrangement. This facilities are owned, leased, or managed either by a college, university, or seminary, or by a private entity or organization. Fraternity and sorority housing recognized by the college or university are included as college student housing.*

Does this definition capture your building? Is it too broad, too narrow, or just right? Tell me more about that.

**Probe:** How would you change this definition?

**Probe:** What does “group living arrangement” mean to you? [\[SHOW RESPONDENT WHERE THIS PHRASE IS IN THE DEFINITION\]](#)

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5. Here is a definition that is very similar to the one that I just showed you. In this definition, the phrase “both on- and off-campus” is included [HAND RESPONDENT REVISION AND SHOW RESPONDENT PHRASE].

*Includes residence halls, dormitories, and other buildings, which house college and university students in a group living arrangement, **both on- and off-campus**. These facilities are owned, leased, or managed either by a college, university, or seminary, or by a private entity or organization. Fraternity and sorority housing recognized by the college or university are included as student housing.*

What do you think about this definition compared to the previous one? Which one do you think fits your building more closely?

6. In the future, one way the Census Bureau could collect information on students living in student housing is to compile information. Please take a moment to look at this form [HAND RESPONDENT ICR].

If the Census Bureau were to ask for information, what might the college/university be able to provide about students living in student housing? [INTERVIEWER NOTE: BE SURE TO GET RESPONSE ON EACH ICR QUESTION.]

Would this information provide an accurate count in your opinion?

*If R mentions legislation prohibiting disclosure:* What information might you be able to provide if we assume that legislation allows it?

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7. Earlier we talked about the two ways the Census collects information: The housing unit method, where forms are mailed to a housing unit and questions are asked about everyone living in that housing unit; and group quarters, where Census collects an “Individual Census Report” from each resident. Based on this information, which of the two methods do you believe would work best for this place for the Decennial Census in 2020?

**Probe:** Please tell me more about that.

8. Let's say I came to your building for the census in 2020 and showed you this flashcard and asked you to identify which category best described this place. What would you say? [\[GIVE RESPONDENT FLASHCARD\]](#)

*(If needed:)* Do you see any categories on this flashcard that capture your building? Tell me more about that.

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9. Now I'd like for you to take a look at a revision to category 11 on this flashcard [\[GIVE RESPONDENT REVISED CATEGORY; POINT OUT 11 ON FLASHCARD\]](#). Please take a moment to read this over.

***“11. Student housing, including a residence hall, dormitory, or other building for students that is owned, leased, or managed, either by a college, university, or seminary, or by a private entity or organization***

*Group housing for students at residential colleges, universities, and seminaries.”*

What do you think about this category compared to the previous one? Which one do you think fits your building more closely?

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10. Is there anything else you would like to mention that we haven't had a chance to talk about yet?

Thank you very much for your time and for your help with improving the 2020 Census.