

Family Finances – Expenditure Diaries

User Guide

May – June 2025

Introduction to Expenditure Diaries 🎉

Welcome to the Expenditure Diaries part of the Family Finances study! We are going to be collecting income and expenditure data from families in England and Scotland for a period of **one month starting on Monday 26th May until 25th June 2025**. This will be an opportunity to log your income and spend on different things for your household, your children and yourselves, using an online app. This will help us understand how families are using their income and if there are any differences in the way parents in Scotland and England spend their money, given the different kinds of benefits available. These diaries will be anonymous: while we might use the figures you supply in research supports, we will not use your real name. **Taking part in the diaries is completely voluntary. If you decide that you don't want to be involved any longer, please let us know.**

Find out more about:

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Joining Instructions and Consent Forms

To join the diary project and access the app, you will need to click on this link: <https://app.familyfinances.study/consent/join>

You will need to use your email to join and you will receive a secure code, which will help you create a secure account to record your income and expenditure. You will be asked to give your consent to being involved. The consent form and information sheet will be available on the app under the '**See my consent forms**' section. If you have any problems logging in at any point, please email:

ilona.pinter@york.ac.uk

TIP: You could bookmark this link to access the diary more easily. If you click 'log out', you'll be sent a one-off code to your email when you try to log in.

 Family Finances

Welcome back

Income


£383.12

+ Add income

Outgoing


£360


+ Add expenses

 See all my entries

100%

Complete


 Tell us about you

 See my consent forms

‘Tell us about you’ Section

To begin with, we need some information about you, your household and your household’s income. This can be entered in the ‘**Tell us about you**’ Section. This information is really important for our analysis so please try to provide as much info as you can. Your **personal details like your name, address and phone number will be kept secure**. We will only use the Alias – the made-up name – rather than your real name in any research outputs. But we need your name and address to send you your vouchers at the end of the diary.

TIP: Make sure to save the information in each box and mark it as complete when you’re done. You’ll be rewarded with confetti! 🎉

 Family Finances

About me

General

Name

Alias
For privacy, please don't use an alias similar to your real name.

About

Age

Gender

Relationship status


Ethnicity


Income and Expenses


We know all our participants have busy lives and we're so grateful that you're taking part in the diaries. We want to make this as easy as possible! You can decide whether to **record your income and expenses information every day** as they happen at a time that works for you. Based on the piloting we've done, we think this will take about 5 minutes. But if you prefer, you can **record the information weekly**. This might take a bit longer, about 20 minutes. Even if you record the information weekly, please **still specify the date** when this income came in or when the spending happened. The income and expenses should be entered for all days between **Monday 26th May and Wednesday 25th June 2025** (inclusive).

We've listed a number of different **income categories** including income from your employment, your partner's employment (if applicable), benefits, child maintenance, loans and money from friends/family. For **Universal Credit entries**, we're asking you to input your take-home amount - so the **payment after deductions**. If there is an income category missing, you can add this as 'Other' and add your own details. When you record the income, you'll be asked to input the type of income, the amount and the date when you received it.

Select type of expense

**Household**
Money spent on the home

**Children**
Money spent on the children

**Adults**
Money spent on the adults

If you need to go back and make any changes or delete entries, you can do this through **‘See all my entries’**.

TIP: Parents piloting the app suggested keeping **shopping receipts** to help them input the information later that day. Some used their **banking app** to help them remember. Enter in as much info as you feel able to or feel comfortable with. It doesn’t need to be the exact amount down to the penny. The main thing is that you do it consistently over the month-long period. 🥳

Reminders 🕒

We know how busy life with kids is and we all get easily distracted by all the family admin. To help remind you to fill in the diary, we will start off by sending you regular reminders. But you can change the

frequency of these reminders to receive **daily or weekly reminders** by phone (text) or email. Or you can stop the reminders altogether. Enter your preferences at the bottom of the main page.

Getting Help and Support

If you run into any technical difficulties, have questions or need support in filling out the diary, please email or text/WhatsApp Ilona on: ilona.pinter@york.ac.uk or 07385 140 367

If you need further support or advice, like a referral to an advice service or specialist support, please contact us via the Family Finances project email: family-finances-project@york.ac.uk.

‘Thank You’ Vouchers 🙏

We are so grateful to you for your involvement in this project and the time you’re putting into this. When the expenditure diaries are completed at the end of the project (25th June), we will send participants a **‘Thank You’ voucher worth £75** either via post or email (please select your preferred option at the bottom of the ‘Tell us about you’ section).