

Financial Services Consumer Panel

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR CONSUMERS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial Services Consumer Panel Basic Banking Research Spring 2002

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Foreword

We are pleased to publish this research into the accessibility of basic bank accounts and believe it contains important messages for the industry and Government. Tackling financial exclusion has been on the Government's agenda since it came into office in 1997. The NOP Financial Research Survey¹ shows that 15% of the population still do not have a current account and FSA research² shows that up to 9% of the adults have no bank or building society account. The non-banked are likely to be disadvantaged in a number of ways including being unable to access cheaper bills through direct debit. For example, DTI figures³ show that electricity and gas bills could be as much as 9% lower for those paying by monthly direct debit than those paying by pre-payment meter.

In November 1998, the Treasury set up a Policy Action Team (PAT 14) which, among other things, examined the role of retail banks, Post Offices and other organisations in providing access to and delivery of financial services in deprived neighbourhoods. The PAT published their report, 'Access to financial services', in November 1999. In her introduction to the report the then Economic Secretary, Melanie Johnson MP, said that tackling social exclusion had been and would remain at the top of the Government's agenda and success in tackling financial exclusion would be central to this.

In our response to 'Access to financial services', we noted that financial exclusion is a complex issue with a number of dimensions including: the access to products and services; levels of awareness of what is available; and the suitability of products and services for low income groups. Promotion of basic bank accounts is key, therefore, and will become more important in future as from April 2003, benefits claimants will need to make provision for an account into which benefits can be paid. A study for the Department of Work and Pensions⁴ predicts that offering basic bank accounts will at least double the entry into banking of the currently non-banked.

The industry, via the British Banker's Association (BBA), has spoken positively about Government's message that financial exclusion must be high on firms' agendas. In their publication 'Promoting Financial Inclusion – the work of the banking industry', the BBA state that there has been a massive increase in the availability of basic bank accounts over the past year. Our clear message to the industry is that the picture on the ground appears to be very different. A sustained effort will be required to make basic bank accounts truly accessible to people who need them.



Colin Brown
Chairman, Financial Services Consumer Panel

¹ NOP Financial Research Survey, interviewed 29, 848 adults aged 16 and over from Jan-June 2001.

² *In or out? Financial exclusion: a literature review*, FSA July 2000.

³ Quoted in the Offer and Ofgas Social Plan Discussion Document, May 1999.

⁴ *Payment of pensions and benefits: a survey of social security recipients paid by order book or girocheque*, Research Report 146, by Elaine Kempson and Claire Whyley

Basic Banking Research

Prepared for Financial Services Consumer Panel

Prepared by saville rossiter-base

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1 Background

The *'In or Out?'* report published by the Financial Services Authority in July 2000 identified the need for a new simpler bank account to meet the needs of people on very low incomes. These basic accounts would provide access to banking facilities such as direct debits, bill payment, and debit cards, but would not carry an overdraft facility so customers could not overdraw on their account unless they haven't kept enough money in the account to cover bills from direct debits. The report also identified that many banks and building societies had or were in the process of designing basic bank accounts to meet the requirements of this otherwise financially excluded group.

The Financial Services Consumer Panel, set up by the Financial Services Authority to represent consumers, suspects that there may be a problem with access to the new basic bank accounts. They have anecdotal evidence that although banks and building societies have such accounts, local branch staff are not pushing them, and so consequently many people for whom they would be suitable are not hearing about them.

The Panel also suspects that even if someone is told about the existence of a basic bank account the actual process of setting one up could exclude certain people, for example, those with County Court Judgements (CCJ's) or those living in hostels who cannot prove their address.

saville rossiter-base (sr-b) were commissioned by the FSA to conduct a mixed 'mystery shopping' exercise to establish whether:

- Those for whom basic bank accounts are intended are able to open an account
- Those expressing an interest in opening an account are offered verbal or written information on basic bank accounts

Two research approaches were adopted for this 'mystery shopping' exercise:

- Information gathering
- Account opening

This document describes these two approaches, and provides indicative evidence to support the Consumer Panel's suspicions that banks and building societies are failing to provide information to eligible consumers about basic bank accounts.

Please note: The use of the word 'bank' for the remainder of the report refers to both banks and building societies offering basic bank accounts.

2 Summary of key findings

2.1 *Information gathering*

- Only a small minority of the ten banks enquired about the personal circumstances of the person looking for information on opening a bank account, and just one offered information on the types of ID required
- When the person looking for information on opening an account expressed concerns about debt or becoming overdrawn, only one bank referred to information about basic bank accounts
- Four of the seven different leaflets collected made some mention of basic bank accounts, but just one placed this information prominently in their leaflet – the same bank that had referred to basic bank accounts

2.2 *Account opening*

- ID requirements were not consistent across the banks visited, with some accepting the application with only a child allowance book as ID, and others (sometimes another branch of the same bank) insisting on a passport or driving license
- None of those trying to open accounts were offered or told anything about basic account accounts, even though in several cases those looking to open an account had expressly raised concerns about becoming overdrawn
- To summarise the outcomes for the 16 respondents
 - 7 out of 16 successfully opened current accounts, with a further 2 opening savings accounts
 - 4 out of 16 had their applications refused outright, three because of strict ID requirements, and one because of a history of County Court Judgement's – none were offered alternative options such as opening a basic bank account or were offered alternative ways in which to satisfy ID requirements such as to produce a letter of from someone in a position of responsibility confirming their identity and address.

- A further three were told that their applications would be fully processed on the provision of further ID, which could be provided
- The research also raised concerns about the services that were offered by the bank; 3 out of 16 respondents were offered credit card applications, and 2 were given information about packaged current accounts offering a range of benefits for a fixed monthly fee

3 Information gathering

3.1 Method

For this element of the research two interviewers working for saville rossiter-base were tasked with visiting branches of ten banks with a high street presence in two locations (Dunstable and St. Albans) to enquire about opening an account.

The interviewers were asked to approach the Enquiries/ Information desk at the bank, where available, explain that they did not have (and had never had) a bank account, and were looking for information on what accounts were available. If asked their personal circumstances, the interviewers explained that they were on very low incomes (under £10,000) and living in rented accommodation. If basic bank accounts were not mentioned by the branch staff, the interviewer stated that they had concerns about debt and being overdrawn – to give the staff member a further opportunity to provide information on basic bank accounts.

In addition to compiling a report on the verbal advice and information provided, the interviewers endeavoured to take away printed information on the accounts available from each bank – a review of this literature can be found in Section 3.2.5.

3.2 Main findings

3.2.1 The enquiries desk

In 8 out of the 10 banks visited the Enquiry/ Information desk was clearly signposted, with all but one being separate from the main counter. In most cases the interviewer found the desk staffed and generally found the member of staff willing to help, except in one branch where the staff member continued a personal conversation with a colleague before offering assistance. Only one bank required the interviewer to speak to a customer service advisor at a separate desk – this was bank policy for account opening.

In the two banks where the interviewer was unable to identify an obvious point of general enquiry they approached a member of the counter staff.

3.2.2 Step 1 – Unprompted response

In all banks the interviewers were usually first provided with or directed to literature on current accounts, generally being informed to have a read through the types of accounts available to

them. Only five offered suggestions (without prompting) on the types of account the interviewer should think about opening, which was typically current accounts, although no explanation or detailed information about these accounts was offered spontaneously. One member of staff mentioned that they would need to run a credit check before they would offer the interviewer suggestions on the most appropriate account.

Only a small minority of banks questioned the interviewer on their personal circumstances, such as age, permanent address, available identification, and likely monthly deposit, with only one outlining the types of ID they would need to open an account.

In two cases the bank provided additional information on interest rates if larger amounts, such as £1,000, were deposited into the account each month.

At this stage of the exercise, NONE of the banks provided information on basic bank accounts.

3.2.3 Step 2 – Prompted response

In order to give the banks the opportunity to provide information on basic bank accounts, the interviewers raised concerns about debt and the account becoming overdrawn.

Subsequently, only one bank went on to highlight the availability of a more basic account, but failed to mention the need for an opening balance of £50 for adults aged 18 or over (this was identified from the booklet detailing the account).

A further three banks outlined cards associated with standard bank accounts which wouldn't allow the customer to become overdrawn, although it was not explicitly clear if the accounts themselves fitted all the criteria for basic bank accounts. All three appeared to be offering similar facilities to the standard current account but with cards - Solo, Electron or Cashcard – where the balance on each account is checked for each transaction and only cleared if there is sufficient balance to cover the transaction.

Other options suggested included:

- 'Trial period' – upgrade the account to an overdraft facility if it remains in credit for a 3 month period
- Setting a suitable overdraft limit
- OR simply, in two cases, don't become overdrawn – *"You'll want to make sure you don't get overdrawn as you'll get charged for it."*

3.2.4 Impressions of the bank staff

Overall impressions were relatively 'neutral', with most bank staff being reasonably helpful, but none exceeding the interviewers' expectations.

In one case the interviewer left feeling patronised, with the staff member laughing when they said they didn't have a bank account.

At another branch the staff member appeared "baffled" when the interviewer asked about opening an account, going on to provide a torn leaflet with pen scribbles on it.

As mentioned earlier, one interviewer was left waiting several minutes for assistance while the staff member continued her conversation with a colleague, despite noticing the interviewer waiting at the enquiry desk.

3.2.5 Literature review

The literature collected by the interviewers was reviewed by sr-b for any details of basic bank accounts.

Seven different leaflets were collected which covered different types of accounts, but particularly current accounts. In a minority of banks, the interviewer was provided with information on subscription accounts which offer the customer a range of benefits for a monthly fee.

Information on basic bank accounts was identified in four of the seven leaflets, with the level and positioning of the information varying. Only one leaflet provided a detailed description of the account available, covering benefits, facilities and opening criteria. In two leaflets the information was not obviously placed, with short descriptions in the "Other Services" section. In another leaflet the account was easily identified in a section on "choosing the account that suits you", but no detail was provided in the leaflet – the customer was directed to contact their branch or the banks service centre for more information.

4 Account opening

4.1 Method

A total of 16 respondents were recruited in four locations (Liverpool, East Barnet, Aberdeen, Wandsworth). The locations were chosen to provide some regional diversity.

All respondents were approached in the street by a market research recruiter, and screened using a short recruitment questionnaire (appended) to ensure that they did not currently hold a bank account (single or joint), and were interested in opening an account but had some concerns, such as:

- Lack of income
- Poor credit history/ CCJ's
- Recently divorced or separated women (with low incomes)
- Turned down previously
- Concerns about being overdrawn

Those in full-time education and those who fully intended to open an account but simply hadn't got around to it were excluded from the research. The table on the next page shows that NONE of the respondents were in full-time education, and all were in households with net incomes below £15,000.

Age group:		Income source:	
Under 30	6	Working full-time	4
30-44	5	Working part-time	5
45 plus	5	On benefits	7
Gender:		Income:	
Male	6	Under £10,000	12
Female	10	£10,000 - £14,999	4
Tenure:			
Local authority housing	10		
Privately owned	4		
Buying with mortgage	2		

At the recruitment stage, respondents were asked to make an appointment with a local bank of their choice and, following this appointment, be interviewed by saville rossiter-base about their experience of the appointment and impressions of the bank visited – a copy of the interview guide can be found in the appendix. Respondents were also informed to take along any form of identification (ID) they had available as the bank may require this to open an account – all chose to take along some form of ID.

While respondents were told by recruiters that neither sr-b nor their clients could be held responsible for any products they ended up taking out with the bank, they were also advised that sr-b would answer any questions they had about the account, or help them to close the account if they wished.

The respondents were NOT specifically informed that the research was concerned with basic bank accounts in case this could affect their discussions with the bank.

4.2 Main findings

4.2.1 Concerns about having a bank account

The information below was collected from respondents at the recruitment stage in terms of their reasons for not holding a bank account.

	Total
Don't have enough money/ regular income to need one	7
Would turn me down – not enough money/ regular income	6
Would turn me down – poor credit history	3
Recently widowed/ divorced/ separated	3
Turned me down before	2
Don't have necessary ID	2
Danger of overdrawing/ spending money don't have	1
Too expensive to have/ run one	1
Just prefer to have/ use cash	1

This table shows that respondents expressed a wide range of concerns about having a bank account. Around half (7 out of 16) of all respondents were concerned that they did not have enough money/ regular income to merit having a bank account.

4.2.2 Why want an account now?

At the start of the follow-up interview, respondents were asked why they had decided to open a bank account now. For around half the decision to open an account was prompted by their employer, with their current method of payment changing from cash to either cheque or BACS. Similarly, those currently looking for work thought it would be useful for them to have an account if they were successful in finding a job, and at present it would be easier to have their benefits paid directly into an account.

For a similar proportion a recent change in their personal circumstances was the main prompt, with some (mostly male respondents) getting remarried or finding a new partner, and others (mostly female respondents) getting separated or divorced. In most cases, the joint account

was closed in the divorce settlement, or the husband had previously taken care of the household finances which meant the female had not needed to have an account.

Amongst the single parents, most commonly females, there was a desire to save money for their children, either to buy items for their children, or to deposit money received from the children's father (or other relatives).

4.2.3 Previous experience of bank accounts

Around one in three respondents had held a bank account in the past. For two (both woman aged under 25) the account was held when they were teenagers and had since 'expired', with both respondents believing that the account had been closed by the bank and not by themselves.

I think they closed it themselves because there wasn't any money in it.

The date expired and I didn't get another card.

Neither appeared to be particularly bothered by this stating that they had felt little need to keep the account active.

The remaining three respondents had closed their account as a result of divorce, with two admitting to experiencing bad debts with their previous accounts, although their ex-partner was generally identified as the bad debtor.

4.2.4 Choice of bank

It was generally left to the respondent to choose the bank they wanted to approach, although when respondents were recruited sr-b tried to avoid sending more than one respondent to the same bank in each location.

Convenience was the main rationale for almost all respondents, with some choosing a branch in the locality of their home or work, or one they passed on a frequent basis. Personal recommendation was rare with only one respondent visiting a bank recommended by a friend, although this respondent also selected a branch opposite his place of work.

Not surprisingly, those previously turned down for accounts (four respondents) chose to avoid the banks that had rejected their past application(s).

4.2.5 Expectations of success

In terms of confidence, males were generally more positive about their chances of success, with this primarily being driven by the opinion that everyone should be entitled to open an account, but more specifically:

- Being able to provide identification of their name and address

The cashier said I just need anything with your name and address on it.

- Perception that you can deposit a small amount of cash to keep the account active

I thought I would be able to open one at least. Put a fiver in and just keep it open, that's what I thought.

- Other (younger) members of the family having an account

My son got a Barclays card and he's only nineteen.

However, most respondents (9 out of 16) were NOT confident that their application would be accepted. There were a number of reasons why respondents thought they would be refused an account, including:

- Previously being turned down through lack of ID
- Poor credit history (including their ex-partners)

I don't know whether there was going to be some things that would crop up, or bad credit, I wasn't sure.

- Perception that they would be thought unworthy of an account

It's the thought of walking in there and they're saying 'you don't need one' sort of thing. It's hard work trying to get one if you don't have wages.

I didn't think they'd give me one to be honest. Not getting much money or anything, I thought all the odds were kind of against me.

I was very nervous when I first went in and totally expected them to say 'Oh you need this, that, the next, and you need a hundred pounds to put in.'

Broadly, women were less positive about being able to open an account than men.

4.2.6 Account opening procedure

At the recruitment stage, respondents were encouraged to contact their chosen bank in advance to book an appointment, or ask if they needed to schedule an appointment. In all, around half contacted the bank ahead of their visit, with only two asked to arrange a definite appointment with a customer service advisor. The other five were told to call into the branch at a certain time or on a day when the advisor would be in the branch. During this initial contact with bank NONE of the respondents were informed on what types of ID they would need to open a new account.

Most (11 out of 16) were seen in a private office or private area of the bank. The remaining respondents being dealt with at the general enquiries desk or by counter staff. Only one or two were concerned about their lack of privacy.

Everyone can hear you when they're queuing up as well, which is worse.

4.2.7 Process of account opening

The account opening process varied greatly across the banks, with some respondents going through a relatively lengthy interview process, while others simply completed the application on paper themselves (and handed it in for processing) or with the advisor entering the details directly into a computer.

In addition, the level of information required from the respondent to open an account varied. For a few all that was required was their personal information – name, address, date of birth etc. Whereas, others were questioned about their reasons for wanting an account, why they had never had an account before, and how they planned to use the new account.

For a few respondents, the types of questions asked gave them the impression that the bank was discouraging them from opening an account.

The way they were saying 'You need this, you need that, blah blah'. Trying to fob me off really.

There was a funny question that came up and it was like your first school you went to. It was a strange question, but I wasn't going to ask why do you need to know that.

It was really strange, she asked me if I knew anyone who banked at that branch for 10 years or more, which I don't. Then asked if I know anyone who'd lived in Barnes for 10

years or more who I could get a reference off, which I found very strange as well, and I said no. And raised eyebrows and all that sort of thing.

He never really explained why I couldn't have one. He just said because I weren't on the list [electoral roll].

The research found evidence of inconsistency in ID requirements. Whilst the above respondent was refused an account on the basis that they were not on the electoral roll, another respondent in the same situation had their application accepted. Another respondent was accepted to open an account on this occasion by simply providing a reference letter from their employer, the same respondent had previously had their application for a bank account rejected by a different bank for not having a passport or driving license.

For some, the process was found to be impersonal, with the bank staff offering little or no detail about the account. In addition, a few were surprised by how easy it was to open an account.

All I said was I'd like to open a current account and that was it. He didn't explain anything. He just went clicking. I saw him click on a cheque book and then an ATM card, and no he didn't explain anything.

It was much easier than I thought it would be. It was a bit impersonal I thought... I expected it to be on a more one to one interview type thing.

Amongst those with limited experience of bank accounts, and those with previous bad debts, many were surprised by the types of accounts and additional services offered by the banks.

She told me I would also get a Switch card. I was shocked obviously, I thought it would just be like a card for the cheque thing. And then she mentioned to me about an Access card.... She put it through the computer and let me have a £500 limit.

She said about the Gold one... there were about 60 advantages on that. I was like, this is my first account so I'd rather just like a simple one.

He offered me the Additions account, where you pay £6 a month... I just wanted to see how I got on with the account, there was no point in me having all these different things, you can end up in trouble can't you?

She said I could apply for a Visa card as well, so I did. If I get this card I hope I don't go overboard with it.

Despite several respondents raising concerns about becoming overdrawn or spending too much money, some banks clearly missed the opportunity to offer information on basic bank accounts.

She just asked me which account and when I said the savers she just went and got the forms. With a current account I was worried that with direct debits and everything I would end up spending too much.

4.2.8 Whether offered an account

The level of success varied across respondents.

- Four respondents were instantly turned down with no options offered
- Three respondents were likely to be able to open an account on provision of ID which should be available – 2 requiring their passport (which will be available), and one required to complete a form to join the electoral roll (although this respondent took her passport, and couldn't understand why she was not on the electoral roll)
- Nine respondents successfully opened accounts, with seven opening current accounts, and two opening savings accounts, with the respondent choosing these accounts because of their concerns about being overdrawn.

When it became clear that respondents had NOT been offered basic bank accounts, the researcher prompted the respondent by asking if the bank had mentioned any other types of accounts which were more basic than the current accounts and wouldn't allow them to become overdrawn. ALL claimed that no such account was ever mentioned.

4.2.9 Reasons for being turned down

Amongst the four respondents who had their applications rejected, two were refused on the basis of a lack of the necessary identification.

They asked me for ID. The ID I could provide was my marriage licence and my housing agreement. They weren't enough. It was a driving licence or passport. Well I don't go abroad and I don't drive. But they were the only two proofs of ID they were willing to take, so that's it.

They said 'Are you working?' I said no, I'm looking for work now. 'Any identification?' I said I've got my medical card that's all I've got. They said I need three forms of

identification before they can do anything for me. Like a driving licence, passport, birth certificate. Which I haven't got.

On one case the respondent was rejected because of a CCJ.

She turned the computer round and showed me, and that's what come up, County Court Judgements. They said we can't give you an account because of them CCJ's. You've got no chance of opening one until these run off. I've got to pay them off first and then I can open an account.

The remaining respondent, was not refused per se, but was offered no alternatives to the references she had been asked for and was unable to provide. This respondent felt the member of staff was far from encouraging.

I just said to her I'd like a hole in the wall account, no overdraft. Just so when I get cheques or if I have got a bit of money I can put it all in there. She told me to take the leaflet away with me. She couldn't wait to get rid of me basically, you know I was just being a pain in the bum. She didn't really say anything like 'No we're not going to give you one' but she did tell me it would be best to take that home and read it. Basically if felt like she was saying don't bother coming back, you're not having one.

Amongst those rejected there appeared to be little hope of being able to open an account, as this experience was most often not the first time they had been turned down.

3.1.1 Overall impressions

Broadly, impressions were positive, and appeared to have little to do with the respondent's success with opening an account, although those who had been successful were generally the most positive about their experiences.

She was nice, she was really, really pleasant. I mean I thought she was going to invite me round her house for tea at one stage.

He did say that in the future I want to change my account from savings to a current account it would be not be a problem, he said the ball is entirely in your court, we are not going to force you to do anything you don't want to do, it is your account not ours. And he made a point of stating it was my account.

I was waiting on a brusque person, somebody that is like you weren't an individual you are just a number, but I didn't get that, I got this polite person.

On further discussion, a number raised negative impressions:

I don't know if it was me being paranoid, it did make me feel little again.

I think she was just more interested in me opening an account, that was it. You know, sort of get me done, off you go and wait for the next one.

He seemed busy, and obviously he's done them before. I was just treated like a number really. He set it up within five minutes.

He was quite pleasant, but he was smarmy, as you would expect a bank manager to be.

It degrades you knowing you can't have an account, and your son's got one. He's only 19 and I'm 45.

For many, the exercise had exceeded their expectations, with all claiming that they were happy with the decisions they had made. ALL stated that they planned to keep the account open.

Subsequent to the research, all respondents were sent a letter by sr-b providing information on their rights in dealing with financial services, and how to get the right advice. A further information leaflet on basic bank accounts was issued to those who did not successfully open a current account.

5 Recruitment script

Q1.	<p>Do you have a bank account, at all – either in your own name, or a joint account with a partner?</p> <p>THIS INCLUDES ANY ACCOUNT WITH THE HIGH STREET BANKS (SEE LIST), BUT NOT BUILDING SOCIETY ACCOUNTS UNLESS THEY HAVE 'CONVERTED' AND ARE ON LIST</p>	<p>Yes 1</p> <p>No 2</p>	<p>CLOSE</p> <p>Q2</p>
Q2.	<p>Which ONE of these describes how you feel about opening a bank account?</p> <p>IF RESPONDENT MENTIONS THEY HAVE BEEN TURNED DOWN, OR THINKS THEIR CREDIT HISTORY WOULD BE A PROBLEM, SIMPLY DETERMINE WHETHER THEY ARE INTERESTED OR NOT.</p> <p>I will definitely open a bank account, I just haven't got around to doing it</p> <p>I am interested in having a bank account, but have some concerns</p> <p>I am not interested in having a bank account</p>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>	<p>CLOSE</p> <p>Q3</p> <p>CLOSE</p>
Q3.	<p>Which of these age groups are you in?</p>	<p>16-24 1</p> <p>25-29 2</p> <p>30-34 3</p> <p>35-44 4</p> <p>45-49 5</p> <p>50-54 6</p> <p>55-64 7</p> <p>65 or over 8</p>	<p>Q4</p> <p>Q5</p> <p>Q5</p> <p>Q5</p> <p>Q5</p> <p>Q5</p> <p>Q5</p> <p>Q5</p>
Q4.	<p>THOSE AGED 16-24. Are you in full time education?</p>	<p>Yes 1</p> <p>No 2</p>	<p>CLOSE</p> <p>Q5</p>

Q5.	<p>ASK ALL. And what is the occupation of the main wage earner/ head of your household. PROBE IN FULL, INCLUDING NUMBER OF STAFF AND QUALIFICATIONS IF APPROPRIATE:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">A 1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">B 2</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ C1 3</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ C2 4</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ D 5</p> <p style="text-align: right;">E 6</p>		<p>CLOSE</p> <p>CLOSE</p> <p>Q6</p> <p>Q6</p> <p>Q6</p> <p>Q6</p>
Q6.	<p>Could you tell me, which of these bands describes your households net income, that is the amount of money coming into the house after any stoppages for tax, national insurance and so on?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Under £10,000 1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">£10,000-£14,999 2</p> <p style="text-align: right;">£15,000 or more 3</p>		<p>Q7</p> <p>Q7</p> <p>CLOSE</p>
Q7.	<p>Are you living...</p> <p style="text-align: right;">In a property which is owned or being bought with a mortgage 1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">In a property which is rented privately 2</p> <p style="text-align: right;">In local authority housing 3</p> <p style="text-align: right;">In a shelter/ hostel/ of no fixed abode 4</p>		<p>ALL TO Q8</p>
Q8.	<p>What are your main reasons for not having a bank account? DO NOT PROMPT. PROBE – Any other reasons?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Don't have enough money/ regular income to need one 1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Would turn me down – not enough money/ regular income 2</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Would turn me down – poor credit history 3</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Too expensive to have/ run one 4</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Danger of overdrawing/ spending money you don't have 5</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Suspicious of them/ worried about safety of money 6</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Just prefer to have/ use cash 7</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Recently widowed/ divorced/ separated 8</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Other SPECIFY _____ 9</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____</p>		<p>ALL TO Q9</p>

Q9.	<p>ASK ALL: Are you married/ living as married, single, divorced/ separated or widowed ?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Married/ living as married 1 Single 2 Divorced/ separated 3 Widowed 4</p>		ALL TO Q10
Q10.	<p>What is your employment status?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Working full-time 1 Working part-time 2 Unemployed/ seeking work 3 Not seeking work 4 Retired 5</p>		ALL TO Q11
Q11.	<p>IF ELIGIBLE, RECRUIT: (OTHERWISE, CLOSE)</p> <p>We are conducting research for the FSA, who are the watchdog for the financial services industry, to assess the service provided by high street banks.</p> <p>We are looking for people to make an appointment on Thursday 28th February/ Friday 1st March next week with one of the local high street banks to open a bank account and then report back on their experience in an interview with a market researcher. Would you be willing to help us with this – you would be paid £30 as a thank you for your help?</p> <p>IF NECESSARY – It should only require £1 to open an account.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Agreed 1 Refused 2</p>		Q12 CLOSE
Q12.	<p>Which of the local high street banks would you choose to open an account with?</p> <p>BANK NAME _____</p>		Q13

Q13	<p>Please make an appointment with (NAME OF BANK) for the morning of (DATE) and then come along to (RECRUITER'S ADDRESS) for (TIME) to speak with the researcher about how you got on. You will probably be asked by (NAME OF BANK) to bring along certain types of identification in order to open a bank account, please don't worry if they ask for anything you don't have – just take along whatever you can.</p> <p>Which of the following types of identification do you have available?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Passport 1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">National identity card 2</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Armed Forces identity card 3</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Employer identity card with a photo and signature 4</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Credit card with a photo 5</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Full UK driving licence 6</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Birth certificate 7</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Plastic National Insurance card 8</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Pension book 9</p> <p style="text-align: right;">NONE OF THESE 0</p>		ALL TO Q14
Q14.	<p>The interview with the researcher after your appointment with the bank will take around 30 minutes, and will cover your experiences and impressions of the appointment at the bank. Please bring along any leaflets or paperwork given to you by the bank.</p> <p>If you have any concerns about the account after you've opened it, the researcher will be able to answer your questions, or help you to close the account if you wish.</p>		Q15
Q15.	<p>TAKE FULL DETAILS:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NAME _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ADDRESS _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PHONE: _____</p>		

6 Topic guide

BACKGROUND

- Introduction to sr-b and purpose of research (experience of opening a bank account)
- Whether ever held a bank account – if so, reasons for closing/ not using
- Whether ever tried to open a bank account previously – outcome of this, and experience of the process
- Reasons for not holding a bank account
- Previous knowledge/ perceptions about types of bank accounts available
- Previous knowledge/ perceptions about what was required to open a bank account
- Expectations of success in opening an account – reasons why didn't expect to be successful (if appropriate)
- Why decided to open a bank account now (just the incentive, or something else)

APPOINTMENT BOOKING

- Which bank chosen to make the appointment – reasons for this choice
- Who spoke with at the bank – just at the enquiry desk?
- Whether made appointment or advised to just come to the branch
- What told about necessary information and ID to open an account
- Any issues with this?
- How did you resolve this/ how were you advised to resolve this?
- Whether given or took away any leaflets or information - details

APPOINTMENT

- Whether had to wait to speak with someone – how long, any comments on this
- Who saw at the bank (title) – did this person give you a business card?
- Where discussion was held – private or open area
- What questions did the bank ask about your background/ reasons for wanting an account/ reasons for not having an account at the moment
- What were you told about bank accounts – any options or just one kind
- Whether looked through any literature during the appointment
- Whether given any literature to take away – details
- Any comments on the discussion – the tone/ manner of the person at the bank
- Were you encouraged or discouraged from opening an account
- If encouraged – what were you told about the benefits of a bank account
- If discouraged – what were you told about the barriers to opening an account/ why you didn't need one/ wouldn't get one
- Whether offered a bank account by the bank
- IF OFFERED
- What was the name of this account
- What were you told about it/ what do you get with this account
- Does this account offer everything you need/ want – why not?
- Did you open this account at the bank – reasons why not, whether will open in the future
- IF NOT OFFERED
- Reasons given by the bank for not offering you an account
- Is this just a temporary issue – why?
- Any alternatives suggested by the bank
- Would you be prepared to try to open an account at another bank today and report back on your experiences (for an additional £30 incentive)

SUMMARY

- Overall impressions of your experience today and your initial visit to the bank
- How does this compare with what you expected
- IF OPENED ACCOUNT
- How do you feel now you have opened this account? Do you have any concerns or anything that makes you unsure about the decision? REASSURE AS NECESSARY, OFFER TO HELP CLOSE ACCOUNT IF NECESSARY.