

## Practical: research on the Witness Service (a hypothetical study)

### Study background

The Witness Service provides support to people (witnesses) who have seen a crime take place and are giving evidence in a criminal trial.

The Witness Service offers the following types of support for witnesses:

- Provide information on the court process and what will happen during the trial
- Arrange to see the court before giving evidence
- Allocate someone to go to court with the witnesses
- Provide a chance to talk over the case when the trial has ended
- Provide information on where witnesses can go for more help and support

### Study objectives

The government would like to understand what is working well and less well about the Witness Service from a range of points of views. Specifically, it wants to fund research to answer the following questions:

- How widely is the Witness Service used?
- How and why do people decide whether or not to use the Witness Service?
- What would have encouraged people who did not access the Witness Service to have done so?
- How well or not are the different types of support (see above) offered by the Witness Service working?
- What services are most used and most valued by people who use the Witness Service?
- What aspects of the Witness Service work most and least well and why?
- Are there any gaps in support for witnesses? How should the gaps be addressed?
- How satisfied are people who use the Witness Service? Why?
- What difference, if any, has the Witness Service made to witnesses and to the courts?

### Your task

What methods would you use to answer these research questions?

Is there a role for mixed-methods research? If so, how will you combine qualitative and quantitative methods?

When we join the wider group, we'll ask you to talk us through:

- your decisions and the reasons for them, and
- any difficulties or issues raised by your discussion