

General:

In general, there was a good level of understanding of the issue at hand. Comprehension was not a major issue, even if there were certain elements that needed to be carefully explained or there were elements that needed further elaboration. However, it did feel like a lot of stimulus to get through – and a couple of our recommendations relate to getting through the content as quickly and efficiently as possible without compromising on how likely respondents are to fully understand the content.

Pre-task:

Feedback	Actions/recommendations
The pre-task did a good job of getting respondents in the right mindset for the discussion and the content included in the pre-task was felt to be clear.	N/A
While some did feel it was hard to answer some of the questions, this was a result of this being a topic many do not think about at all as opposed to the questions being too complicated. With a bit of effort, everyone was able to complete the task without issue.	N/A

Discussion guide:

Feedback	Actions/recommendations
After the interview itself, respondents felt it was clear as to who United Utilities are and the role that Ofwat plays in regulating them and helping them to set service targets or performance commitments.	N/A
In the discussion guide there are a lot of prompts when you get to the section where we are evaluating the bespoke PCs. There were too many prompts here, given the volume of bespoke PCs there were to test. Time does not allow for all of these prompts of probes.	Discussion guide page 3. We recommend rationalising the prompts included and trying to refine to 5 or 6 key questions. See updated page 3 in discussion guide
The 4 questions at the end of the guide take too long to get through in the last 5-10 minutes, and were quite difficult and potentially awkward for respondents to answer – the second and fourth questions in particular were difficult for respondents to answer (page 5 of guide)	Discussion guide page 5. We have kept 2 x of these questions and tweaked the question wording itself to make it slightly easier to respondents to answer, but also to speed up this final section of the session. See updated page 5 in discussion guide
Once we had reached the end of the bespoke PCs and we were evaluating the bespoke PCs 'as a whole' (e.g., asking if there is anything missing from them) – we found it may have helped to have a slide that shows all 7 PCs with a title, to refresh the respondents' memories of the PCs we had just reviewed	NEW Slide - 19. An overview of the different bespoke PCs would prove useful when asking respondents to reflect on the PCs as a whole. See last slide in the updated stimulus

Stimulus:

Feedback	Actions/recommendations
<p>Depending on how they were described and outlined, the 'common PCs' took a while to get through</p>	<p>In order to stick to timings, it will be necessary to streamline this as much as possible. (slide 7-9 of stimulus). We can outline the sort of commitments that exist (e.g., 'experience' commitments, 'environmental' commitments, and 'maintenance' commitments) while giving a couple of examples. We suggest we create a moderator note in the guide that specifies the moderator does not read through every single performance commitment, and instead just gives a higher-level overview of the sorts of commitments that are in place for all water companies. <u>No update to stimulus, but additional moderator note included in guide to make sure this is how it is approached</u></p>
<p>They also understood the difference between the 'common' performance commitments and the 'bespoke' performance commitments – though from a moderator perspective, more could be done with the stimulus to make this distinction even clearer. In the end, it required some explanation that wasn't included in the copy to expand and make the differences fully understood. (slides 4-5 of stimulus)</p>	<p>Slides 4-5. The copy should be updated to make the distinction between the 'common' and bespoke' commitments clearer. We could bring in some of the content from slide 10 while doing this, and then remove slide 10 from later on in the stimulus to reduce the time it takes to get through the stimulus as a whole. We have removed some of the content that was included on slide 4 that explain why companies may or may not hit their targets in order to include this new information, though this could be voiced over on the slide before when explaining the financial incentives/ penalties for meeting targets. <u>See updated stimulus for new wording</u></p>
<p>From a moderator perspective, slide 10 of the stimulus also felt a little clunky to present. (slide 10 of stimulus)</p>	<p>Slide 10. We can remove this slide after incorporating some of the content to the earlier slides (slide 4-5). <u>See updated stimulus for how this has been incorporated earlier on in the stimulus</u></p>
<p>On the bespoke performance commitments (slides 11-17 of stimulus) the levels of comprehension were good. Respondents found the 'Help for households' 'Help for non-household customers', 'Improving Windermere', 'Rainfall management' and 'What not to flush' commitments easy to understand.</p>	<p>Slide 12 and 13 were understood to mean a sustained commitment to financial support for both households, and non-household customers who were struggling financially. In the non-household commitment, the examples of organisations listed were thought to be important to the community. Some recognised and spontaneously referenced the pressures</p>

	<p>schools already face with their budgets, and the fact they need further support.</p> <p>Slide 14 was understood to mean United Utilities looking to improve the ‘general health’ of Lake Windermere and the surrounding areas, with a particular focus on removing or reducing the prevalence of the chemicals (phosphorus) causing the issues</p> <p>Slide 15 was interpreted as United Utilities focusing on diverting rainwater away from integrated sewer systems, specifically at times of heavy rainfall (through installation of water butts or permeable pavements)</p> <p>Slide 17 made complete sense to all, and tallied with previous campaigns many had already seen – it was interpreted as United Utilities doing everything they can to educate people on what can and can’t be flushed – especially those who may not already know what is appropriate to flush vs what is not</p>
<p>Feedback</p>	<p>Actions/recommendations</p>
<p>There were some small issues with comprehension with the ‘Lead pipe replacement scheme’ commitment, and the ‘Embodied carbon emissions’ commitment, however:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the lead pipe replacement scheme, there were some questions as to how the new scheme differs from the old scheme that is referred to in the copy – if this support already exists, what is new about this proposed replacement scheme? (slide 16 of stimulus) • On the commitment related to embodied carbon emissions, the description was felt to be relatively long and quite wordy, and this could have an impact on comprehension – specifically, it needs to be clearer that ‘operational and ‘embodied’ emissions are different sorts of emissions, and that ‘operational’ emissions are already covered by the ‘common PCs’. There was also one respondent who did not know what ‘net zero’ meant (slide 18 of stimulus) 	<p>Slide 16. The difference between the old scheme and the new scheme could be made clearer. See updated stimulus for new wording.</p> <p>Slide 18. The difference between ‘embodied’ and ‘operational’ emissions could be even clearer, while the text as a whole needs to be shortened and simplified as much as possible. In case there are other respondents who do not know what ‘net zero’ means, we have added a moderator note to the discussion guide to refer to the crib sheet if they require clarification. See updated stimulus for new wording.</p>

