



Participant Information Leaflet for focus group volunteers

Study Title: Warwick University Study Toolbox (WUST)

Investigator(s): Dr Julia Brettschneider (lead), Dr Martyn Parker (co-lead), and Alisha Rodgers (student project officer, focus group study planning).

Introduction

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish.

Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Who is organising and funding the study?

This focus group study is part of a research project funded by the Warwick International Higher Education Academy (WIHEA) which develops a toolbox supporting students in their learning and related aspects. The research project is led by Dr Julia Brettschneider from the Department of Statistics at the University of Warwick.

What is the study about?

The Warwick University Study Toolbox (WUST) is being developed by a team of Warwick staff and students across a range of departments. The resource aims to support students in exploring individual needs and in creating optimal support systems for themselves based on existing concepts and tools. WUST can be used by students across all courses from the beginning of their university journeys. It aims to support students in mastering the higher degree of self-management that can be required by non-traditional learning and assessment portfolios with elements like group projects, digital platforms, and flexible learning. A

secondary aim of WUST is to facilitate students taking control of their academic success, while simultaneously providing a learning-by-applying opportunity for transferrable skills.

The purpose of the focus group discussions is to gather a range of views about a WUST prototype. The research team will use this feedback along with expert opinions to modify and finalise WUST.

What would taking part involve?

You will be invited to a 90-minute online focus group session by email. The session will take place on Teams and use the built in recording and transcription functionalities. We will begin with a review of this participants' information leaflet giving you the opportunity to clarify any remaining questions. The facilitator will establish ground rules to ensure respectful discussion and briefly review the WUST prototype. This will be followed by a semi-structured dialogue, soliciting your insights on WUST's various aspects and potential improvements through open-ended questions. Most of the discussion will happen during activities involving participants to using WUST.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you to decide. We will describe the study and go through this information sheet, which we will give you to keep.

If you choose to participate, we will ask you to sign a consent form at the beginning of the online focus group session. Consent will be collected by the student project officer Alisha Rodgers (or by the above-mentioned lead or co-lead of the study).

You will be free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and this will not affect you or your circumstances in any way.

What are the possible disadvantages, side effects or risks, of taking part in this study?

No risks, side effects, or discomfort is expected from taking part in the focus group discussions. Disagreements may arise, but they concern topics that students would naturally discuss with peers as part of their regular student experience (e.g., about what is the optimal time management method or what is the best approach to task management in group projects) and we ask participants to be respectful of other students' preferences.

Expenses and payments

If you take part in this study, you will receive a £15 voucher.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

The focus group session will be recorded and transcribed using Teams functionalities. The transcripts will be analysed using standard qualitative research methods. Transcripts will be de-identified by giving participants a study number to protect their identity and the code linking this will be stored separately to the research data. The transcripts will be stored securely on the University drives (password protected) for the duration of the research project until the publication is completed. The data can be assessed by the investigators (see top of this leaflet). Direct quotes may be used in reports/publications of this research, but only if individuals cannot be identified from these quotes.

What will happen to the data collected about me?

As a publicly funded organisation, the University of Warwick must ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally identifiable information from people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, such as this, we will use your data in the ways needed to conduct and analyse the research study.

We will be using information from you to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. We are committed to protecting the rights of individuals in line with data protection legislation. The University of Warwick will keep your pseudonymised information until the evaluation of WUST has been completed and a report of the research project has been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Research data will be **pseudonymised** as quickly as possible after data collection. This means all direct and indirect identifiers will be removed from the research data and will be replaced with a participant number. The key to identification will be stored separately and securely to the research data to safeguard your identity. It is possible to withdraw your data up to 1 week after the focus group session. After that, removal may not be possible because the observations will already be included in the thematic analysis synthesising the discussions that took place during the sessions.

Data Sharing

Data will not be share with anyone outside the University.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways for the research to be reliable and accurate. The University of Warwick has in place policies and procedures to keep your data safe.

For further information, please refer to the University of Warwick Research Privacy Notice which is available here:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/idc/dataprotection/privacynotices/researchprivacynotice> or by contacting the Legal and Compliance Team at infocompliance@warwick.ac.uk.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on being part of the study?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Refusal to participate will not affect you in any way. If you decide to take part in the study, you will need to sign an online consent form, which states that you have given your consent to participate.

If you agree to participate, you may nevertheless withdraw from the study at any time without affecting you in any way. You have the right to withdraw from the study completely and decline any further contact by study staff after you withdraw. Your withdrawal from the study will not affect your place your university course or their grades in any way please contact the study lead:

Dr Julia Brettschneider (email: julia.brettschneider@warwick.ac.uk)

Please note that if you withdraw from the study, it will not be possible to withdraw your data 1 week after the focus group session took place because after this point the data will have been pseudonymised and thematic data analysis synthesising the observations will have commenced. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible and keep the data secure in line with the University's Information and Data Compliance policies.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The full WUST research team will use the feedback of the focus groups, along with expert opinions, to improve the resource. The final version of WUST will be disseminated to students across campus at all stages of their university journey. Dissemination will be organised through WIHEA, the SU, academic departments, social media, and other channels. We plan to publish an article about the development of WUST in a peer reviewed journal with educational focus.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by the University of Warwick's

Biomedical and Scientific Research Ethics Committee (BSREC):

Warwick University Study Toolbox (WUST): Navigating Project Management Concepts and Technology Choices, BSREC 59/23-24

Who should I contact if I want further information?

If you have any questions about any aspect of the study, or your participation in it, not answered by this participant information leaflet, please contact the study lead:

Dr Julia Brettschneider (email: julia.brettschneider@warwick.ac.uk)

Who should I contact if I wish to make a complaint?

Any complaint about the way you have been dealt with during the study or any possible harm you might have suffered will be addressed. Please address your complaint to the person below, who is a senior University of Warwick official entirely independent of this study:

Head of Research Governance

Research & Impact Services

University House

University of Warwick

Coventry

CV4 8UW

Email: researchgovernance@warwick.ac.uk

Tel: 02476 575733

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter: DPO@warwick.ac.uk.

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Thank you for taking the time to read this Participant Information Leaflet