

Post-viva Support in UK HEI

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to take part in research investigating your experience of post-viva support which will help us understand the impact this had on PGR mental health and ability to complete corrections.

What is the purpose of the study?

This project aims to focus on the under-researched area of post-viva support in UK HEIs. Specifically, we will focus on current provision at Coventry University, suggestions for change from various stakeholders and monitoring trends in completion times and outcomes of viva. To investigate this, the project will examine the opinions and lived experiences of PGRs and doctoral supervisors in a post-viva corrections period at Coventry University.

Minimal published research currently exists on this topic and information from HEIs, including handbooks and supervisor training is inconsistent leading to confusion over what support should be provided during this period. The journey for PGR is complex and individual, so this study will explore the factors that contribute to PGR entering a corrections period and how HEIs can improve provision.

This research project will take a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews to explore your thoughts, experience, feelings, impressions and observations. As the focus of the project relates to a post-viva corrections period, interviews will only be held with staff and PGRs who have entered a post-viva corrections period.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is being organised and funded by Coventry University's Doctoral College. The research was granted ethical approval by Coventry University's Research Ethics Committee, Project Reference P140020.

Do I have to take part?

No – it is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, please keep this Information Sheet and complete the Informed Consent Form to show that you understand your rights in relation to the research, and that you are happy to participate. Please note down your participant number (which is on the Consent Form) and provide this to the lead researcher if you seek to withdraw from the study at a later date. You are free to withdraw your information from the project data set at any time until the data are fully anonymised in our records on 1st January 2024. You should note that your data may be used in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, theses and reports) prior to this date and so you are advised to contact the university at the earliest opportunity should you wish to withdraw from the study. To withdraw, please contact the lead researcher (contact details

are provided below). You do not need to give a reason. A decision to withdraw, or not to take part, will not affect you in any way.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

You will be asked about your experiences, thoughts, impressions and observations of the support during a post-viva corrections period as a postgraduate researcher (PGR) or in your capacity as part of a PGR supervisory team. The interview will take place in a safe environment at a time that is convenient to you. Ideally, we would like to audio record your responses (and will require your consent for this), so the location should be in a fairly quiet area. Each informal, semi-structured interview will last 45-60 minutes approximately. The questions you will be asked during the interview are designed to allow you to talk about your thoughts, feelings and experience as freely as you wish and there are no right or wrong answers. At the end of the interview you will be given the opportunity to ask any questions you may have and you will be asked to complete a short demographics questionnaire.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are invited to participate in this study because you have been enrolled onto a post-viva corrections period as a postgraduate researcher (PGR) or as part of a PGR supervisory team. As stated above, we are particularly interested in hearing about your experiences and impressions of the support provided during the post-viva corrections period.

What are the benefits and potential risks in taking part?

By sharing your experiences with us, you will be helping the Doctoral College and Coventry University to better understand the required support for doctoral candidates in a post-viva corrections period and the ways in which this could be improved.

While there are no significant risks associated with participation, the topic being explored could potentially be an emotive one for some, simply by the nature of touching on personal and challenging issues; however the questions are aimed at exploring your own experience during this time, rather than focussing predominantly on upsetting or negative aspects of it. If, however, you do feel uncomfortable answering a question it is important that you are aware that you only need to answer those questions that you wish to, you can end the interview at any point and you can withdraw your data from the study before the date specified below.

If there have been any issues raised, as a result of participating in this research, that you feel that you wish to talk to someone about the Samaritans offer a confidential service and can be reached by:

Telephone: 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org or visit their website at <https://www.samaritans.org/>

You may also have worries associated with how your responses may be perceived or a general fear of 'getting it wrong'. For this reason an informal, semi-structured interview was chosen

to gather data in the hope that talking to a non-judgemental researcher, in a relaxed setting, would minimise such uncertainties and allow you to feel free to express yourself openly.

Additionally, your recorded responses, consent form and completed demographic questionnaire will be kept securely, only the main researcher and direct research team will have access to the original recording, and the transcribed data will be anonymised. This will be done by providing you, and your responses, with a pseudonym and any reference to specific places/events/people, in your responses, will be removed during transcription to prevent anyone, outside the research team, being able to identify you.

Lawful basis of processing

Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), tailored by the Data Protection Act 2018 we must have a lawful basis to process your personal data and for the purpose of this research, our lawful basis is that of consent.

This research will require us to process your sensitive data (referred to by UK GDPR as 'special category data'). We will only process this on the basis of your consent, where you have previously published the information, for medical purposes or in certain circumstances where it is necessary for archiving, scientific or historical research purposes, or statistics purposes.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The results of this research may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. Quotes or key findings will always be made anonymous in any formal outputs unless we have your prior and explicit written permission to attribute them to you by name.

Who will have access to the information?

Your data will only be accessed by the research team.

Where will the information be stored and how long will it be kept for?

Your data will be processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. Unless they are fully anonymised in our records, your data will be referred to by a unique participant number rather than by name. If you consent to being audio recorded, all recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed.

All electronic data will be stored on Coventry University's Onedrive on encrypted, password-protected servers and will only be accessible by the research team. All paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the Doctoral College office at Elm Bank or shredded and disposed of as confidential waste. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses. The research team will take responsibility for data destruction and all collected identifiable data will be destroyed on or before 1st January 2024.

For further information about how Coventry University will handle your personal data, please read our Privacy Notice for Research Participants.

What will happen next?

If you would like to take part, please contact the lead researcher. You will be asked to complete a consent form before taking part.

Researcher contact details:

Chris Day, email: ad6194@coventry.ac.uk

Nikki Harkin, email: ac9113@coventry.ac.uk

Katie Choudhry, email aa4080@coventry.ac.uk

Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about this research?

If you have any questions, or concerns about this research, please contact the researcher. If you still have concerns and wish to make a complaint, please contact the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Manager by e-mailing ethics.uni@coventry.ac.uk. Please provide information about the research project, specify the name of the researcher and detail the nature of your complaint.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for considering participating in this research.