

Participant Information Sheet

Research Title: Mathematics examinations pre-, during and post-COVID

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Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. Please read the following information about the project so that you can decide whether you would like to take part in this research. Please feel free to ask any questions you might have about our involvement in the project.

If you decide to participate in this research, please keep in mind that your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to stop at any time, and you would not need to give any explanation for your decision to stop participating. We will not be collecting any personal information. We will ask for the name of the university at which you currently work; however, this information will only be used to collate multiple responses by university.

You will be given the Participant Information and Consent Form to sign and you will be given a copy to keep. Your decision whether you take part, or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with The University of Queensland.

What is this research about?

Assessment in tertiary mathematics subjects has become one of the most significant challenges of learning and teaching during the COVID pandemic. Cheating/plagiarism has been rife as many assessments, including examinations, are no longer invigilated.

Correspondence from colleagues at some Australian mathematics departments indicate that on-campus, invigilated examinations are a thing of the past. However, it does appear that some university administrations are willing to consider reinstating these examinations if data can be gathered on what the sector is doing.

As such, in this project First Year in Maths National Steering Committee members Michael, Deb and Don wish to investigate what the current examination practices are in university mathematics. In addition, we also want to find out what the new normal may look like for mathematics examinations and who will decide what that is.

What will I need to do?

If you agree to participate you will be asked to complete one short online survey. No personal data will be collected and no incentives will be offered.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There is little published research on the affect of COVID on the running of mathematics examinations. As such, this project helps fill a gap, importantly providing a sector-wide picture which universities can use to help plan future assessment regimes.

At least one DVC(A) from an Australian university has indicated that on-campus examinations may be reinstated (just for mathematics) if sector-wide data indicates that other universities (e.g., UQ and Melbourne) have returned to on-campus, invigilated examinations.

What are the possible risks and disadvantages of taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks, other than slight frustration with the prevalence of plagiarism/cheating in examinations. Expressing your views in this anonymous survey may act as a release valve for your frustrations.

What will happen to the information about me?

All information collected about you will remain confidential. We will not be collecting any personal information. We will ask for the name of the university at which you currently work; however, this information will only be used to collate multiple responses by university.

Survey responses will be stored securely on Qualtrics before being moved to The University of Queensland's (UQ) Research Data Manager (RDM) secure server. Only Michael, Deb and Don will have access to the data. The data will be deleted from Qualtrics upon transfer to UQ's RDM. Your consent form will be held securely for 15 years after the study has been completed, then it will be destroyed. Your answers to the questions will be held securely for 5 years then destroyed.

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in a variety of forms. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

What will happen if I decide to withdraw?

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the research anytime without needing to provide any explanation, and you would not receive any penalty or bias as a result of your withdrawal. We will not be collecting any personal information. We will ask for the name of the university at which you currently work; however, this information will only be used to collate multiple responses by university.

Can I hear about the results of this research?

Analysis of the data will be presented at our July 18 & 19 workshop in Sydney. We will also write a journal article for submission to an appropriate journal and/or conference.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with the researcher contactable on msj@uq.edu.au if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Coordinator on +617 3365 3924 / +617 3443 1656 or email humanethics@research.uq.edu.au

This research Ethics ID number: 2022/HE001020