

Participant Information Sheet

The Influence of Personality Traits and Perceived Organisational Support on Belonging Among Students With and Without Special Educational Needs: A Correlational Study in UK Further and Higher Education

My name is Sarah Yates, an MSc Psychology conversion course student from the School of Psychology at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). I am completing a project as part of my course and want to invite you to participate. It is up to you to choose if you want to take part, and I would be grateful if you could take the time to read on to help you decide.

You will be able to take part by following a link or QR code at the end of this information

If you would normally, please make use of your usual read-write software before you carry on reading. If you are a college student and I also work at your college, please be aware that this research is with UCLan and not with the college. I will not be able to know if you have taken part or not because your results are anonymous. Not taking part in the study will have no effect in terms of your college life or work in any way.

What is the research about?

The aim of the research is to see if there is an association between personality traits and how much students feel they belong at their college or university. It will also see if this is different for students in mainstream college or university with and without different learning needs or disabilities, or when students feel they are well supported by teachers. I am interested in exploring these things in 'emerging adults' (Arnett, 2000) who are aged 18-25 years old.

The questions involve thinking about things to do with personality as well as how much you feel you belong and are supported by your teachers at college or university. This may be upsetting or unsettling for some people, so please think carefully about this when deciding whether to take part. Do not take part if you feel you will be negatively affected by the study.

Why me?

You can take part in this study if you are aged 18-25 years old and doing a face-to-face college or university course in the UK. You must be able to complete the questionnaire on your own and will be asked to confirm this at the beginning. You can take part in the study whether or not you have an inclusive support need.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire about yourself online. For this you will need to select an option which best describes how you feel about a statement (e.g. from 1 – “never agree” through to 5 – “always agree”). There will be three sections: one measuring personality

(openness, extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism and agreeableness; Donellan et al., 2006); one measuring belonging (Arslan, 2021); and one measuring how much you feel supported by your teachers (McWhirter, 1996).

This should take around 10-15 minutes. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to the questions and a variety of responses are anticipated. You need a smartphone, tablet, laptop or a desktop computer and an internet connection to do this. It is important to find a quiet place where you can answer the questions on your own and in one go. The questionnaire will be submitted automatically when you have finished.

Are there any risks if I take part?

The questions will gather information about your personality, how much you feel you belong at college or university, and how much and in what ways you feel you are supported there. You will also be asked if you have a diagnosis of a Special Educational Need or Disability and, if so, to state this diagnosis. You can choose not to answer these questions if you prefer. These questions might be sensitive, so please think carefully about if you want to take part. Details for support organisations are given at the end of questionnaire.

What are the advantages of taking part?

Taking part will not benefit you directly, but it will help with my project.

What about my personal data?

The data you provide is anonymous and you will not be asked for information that can easily identify you (like your name or contact details). You will be asked to confirm you are between 18-25 years old, that you are completing the questionnaire on your own and are currently in college or university in the UK before you start. Also, you will be asked if you have been diagnosed with any type of Special Educational Need or Disability and to say what this is (if you are happy to say). This will be confidential and will only be seen by me and those with a legitimate academic need (e.g. UCLan staff supervising my work). Digital data will be securely stored on password protected computers until I graduate, in line with the University's data requirements.

What will happen if I do not want to carry on or change my mind about taking part?

If you begin the study but do not want to carry on, please scroll to the end of the section and check the box to state you wish to exit the study. You will be taken to the study debrief which includes helpful support resources. You can also withdraw by closing your browser window to exit the questionnaire, but please be aware that if you do this you will not be able to access the support information in the debrief. No explanation is required if you withdraw. If you do, your responses will not be used in the study and will be deleted. You will be able to withdraw your participation at any time until you submit your final responses online. After this, it will not be possible to withdraw from the

study. This is because your responses will be anonymous and stored with other anonymous responses. It will not be possible to track them back to you to remove your data.

Will I be able to see my results

It will not be possible to share your individual results because responses are anonymous. If you want to find out more about the topics in the study, links to more information are provided at the end.

How to get in touch?

If you have a question or concern, please contact me by email at sjyates3@uclan.ac.uk. The study is supervised by Dr Charlotte Field who can be contacted via email at cfield2@uclan.ac.uk. If you prefer to speak to someone independent of the research, you can contact the University Office for Ethics and Integrity at officerforethics@uclan.ac.uk.

How do I take part?

To take part, please follow the link or QR code to the online questionnaire below. By ticking the consent box and submitting your responses online, you will be agreeing to taking part in the research. If you do not wish to proceed to the study, simply close your browser window now.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information,

Sarah Yates (student researcher)

[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE](#)

