

Participant Information Leaflet (PIL) (version 3.0_12.01.26)

Dear Student,

Thank you for your interest in this research study. Please read this Participant Information Leaflet carefully before deciding whether or not to take part. Participation is entirely voluntary, and choosing not to participate will not disadvantage you in any way. We appreciate your consideration.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study is being conducted in the Centre for Medical Education by Dr Linda Ní Chianáin (Lecturer in Simulation), Dr Mairead Corrigan (EDI Academic Lead) and Professor Gerry Gormley (Professor of Simulation & CSEC Director) together with final year medical students Ella Chamberlain and Jemma Campbell who will conduct the interviews. The project explores the lived experiences of neurodivergent medical students in simulation-based education (SBE).

Simulation is a key part of medical training. This study aims to understand how neurodivergent students experience simulation, and how these experiences shape their learning and wellbeing. The findings will help inform more inclusive and responsive educational practices.

Why have I been invited to take part in this study?

We are inviting students in Years 4 and 5 who identify as neurodiverse, that includes students with a formally diagnosis and those who self-identify.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is entirely voluntary. Participation or non-participation will have no impact on your degree outcome. If you choose to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. You may withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Your participation or decision to withdraw will have no bearing on your degree outcome. Data you provide can be withdrawn up to two weeks after your interview by contacting a member of the research team to notify them about your request [see contact details below].

What will happen to me if I take part?

Once you consent, a student interviewer will contact you to arrange a one-to-one interview at a time when you are free. Interviews can be conducted in person or

online via Microsoft Teams. You will receive the interview schedule in advance of your interview so you know what questions are being asked.

You will be invited to share your experiences of simulation-based education as a neurodivergent student. Interviews will last approximately 30–60 minutes. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded for transcription and analysis. If you don't wish for the interviews to be recorded, the interviewer will take notes instead. Recordings and notes will be securely stored.

You have the option of creating a simple drawing of your experiences of simulation before the interview, though there is no obligation on you to do this. If you do wish to create a drawing, we would ask you to produce a simple sketch of **how you feel about participating in simulations**. Please be reassured that no artistic skill is needed as it is the content, and not the artistic quality, that is important. The drawing will be used simply to prompt discussion during the interview.

As a token of appreciation for participating in the research project, you will receive a **£30 Amazon gift voucher** following the interview.

Anonymity and confidentiality

All information collected during this study will be kept strictly confidential. Your identity will be anonymised.

Your name and any other identifying details, such as demographic information (e.g., age), will not be linked to your comments or appear in any reports or publications resulting from this study.

Queen's University Belfast (QUB) is the sponsor of this study and is responsible for safeguarding and managing your information. Identifiable information will be securely stored for five years following the study's completion.

What are the risks or discomforts received when taking part?

This is a non-invasive study, and we believe the risks associated with participation are minimal. Your decision to participate - or not - will not affect your relationship with any of the investigators. You will be fully briefed before the interview and debriefed afterwards. You may skip any questions or stop the interview at any time.

What are the benefits?

Your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how neurodivergent students experience simulation-based education. The findings will help shape more inclusive teaching practices and support systems in medical education.

What if there is a problem?

If you have any concerns about any aspects of the study, you can contact Dr Mairead Corrigan m.corrigan@qub.ac.uk or Prof Gormley g.gormley@qub.ac.uk. Should you remain unhappy and wish to make a formal complaint, you can contact the Research Governance Team at Queen's University Belfast (Telephone: 028 9097 2529; Email: researchgovernance@qub.ac.uk).

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences Research Ethics Committee at Queen's University Belfast.

Who is organising the research?

- Chief Investigator: Dr Linda Ní Chianáin
- Co-Investigators: Dr Mairead Corrigan, Professor Gerry Gormley
- Chief Researchers: Ella Chamberlain, Jemma Campbell

What data or information will be collected and how will it be utilised?

All data (audio, demographic and interview transcripts) will be securely stored as required by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018. Data will be stored appropriately in a locked cabinet or on password-protected systems as required by Queen's University Belfast. Only the research team will have access to this data, which will be kept for five years before being destroyed, in accordance with research governance guidelines. The results of this study will be published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at conferences and shared via academic social media. All participants will be anonymised, meaning no participant will be identifiable. A summary of the findings will be provided to all participants upon completion of the study by email. Moreover, participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw up to two weeks post interview, without giving a reason. To do this contact a member of the research team to notify them about your request.

For more information about how we look after your information, how to access your rights and who to contact if you have any queries or concerns about data protection please visit the Queen's University Belfast website -

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/privacynotice/Research/ListofResearchPrivacyNotices/PrivacyNoticeforResearchParticipants.html>

Contacts for Further Information

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