

## **RARA Project: Student Focus Group Informed Consent Information Sheet (Staff)**

Title of Study; Raising Awareness, Raising Aspiration: A Targeted Personal Tutoring Support Programme for Narrowing Gaps in Student Attainment

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1. Thank you for taking the opportunity to participate in this research, further details of the study are provided below.

### **2. Background information**

3. You are about to participate in a study into Personal Tutoring (PT). This study aims to collect data to research and evaluate the role of personal tutoring in your institution.
4. This focus group aims to capture your experiences of PT to inform the changes taking place in your faculty in the 2017/18 academic year, as part of a pilot project funded by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). These improvements include introducing new resources and guidance for personal tutors to support them to be more effective in their role.
5. This project has been funded by HEFCE and is being conducted March 2017-2019.
6. The project will be conducted across 3 institutions, including The University of Sheffield, King's College London, and the University of Portsmouth.

### **7. Purpose of the study**

8. The overall aim of this project is to develop an approach to improving the quality of personal tutoring for all students in the faculty, with a particular view to narrowing attainment and success gaps for students from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups and from lower socio-economic backgrounds. For example, research by the Equalities Challenge Unit shows a 16% gap nationally in first degree attainment. The project hypothesises that effective personal tutoring will benefit all students, but particularly students from these backgrounds.
9. The objective of this phase of the research is to collect data on the current provision of personal tutoring in your faculty. This will inform the development of the project which will launch in the 2017/18 academic year.
10. This data will also provide an indication of what the experiences of personal tutoring are like before the project started, so that we can understand what effect our proposed changes will have on a student's experience of personal tutoring during 2017-18.

### **11. How will I be involved?**

12. You are being asked to participate in a Focus Group which should last no more than 1 hour.
13. You can end your participation in the focus group at any time, by telling the facilitator.
14. Participation in this study is voluntary, and un-related to your programme of study and academic progression. Participation or withdrawal from this study will not influence any processes involved in your study or role as a student at the university.

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15. The focus group will be audio recorded, and transcribed, the audio recording will be stored securely and only the anonymised transcription will be used in research analysis and any subsequent dissemination.

### **16. What happens if I want to withdraw from the research?**

17. If you change your mind about participating you may withdraw at any time, up to four weeks from the date of your participation to do this by contacting the Principal Investigator without giving a reason.

18. All information you have provided up to that time will be destroyed.

### **19. How will the information be used?**

20. The information from this research will primarily be used to inform our design and develop the changes to personal tutoring that will take place in your faculty.

21. The data you share during the focus groups will also be used to inform the evaluation of the project and will be disseminated in conference papers, publications, and formal reports.

22. Data will be retained until 2024 when the evaluation of the project will be complete

23. Data may also be subjected to secondary analysis for project specific research projects approved by the project steering board

24. All personal details will be removed from the data or made anonymous before publication outside of the designated researchers supporting the work of the project.

25. All information will be kept confidential, unless you disclose information which highlights a direct risk of harm to yourself or others, at which point the researcher is ethically bound to disclose this to an appropriate authority such as the Police, or Medical Authorities.

### **26. Further information**

27. For further information on the project overall please consult the project website:

<http://www.raratutor.ac.uk/>

28. If you would like any other information about this research, or if you have any questions about the information I have given, please contact Samuel Dent Email:

[S.Dent@Sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:S.Dent@Sheffield.ac.uk) Telephone : 0114 222 1715

29. If you would like to speak about any concerns about the research or conduct, please contact the following independent person:

30. Amerjit Basi Tel. 0114 222 1216 Email [a.basi@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:a.basi@sheffield.ac.uk)