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**Participant Information Sheet**

Research Project Title

Assessing the feasibility of a new online learning resource to support academic staff supervising postgraduate research students with a mental health difficulty

Invitation

You are being invited to take part in this research project. Before you decide to do so, it is important you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. If you have any questions, or if you would like more information please feel free to contact the lead researcher, Anna Quinn, via the email provided below.

What is the project’s purpose?

This project will evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of a new online learning resource developed to support supervisors of postgraduate research students (PGRs) experiencing a mental health difficulty.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen as you are a PGR supervisor at the University of Glasgow. We are seeking a mixed-gender group of 10-16 participants in total from across the four Colleges, with a range of levels of supervision experience.

Inclusion criteria

We ask that all those expressing an interest to participate have either supervised a PGR student who had a mental health difficulty or have a general interest in PGR mental health. For example, your interest may stem from supervision experiences more generally, your own area of practice, your personal interests, or discussions with colleagues. It is not necessary for participants have any prior training or specific knowledge about mental health issues.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you whether or not you decide to take part participation is voluntary. If you do decide to take part you can still withdraw your consent at any time and can request that data within the transcripts pertaining to your responses are destroyed, by contacting

Anna Quinn- [2509925q@student.gla.ac.uk](mailto:2509925q@student.gla.ac.uk)

Dr Breda Cullen- breda.cullen@glasgow.ac.uk

If you do decide to withdraw from the study, the data collected up to that point, unless requested otherwise as above, will be retained and used for the remainder of the study.

What will happen to me if I take part?

Prior to taking part you will be asked to provide written consent via the University’s College of MVLS consent pro forma.

You will then be asked to complete the learning modules that are the focus of this study. These modules have been developed by the research team and will cover information that is relevant to supervising PGRs with mental health difficulties. These will be accessible via the University’s online learning platform Moodle. There are two modules to complete, which will take around 50 minutes in total. These modules can be completed in any order.

You will be given a minimum of 4 weeks to complete the modules, following which you will be invited to attend a focus group (September 2022) to give feedback on your prior expectations, as well as the acceptability and feasibility of the modules. The modules will then be revised based on the feedback received, as part of the final project write up.

The focus groups will last 60-75 minutes and will be held via a secure online meeting application, either Zoom or Microsoft Teams. There will be 5-8 participants taking part in each focus group. Participants will be placed into a group of those with a similar length of supervisory experience, either <=5 years or >=6 years. Gender and College will also be taken into account during sampling to allow for maximum variation. Participants will be asked open questions with regards to their opinions of the modules. The questions will allow for exploration of participants’ perceptions of the materials, feasibility and acceptability. The focus group facilitator Anna Quinn will not ask you about specific supervisory experiences and we would ask that you avoid discussing any experiences which may identify any students. This will be monitored throughout and should there be any concerns around student identifiability or confidentiality, the facilitator will interject. The focus groups will be audio and video recorded for the purpose of producing a transcript for analysis by the research team, however you may put your camera off during the focus group if you wish. Only the audio content will be transcribed and no comment will be made with regards to visuals, such as body language, observed. The recordings will be made on both Microsoft teams/ or Zoom, as well as via a digital Dictaphone as a back-up should this recording fail.

You will also be shown a questionnaire and will be asked to complete this online before and after completing the modules. The questionnaire will take a maximum of 10 minutes to complete and feedback on this will also be sought during the focus group with regards to its potential use as an outcome measure in a future large scale trial. Please see table 1 for details of your proposed involvement and approximate time commitment.

It is thought the time commitment will be a maximum of 2.5 hours in total, spread over 4 months (table 1).

**Table 1.**

*Proposed time commitment and task requirements*

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| **What you will be asked to do** | **When** | **Approximate time commitment** |
| Complete the consent process | June/ July 2022 | 15 minutes (Read the information sheet again and send signed consent form via email) |
| Complete the online modules and questionnaire | August 2022 | 1 hour |
| Attend the focus group | September 2022 | 60-75 minutes (Feedback sought on expectations, acceptability and feasibility of module content and questionnaire) |

What do I have to do now?

If you would like to take part please email the address given below providing your **name, College, years of PGR supervision experience and gender**. This information is required as purposive sampling is being used, to select a varied participant group. Should we receive interest from more people than our maximum target sample size (n = 16), this information will be used to select participants with a varied mix of characteristics. If you are not selected to take part, we will ask you if you would like to receive a copy of the results after the end of the study. If so, we will retain your contact details for this purpose.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Participating in the research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages; however the content of the modules may address sensitive, possibly emotive content and we advise you to seek support from the university support services (PAM Assist – details of which can be accessed via their webpage https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/humanresources/all/health/staffcounselling/ or by telephoning 0800 882 4102) should this be required. Given the nature of the study it will involve sharing opinions within a wider group, but how much or little you share is up to you.

No personal information will be sought about your supervisory practice and data collection will focus only on the feasibility and acceptability of the modules and questionnaire, not individual supervision experiences. It will be made clear at the start of the focus groups that there are ground rules that must be adhered to. These include: respecting each other, not discussing supervisees in an identifiable way and not sharing anything discussed out with the focus group. The researcher will be alert throughout the session to any breaches of these rules and will intervene accordingly. Please note that the participants in the focus group and the research team will all be University of Glasgow staff members and may be known to you.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

It is hoped participants, following completion of the modules, will have increased awareness of issues relating to student mental health and wellbeing. The findings of this research will then be used to inform a larger scale study of the effectiveness of the modules.

What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?

Should the research stop earlier than planned and you are affected in any way we will tell you and explain why.

What if something goes wrong?

If you have any complaints about the project you can contact any member of the research team: lead researcher (Anna Quinn) or research supervisor (Dr Breda Cullen). You can also contact the Researcher Development Manager (Dr Kay Guccione) who will be overseeing the project.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

Your personal data will be held securely on University of Glasgow systems with access restricted to the research team. Raw focus group transcripts will be held securely and separately from your personal data on University of Glasgow systems, with access restricted to the research team. The recordings will be deleted after the project is complete. Written consent will be sought from you to use anonymised quotes from the focus groups within the project write up. In order to promote confidentiality within a group setting we will also ask you to confirm within the consent form that you will not share any details discussed by others during focus groups.

What will happen to my data

* The recordings will be deleted after the project is complete.
* To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible.
* Researchers from the University of Glasgow collect, store and process all personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018).
* All study data will be held in accordance with The General Data Protection Regulation (2018).
* The data will be stored in archiving facilities in line with the University of Glasgow retention policy of up to 10 years. After this period, further retention may be agreed or your data will be securely destroyed in accordance with the relevant standard procedures.
* Your data will form part of the study results that may be published in specialist journals, and will form part of a doctoral thesis.
* The data collected may also be used in future studies by our team and/or other researchers working in this field.

What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project’s objectives?

We are asking you to provide information regarding your gender, College and years of PGR supervision experience to enable us to recruit a mixed participant group. The focus group questions will centre around your opinions of the modules developed, such as your experience of completing these modules. We are also interested in your thoughts on whether the questionnaire captures the necessary information and its acceptability for use should there be a larger scale trial.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

The research results will be prepared for submission to a relevant journal in order to share the findings of the research as widely as possible. The research findings will also be disseminated to participants involved in the study who expressed a desire to be informed of the results, as well as the wider University community if relevant. The project will be written up as part of the lead researcher’s doctoral thesis. It is hoped the modules will be developed further as part of a larger research project and be made available to all academic supervisors within the University, if there is evidence from future research that they are effective.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is part of a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. There is no external funding.

Who has ethically reviewed the project?

This project has been ethically approved by the University of Glasgow’s College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

Contacts for further information

**Lead researcher-** Anna Quinn, Trainee Clinical Psychologist

Contact: [2509925q@student.gla.ac.uk](mailto:2509925q@student.gla.ac.uk) – *please send all emails expressing interest, or questions to this account.*

**Academic supervisor-** Dr Breda Cullen, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology

Contact: [breda.cullen@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:breda.cullen@glasgow.ac.uk)

**Field supervisor-** Dr Kay Guccione Researcher Development Manager

Contact: kay.guccione@glasgow.ac.uk

**Field supervisor**- Dr Samantha Oakley, Researcher and Development Integrity Specialist

Contact: Samantha.oakley@glasgow.ac.uk

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this document.