



Eliminating barriers to postgraduate
research study in the West Midlands



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

PRE-RECRUITMENT SURVEY

**COUNT ME IN! – A
SURVEY SENT TO FINAL
YEAR UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS**

THAT'S ME!

**ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDY
IN THE WEST MIDLANDS**

A Survey for Undergraduate students and
Information Sheet
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Name of Fieldwork Activity:

Pre-Recruitment Survey – Count Me In!

Content of the Activity:

Research Statement (50-100 words):

This is the pre-recruitment survey that will be sent to final year undergraduate students (UG), postgraduate taught students (PGT) and postgraduate research students (PGR). The aim of the survey is to gather basic demographic information, educational and subject specific information, and preferences for how individuals may wish to participate in the other planned fieldwork activities. For example we should be able to key information about ethnicity and nationality, subject area and faculty, employment, household income and support, as well as if they would like to participate online, offline, on campus or elsewhere if face to face.

Likewise if they prefer discussing via interview or focus groups, and which areas of the PGR experience or process they are most interested in talking about. A unique identifier along with contact email will be taken. This will allow us to contact people for opportunities to participate, keep personal information separate from identifiable information, and link data across the different areas of fieldwork. Whilst the aim is for participants to fill this in first, they could still participate in other groups if approached, and fill this in afterwards to provide useful demographic information.

Contribution to project outputs: Confirm outputs in the table

Output	Output description
3	Report on barriers (stand-alone and interrelated)
6	Inclusive PGR online application processes established

INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?

That's Me! Eliminating barriers to postgraduate research study in the West Midlands is a project that aims to explore the Global Majority postgraduate research experience, from applying for to being awarded a doctorate. The project is organised into three streams: Routes In, Routes Through, and Routes Out of study. Using research methods including focus groups, interviews, and arts based methods, we want to identify and address the challenges associated with postgraduate research, and so make positive changes to the research culture and community. These changes will benefit both universities and employers in the region. This project is co-led by Birmingham City University and the University of Wolverhampton. It is funded by the UKRI and Of e of Students as part of a nationwide programme to widen participation in postgraduate research.

As part of the project, we are seeking to gather information from the That's Me! Employer Board. The aim of this is to understand how employees undertaking doctoral qualifications are supported and to also ascertain the perceived bene s and challenges of this study. That's Me! supports those from global majority backgrounds; therefore, we are specifi ally interested in collating information for this group.

There will be both closed questions (to help us gather statistical data) and open questions so that you can share your thoughts.

Global majority is a shortened version of the term 'people of the global majority'. We use it to refer to all ethnic groups except white British and other white groups, including white minorities. This includes people from black, Asian, mixed, and other ethnic groups who are often racialised as 'ethnic minorities'.

Design and delivery:

For surveys:

The survey instrument is available in Appendix A. This survey is expected to be live for data collection between 01/03/2024 to 31/03/2024.

Location:

Online (QuestionPro)

Logistical Requirements:

The survey will be promoted via internal communication methods.

Delivery team:

This activity will be delivered collaboratively by two academic staff members and one postgraduate researcher as part of the Routes In Action Research Team. One team member will be responsible for creating, editing, launching, and monitoring the survey using QuestionPro. The other two members will lead on survey design and the preparation of ethical approval documentation.

Budget:

This activity will offer participants the opportunity to be entered into a £50 Lovetoshop prize draw. Participants who are then part of later research stages will be compensated as part of the project standard incentive.

A postgraduate researcher is a student enrolled on a formal course at a university which focuses on the student completing an extended research project. Examples of qualifications postgraduate researchers may be enrolled on include MRes, MPhil and PhD.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. You do not have to take part if you do not want to.

WHAT WILL MY INVOLVEMENT BE?

Your involvement is completing the survey.

HOW DO I WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

You are free to withdraw within three months of participating without giving a reason. To do so, email us with the completion receipt number issued to you upon completion of the survey. You will not be expected to disclose any personal or confidential information unless you choose to leave contact details. Withdrawing from the study will have no effect on you. If you withdraw from the study, we will aim to not retain the information you have given thus far, unless you are happy for us to do so.

WHAT WILL MY INFORMATION BE USED FOR?

We will use the collected information for training materials, project publicity, and research and policy publications produced as part of this project. For a full list of the outputs associated with the project, see webpage [<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/education-and-socialwork/research/practitioner-education-research-group/research-projects/thats-me-eliminatingbarriers-to-post-graduate-research>]. Our hope is that the information you provide us will help create more inclusive universities and businesses in the West Midlands.

WILL MY TAKING PART AND MY DATA BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL? WILL IT BE ANONYMISED?

Access to records from this study will be kept as confidential as possible. Only authorised members of the That's Me! Project team will have access to records. Your data will be anonymised: your name will not be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study. All digital files, transcripts, and summaries will be given codes and stored separately from anynames or other direct identification of participants. Any hard copies of research information will be always kept in locked files. Limits to confidentiality: confidentiality will be maintained as far as it is possible, unless you tell us something which implies that you or someone you mention might be in significant danger of harm and unable to act for themselves; in this case, we may have to inform the relevant agencies of this, but we would discuss this with you first.

WHO HAS REVIEWD THIS STUDY?

This study has undergone ethics review in accordance with the BCU Research Ethics Policy and Procedure.

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The BCU Research Privacy Policy can be found at:

<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/policies-and-procedures/privacy-notices/research-participants>

The legal basis used to process your personal data will be *Students* "Legitimate interests". The legal basis used to process special category personal data (e.g. data that reveals racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, health, sex life or sexual orientation, genetic or biometric data) will be for scientific and historical research or statistical purposes.

To request a copy of the data held about you please contact:

informationmanagement@bcu.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the conduct of this research, please contact the BCU Ethics Team at BCU_Ethics@bcu.ac.uk. If you are happy to take part in this study, please complete the consent sheet on the next page.

CONSENT FORM

Please answer the following question to confirm your understanding and consent.

» I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw up to three months after completion of the survey by emailing the researchers with my survey ID number/Unique Identifier. I understand that the information I provide will be used in various anonymised outputs, including a report and journal publication

Yes, I want to take part

No, I don't want to take part (please leave the survey)

Please create a unique identifier in the box below. To create this please take the first two digits of your birthday (01, 19, 28 etc.), your favourite colour (green, red, beige etc.), and the last 3 digits of your phone number.

For example 19Green472

We need this so we can remove your data at a later date if requested, and to aid us in contacting you later about the most appropriate participation opportunities. It will also allow us to ensure you are contacted if you win any related prize draws. Please make a note of this unique ID and keep it safe.

Please enter your preferred email address so we can contact you at a later date about participation opportunities.

COUNT ME IN! SURVEY

Section 1 - Language Key

PGR = Postgraduate research e.g. PhD, EdD, Doctoral study etc.

PGT = Postgraduate taught course e.g. MSc or MA

BA = Bachelor of Arts e.g. undergraduate study at university

BSc = Bachelor of Science e.g. undergraduate study at university

MA = Masters of Arts e.g. Postgraduate study at university

MSc = Masters of Science e.g. Postgraduate study at university

Section 2 - Survey

Have you at any point been enrolled at either of the following universities?

- » Birmingham City University
- » Wolverhampton University
- » I have been enrolled at both at some point
- » No, I have not

Do you know of anyone who is currently doing or completed a Postgraduate degree (PhD, EdD, MA, MSc etc.)?

- » No
- » Yes - friend(s)
- » Yes - family member(s)
- » Yes - Other

What is your gender?

- » Woman
- » Man
- » Non-binary
- » Prefer not to say
- » Other

How old are you (in years)?

How would you best describe your ethnicity?

- » Indian
- » Pakistani
- » Bangladeshi
- » Chinese
- » Any other Asian background
- » Caribbean
- » African
- » Any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background
- » White and Black Caribbean
- » White and Asian
- » Any other mixed or multiple ethnic background
- » English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- » Irish
- » Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- » Roma
- » Any other white background
- » Arab
- » Any other ethnic group
- » Other

Are you a British Citizen?

- » Yes
- » No
- » Prefer not to say

Are you currently employed?

- » Full time
- » Part time
- » Self-employed/Freelance
- » Unemployed and looking for employment
- » Unemployed and not looking for employment
- » Retired
- » Other

Which industry do you work in?

- » Agriculture and Forestry
- » Construction and Real Estate
- » Manufacturing
- » Retail and Wholesale
- » Transportation and Logistics
- » Information Technology and Communications
- » Energy and Utilities
- » Mining
- » Education
- » Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals
- » Finance, Banking and Insurance
- » Entertainment, Media and Publishing
- » Legal and Consulting Services
- » Government and Public Administration
- » Arts, Culture and Fashion
- » Environmental and Renewable Energy
- » Aerospace and Defense
- » Automotive and Electronics
- » Other

What is your specific job title?

Are you currently studying?

- » No
- » University - Full time (Bachelors)
- » University - Part time (Bachelors)
- » University - Full time (Masters)
- » University - Part time (Masters)
- » Doctoral Research (PhD, EdD etc.) - Full time
- » Doctoral Research (PhD, EdD etc.) - Part time
- » Doctoral Research (PhD, EdD etc.) - Distance Learning
- » Other

Please specify which faculty you study/studied in at BCU

- » Business, Law and Social Sciences (BLSS)
- » Health, Education and Life Sciences (HELS)
- » Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment (CEBE)
- » Arts, Media and Design (ADM)
- » Other

What is your specific current or last awarded degree title? For example, BSc in Sports Science PhD in Law etc.

Why did you decide to pursue higher education? Please select all that apply

- » To gain specialised knowledge in my field of interest
- » To improve my career prospects and opportunities
- » To Fulfil a personal goal or lifelong dream
- » To increase my earning potential
- » To contribute to research and advancements in my field

- » To change or advance my current career path
- » To meet the requirements for a specific profession
- » To develop critical thinking and problem solving skills
- » To be a role model for my family or community members
- » To explore new subjects and broaden my horizons
- » To gain independence and personal growth
- » To engage with diverse ideas and perspectives
- » To access networking and mentoring opportunities
- » To pursue an academic or research-oriented career
- » To satisfy intellectual curiosity and love of learning
- » To gain international experience and exposure
- » To contribute to societal development and change
- » To access better educational facilities and resources
- » To follow the advice or footsteps of mentors or role models
- » To comply with family expectations or traditions
- » Other

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- » High School/College
- » Bachelors
- » Masters
- » Doctorate
- » Prefer not to say
- » Other

Please select the option below that best describes your usual living arrangements

- » I live with my parents, guardians, or other family members (in their home)
- » I live on my own
- » I live with a partner/spouse
- » I live with friends or housemates
- » Other

What is your approximate annual household income (taking into account all adults in your home - your own, parents, family over the age of 18 etc.)?

What is your approximate annual household income (taking into account all adults in your home - your own, spouse, partner etc.)?

What is your approximate individual household income (including no other adults)?

Please select all that currently apply or have applied to you during your studies

- » I receive or have received financial support from my family during or toward my studies
- » I receive or have received financial support from my partner/spouse during or toward my studies
- » I receive or have received financial support from others during or towards my studies
- » Prefer not to say
- » Other

Do you have any care responsibilities, such as for children, individuals with disabilities, or elderly family members? Please select as many as are relevant.

- » Yes, for children
- » Yes, for individuals with disabilities
- » No
- » Prefer not to say
- » Other

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence?

We are asking whether you have ever been convicted of a criminal offence to better understand the unique challenges and barriers faced by this group in accessing and pursuing postgraduate research opportunities, as it may act as an additional barrier.

- » Yes
- » No
- » Prefer not to say

Are you a care leaver?

We are asking whether you are a carer leaver to better understand the unique challenges and barriers faced by this group in accessing and pursuing postgraduate research opportunities, as it may act as an additional barrier.

- » Yes
- » No
- » Prefer not to say

Which of the following would you be most interested in participating in research about? Please select as many as you are interested in.

- » All aspects of PGR study
- » PGR recruitment and admissions
- » PGR student experience
- » PGR graduate outcomes
- » The visa process
- » The transition from UG study to PGR

What would be your preferred means of participating in the research? Select as many as required.

- » Online 1:1 interview
- » Online focus groups with other people
- » Face to Face 1:1 interview
- » Face to Face focus group with other people
- » Online survey

If taking part face to face what would be your preferred location?
We will attempt to offer participation that matches your preferences but

- » On BCU Campus or other BCU location
- » On University of Wolverhampton Campus or other UoW location
- » Off campus or non-University location