

## Participant Information Sheet

**Project title:** Improving students' mathematical writing

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**Department:** Mathematical Sciences

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You are invited to take part in a study that I am conducting as part of a research project investigating how students view mathematical writing in their notes, homework assignments and essays. At this stage, the aim is just to better understand how mathematical writing is perceived, but long-term I would like to understand how best we can develop students' mathematical writing skills throughout their degrees.

This study has received ethical approval from the ethics committee of the Maths department of Durham University.

Before you decide whether to agree to take part it is important for you to understand the purpose of the research and what is involved as a participant. Please read the following information carefully. Please get in contact if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

### **What is the purpose of the study?**

The aim of this survey is to investigate staff and student attitudes towards writing as part of mathematics.

In my experience, students often arrive at university with little previous experience of formal mathematical writing. By the end of their degrees, students are expected to be able to produce a sophisticated and well-explained report as part of Project 3/4. Somewhere along the way, they are supposed to stop leaving it to the reader to understand what they mean, and start writing to explain themselves more precisely.

This project aims to understand how students experience this shift in expectation, and what we can do to better support them through it. Through a survey of staff (previously done) and students (this one) in the Department, I want to understand what sort of messages we are sending to students and how they're being received.

### **Do I have to take part?**

Your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to agree to take part. If you do agree to take part, you can withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

### **What will happen to my data?**

Your data will be held and stored in accordance with the University's privacy policy.

You can find information about the University's responsibilities for data protection and your rights under data protection legislation in the University's [privacy notice](#).

You can withdraw from the survey at any time by closing the window. If you want to withdraw your responses after submitting them, we will do our best to find and remove them from the dataset. However, because the survey is anonymous, this might not be possible.

### **What will happen to the results of the project?**

The findings of the survey may be disseminated through conference presentations, journal articles, website publications, and other research avenues. Any quotations from your responses we use will be used anonymously, and any identifying information will be removed as much as possible.

The survey forms part of a longer-term project, and our findings may be used in later publications as the project develops.

**Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about this study?**

If you have any further questions or concerns about this study, please speak to the researcher. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please submit a complaint via [research.policy@durham.ac.uk](mailto:research.policy@durham.ac.uk).

Thank you for reading this information and considering taking part in this study.