

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

INVESTIGATING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THINKING PATTERNS AND OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

You are being invited to take part in research on thinking patterns and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Dr Elizabeth Kirkham, who is a Lecturer in Applied Psychology at the University of Edinburgh is leading this research. Before you decide whether to take part it is important you understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a mental health condition in which people experience persistent unwanted thoughts and feel that they have to perform actions to stop bad things from happening. The purpose of the study is to investigate how obsessive-compulsive symptomology relates to thinking patterns. As part of this study we are testing a new questionnaire designed to measure excessive rationalisation. Excessive rationalisation is a mental strategy in which people “argue with” or try to explain away unwanted thoughts.

WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

You are invited to participate in this study because you:

- Are aged 18 or over
- Are fluent in English

You do **not** need to have OCD yourself to take part. We are recruiting people with OCD **and** people without OCD.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

No – it is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, you can stop the survey at any time, without giving a reason. You can do this by closing the browser window.

We will keep data that you have already provided (under the conditions detailed in this participant information sheet) unless you ask us to withdraw this data. If you would like to withdraw your data, please email elizabeth.kirkham@ed.ac.uk with your unique participant code (located in your invitation email). Data withdrawal will be possible until the end of the data collection period (approximately July 2024). After this time it will no longer be possible to withdraw your data as it will have been anonymised.

Deciding not to take part or withdrawing from the study will not affect your employment, medical care or legal rights.

Please note that your data may be used in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, theses and reports) prior to your withdrawal and so you are advised to contact the research team at the earliest opportunity should you wish to withdraw from the study.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DECIDE TO TAKE PART?

If you do decide to take part, please keep this Information Sheet. You will be asked to complete an online Informed Consent Form to show that you understand your rights in relation to the research, and that you are happy to participate.

This study involves completing two online surveys, one week apart. The first survey is longer than the second survey.

The first survey will ask you to complete some brief information about you. This will include stating any mental health conditions you have, whether or not you are neurodivergent (e.g. are autistic or have ADHD), and demographic details (age, gender, ethnicity, location). You will also be asked to complete a number of questionnaires about mental health and thinking patterns. If you have OCD, you will also be asked some brief questions about your treatment experiences. This survey should take approximately 15 - 20 minutes to complete.

One week after you have completed the first survey you will receive a link to complete the second survey. The second survey will require you to complete one questionnaire. The second survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?

There are no direct benefits, but by sharing your experiences with us, you will be helping Dr Elizabeth Kirkham and the University to better understand OCD thinking patterns.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS OR DISADVANTAGES ASSOCIATED WITH TAKING PART?

There are no significant risks associated with participation. However, this survey will ask you to think about your experiences of unwanted thoughts, which could be distressing. A list of support organisations is provided at the end of this information sheet.

WILL MY TAKING PART BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

All the information we collect during the course of the research will be kept confidential and there are strict laws which safeguard your privacy at every stage.



HOW WILL WE USE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU?

We will need to use information from you for this research project. People will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly. All information collected through these surveys will be stored securely by the research team on the University of Edinburgh's secure Datastore.

This will include identifiable information (name and email address), and non-identifiable information (questionnaire responses).

Your name and email address (identifiable information) will be kept in a password-protected document that is stored separately from your other survey responses. Your name and email address will be used to email you with a link to each survey. Once the data collection period has ended (approximately July 2024), the list of names and email addresses will be securely deleted.

Once the research has finished, the non-identifiable information you provide in the surveys will be checked to ensure it is anonymous, and then uploaded to the University of Edinburgh's DataShare repository. The DataShare repository provides a secure location for anonymous data so that it is not lost when a project finishes. It also allows other researchers to answer additional research questions in the future without having to ask participants to provide the information again. Please [click here](#) to see an example of a different open-access dataset we have published through DataShare in the past.

WHAT ARE YOUR CHOICES ABOUT HOW YOUR INFORMATION IS USED?

We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable, this means that we won't be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW YOUR INFORMATION IS USED?

Ways to find out more about how we use your information:

- www.research-office.ed.ac.uk/about/privacy-notice
- By asking one of the research team
- By sending an email to elizabeth.kirkham@ed.ac.uk

The University of Edinburgh is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Edinburgh will keep your identifiable information until the end of the data collection period and your anonymized data for a minimum of 10 years.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY?

The results of this study may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. You will not be identifiable from any published results.

If you would like to receive a summary of the findings from this study please email elizabeth.kirkham@ed.ac.uk after the research project has ended (September 2024 onwards).

WHO IS ORGANISING AND FUNDING THE RESEARCH?

This study has been organised by a Dr Elizabeth Kirkham, who is a Lecturer in Applied Psychology, and a research team of MSc students. The study is sponsored by the University of Edinburgh. This study has not received any funding, but the questionnaire we are testing was created using a grant from [Edinburgh Innovations](#).

WHO HAS REVIEWED THE STUDY?

The study proposal has been reviewed by the Ethics committee in the School of Health and Social Sciences from the University of Edinburgh.

WHO CAN I CONTACT?

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact the lead researcher, Dr Elizabeth Kirkham (elizabeth.kirkham@ed.ac.uk)

If you would like to discuss this study with someone independent of the research please contact Dr Alice Gritti (alice.gritti@ed.ac.uk).

If you wish to make a complaint about the study, please contact the Head of the School of Health in Social Sciences at the University of Edinburgh, Professor Matthias Scwannauer (headofschool.health@ed.ac.uk)

ORGANISATIONS WHICH OFFER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

General mental health support can be found using the information below.

Samaritans (UK):

Website: www.samaritans.org

Phone: 116 123 (free to call 24/7)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Sane (UK):

Website: www.sane.org.uk

Email: support@sane.org.uk

Find a Helpline (international):

This website helps people identify mental health helplines in the country they live in.

Website: www.findahelpline.com



If you are concerned that you or a loved one may have OCD, you can find information and details of support services at:

- OCD UK (for people in the UK): www.ocduk.org
- The International OCD Foundation: www.iocdf.org