

Dear Postgraduate Coursework Student,

You are invited to participate in a PhD research study *Relationships between dispositional attributes and academic achievement*. We have asked your course coordinator to distribute this invitation on our behalf. The study explores the ways postgraduate coursework students approach learning, and how this relates to academic success. Participants can enter a prize draw to win a Samsung Galaxy Tablet, with 8GB of memory, front and rear cameras, wireless and Bluetooth.



Please read the following information statement, then if you wish to participate simply scroll down and click on the link to the online survey.

Participant Information Statement

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Why is the research being done?

The purpose of the research is to better understand postgraduate coursework students' beliefs and attitudes towards knowledge and learning (*dispositional attributes*), and how these relate to academic achievement. The study also explores similarities and differences between different groups of students. The findings will inform a theoretical model of learning, and contribute to more effective teaching and learning in Masters degrees.

Who can participate in the research?

All students who are invited are eligible to participate. We are seeking postgraduate coursework students from a range of backgrounds, enrolled in various degree programs at several universities.

What choice do you have?

Participation is entirely your choice: whether you participate or not, your decision will not disadvantage you. If you participate, you may withdraw any time before submitting your survey.

What would you be asked to do?

Participants will be asked to complete an online survey. It begins with demographic questions (e.g. age, nationality) and then asks you to agree or disagree with a range of statements about learning. You will also be asked if you are willing to be contacted about a follow-up study in the next two years. If you choose to give contact details, you can still say no to any future invitation.

How much time will it take?

The survey is completed entirely online, in one session. It should take about half an hour, depending on how long you consider each item. If you give quick responses then it will take less time to complete.

What are the risks or benefits of participating?

All participants can enter a prize draw to win a Samsung Galaxy Tablet, with 8GB of memory, front and rear cameras, wireless and Bluetooth connectivity. It may also be beneficial to reflect on how you approach your study. It is possible you might feel uncomfortable thinking about your attitudes to learning; remember you are free to withdraw at any time. In the highly unlikely event that participation causes distress, we encourage you to see a counsellor at your University or a health or community service.

How will your privacy be protected?

Information will be securely stored on the University of Newcastle server and only accessed by the researchers, except as required by law. If you enter the prize draw your contact details cannot be matched to your survey, so your survey responses remain completely anonymous. If you give contact details for the follow-up study, these remain strictly confidential and will not be passed on to third parties. According to policy, data will be retained for five years at the University of Newcastle.

How will the information collected be used?

The data and analysis will be included in a doctoral thesis to be submitted to the University of Newcastle. Findings will also be reported at conferences and in journal articles. A summary of key findings will be distributed to participating course coordinators, who can share this with students. No identifying personal or institutional information will be published in any form.

What do you need to do to participate?

Please be sure you understand this information before you consent to participate. If you have questions, contact the researchers using the details below. Your completion of the survey will be taken as implied consent to participate.

[To participate, click on this link to open the survey](#)

IMPORTANT LOGIN INFO: The survey will ask you to create an original username and password. It is important that each participant gives different login details, so please be creative (i.e. not 'username' for your username!). You don't need to remember them.

If you have problems with the link, you can copy and paste the address into your browser:

<http://www.surveymaker.com.au/sm/survey.cfm?survey=3829>

For further information please contact:

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Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval Number H-2013-0100. Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Office, The Chancellery, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, (02) 49216333, Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au.