

Participant Information Sheet – Student Parents

Project Title: Support Student Parents (VC Gender Equity Fund Project)

Project Summary:

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Western Sydney University's VC Gender Equity Fund initiative, specifically A/Prof Chloe Taylor, A/Prof Kate Huppatz, Dr Kiernyn McKay, Dr Michelle O'Shea, Dr Amie Matthews, Dr Sharlotte Tusasiirwe, Dr Navin Naidoo, Dr Roland Gamsjaeger, Dr Cris Townley, Ms Jenni Haines, Dr. Selda Dagistanli, Dr Jenna Condie, and Ms Leila Frijat.

The research explores the experiences of WSU students who are also parents and/or carers of dependent children. The survey and interviews aim to examine the current obstacles and opportunities for implementing effective and meaningful support for Student Parents. The project will contribute to sector understanding of best practice for supporting student parents and carers within Higher Education.

How is the study being paid for?

This study is funded by the University's Vice Chancellor's 'Gender Equity' Fund.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to participate in an online survey about your experiences of accessing of different supports and facilities as a parent and/or carer at WSU. Participants who indicate interest will also be invited to participate in a focus group (or individual semi-structured interview if preferred) to further elucidate their experiences and identify barriers they have experienced during their time at WSU. You will have the opportunity to register for a student parent networking event. However, the networking event does not involve data collection. Besides the chance to connect with other student parents, the purpose of the networking event is to present current supports for student parents and to involve both students and staff in conversations about priorities for future supports. The networking event will also be an opportunity to find out more about the focus groups.

How much of my time will I need to give?

The online survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Focus groups and interviews will last up to 60 minutes.

What benefits will I, and/or the broader community, receive for participating?

Through completion of the survey and focus groups, participants may benefit from increased awareness of policies, processes, and supports available to them as parents and/or carers. It is expected that the results of the research will allow us to evaluate progress, report on successes, and inform the development of recommendations to improve WSU policy and practice in supporting student parents.

Students completing the focus group or interview will be reimbursed for their time in the form of a \$50 Prezzee voucher. Students who complete the survey can go into a draw to win one of two

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\$50 Prezzy vouchers. If a participant receives a \$50 voucher through the survey prize draw, they will still receive a \$50 voucher if they take part in an interview/focus group (i.e. total of \$100).

Will the study involve any risk or discomfort for me? If so, what will be done to rectify it?

You may experience some discomfort talking about your experiences and challenges as a parent and/or carer. If you decide to take part in the study, we will support you to ensure that you feel comfortable. You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, and you can take a break or leave the interview or focus group at any time.

If you require further support, please contact the University's Counselling Service. The service provides professional, confidential and free counselling service for university students. The service can be accessed by calling 1300 668 370 (Option 5) or by emailing counselling@westernsydney.edu.au.

Students can also contact the Student Welfare Service to speak with trained Welfare Officers who provide tailored support to support, advice and referrals for students. Students can book an appointment with a Welfare Officer by contacting welfareservice@westernsydney.edu.au or 1300 668 370 (option 5).

How do you intend to publish or disseminate the results?

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums, including in the contexts of:

- Western Sydney University's Vice-Chancellors Gender Equity Project Report
- Western Sydney University's SAGE Self-Assessment Team (SAT) meetings
- SAGE Cygnet Progress and Impact Reports

In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that participants cannot be identified, and your survey, interview and/or focus group answers will be anonymous.

All information provided in interviews and focus groups will be de-identified at the point of transcription. This includes changing any details that may identify you, such as names, gender, and study details. From the point of transcription, participants will be referred to only by the demographic markers. The number and type of these generic demographic markers will be attributed with careful consideration of the risk of re-identification for individual participants. These de-identified markers will be maintained for all publications and/or presentations arising from the research.

Will the data and information that I have provided be disposed of?

Please be assured that only the researchers will have access to the raw data you provide. However, your data may be used in other related projects for an extended period of time. The researchers will allow this data to be used by the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity Committee and SAGE initiative to make ongoing improvements to University policy and practice. The data could also be used to develop baseline and benchmark criteria which can

then be used for future assessment of policy and process, including within future SAGE Athena SWAN applications.

To enable this re-use, your data will be held at the University in its data repository and managed under a Data Management Plan. The stored data available for re-use will be de-identified.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation is entirely voluntary, and you are not obliged to be involved. If you do participate you can withdraw at any time by not submitting the survey, by stopping the interview, or leaving the focus group session. You may do this without giving reason and without affecting your relationships with the researchers or Western Sydney University.

You may be able to withdraw your information from interviews by requesting that your data be excluded prior to transcription. Requests made for the exclusion of information after transcription may not be possible, since transcripts will be de-identified. Anything you say will remain confidential and you will not be identifiable in interview transcripts.

Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with A/Prof Chloe Taylor's contact details (c.taylor@westernsydney.edu.au), or by sending the survey link and participant information sheet to other people.

What if I require further information?

Please contact Chief Investigator A/Prof Chloe Taylor (c.taylor@westernsydney.edu.au) should you wish to discuss the research further before deciding whether to participate.

Privacy Notice

Western Sydney University staff and students conduct research that may require the collection of personal and/or health information from research participants.

The University's Privacy Policy and Privacy Management Plan set out how the University collects, holds, uses and discloses personal or health information. Further details about the use and disclosure of this information can be found on the [Privacy at Western Sydney webpage](#).

What if I have a complaint?

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may email the Ethics Committee through Research Services: humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form. The information sheet is for you to keep, and the consent form is retained by the researcher/s. This study has been approved by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H16208

Explanation of Consent

What will happen to my information if I agree to it being used in other projects?

Thank you for considering being a participant in a university research project. The researchers are asking that you agree to supply your information (data) for use in this project and to also agree to allow the data to potentially be used in future research projects.

This request is in line with current University and government policy that encourages the re-use of data once it has been collected. Collecting information for research can be an inconvenience or burden for participants and has significant costs associated with it. Sharing your data with other researchers gives potential for others to reflect on the data and its findings, to re-use it with new insight, and increase understanding in this research area.

You have been asked to agree to Extended consent.

What does this mean?

When you agree to extended consent, it means that you agree that your data, as part of a larger dataset (the information collected for this project) can be re-used in projects that are

- an extension of this project
- closely related to this project
- in the same general area of this research.

The researchers will allow this data to be used by the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity Committee and SAGE initiative to make ongoing improvements to the University's policy and practice to support Student parents.

The research explores the experiences of WSU students who are also parents and/or carers of dependent children. The survey and focus groups aim to examine the current obstacles and opportunities for implementing effective and meaningful support for Student Parents. The project will contribute to sector understanding of best practice for supporting student parents and carers within Higher Education. The data could also be used to develop baseline and benchmark criteria which can then be used for future assessment of policy and process, including within future SAGE Athena SWAN applications.

To enable this re-use, your data will be held at the University in its data repository and managed under a Data Management Plan. The stored data available for re-use will not have information in it that makes you identifiable. The re-use of the data will only be allowed after an ethics committee has agreed that the new use of the data meets the requirements of ethics review.

The researchers want to keep the data for 5 years for possible re-use. After this time the data will be securely destroyed.

You are welcome to discuss these issues further with the researchers before deciding if you

agree. You can also find more information about the re-use of data in research in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research – see Sections 2.2.14 - 2.2.18.

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018>