**Participant Information Sheet**

1. **Research project title**

Evaluating the impact of maths support centres on maths and statistics anxiety and confidence.

1. **Invitation**

You are invited to participate in a multi-institutional study to investigate the effectiveness of maths or statistics support particularly relating to the impact on confidence and anxiety.

Please read the following information as it is important that you understand why the research is taking place and what it will involve before deciding to take part. If you have any further questions relating to the study, you are welcome to speak to one of members of staff undertaking this research who are named at the end of the sheet. The Sheffield Hallam Ethics Committee have reviewed and approved this study with Converis number ER20973393.

1. **What is the project’s purpose?**

Many students undertaking maths or statistics courses in higher education have negative attitudes towards the subjects and often feel apprehensive or lack confidence. The purpose of this study is to understand student’s anxiety and confidence with studying maths or statistics before and after using a maths support centre. The researchers involved in this study work in maths or statistics support centres and the research will help them evaluate the service as well as better understand anxiety about maths or statistics.

**4. Why have I been chosen?**

All students visiting the maths support service at Sheffield Hallam, York and Coventry Universities are being asked to participate in this study. Students will be asked to fill the main surveys before and after their first visit to the maths support centre. At the end of the semester, everyone using maths or statistics support will be asked to participate in a further questionnaire asking for their opinions again.

**5. Do I have to take part?**

Although participation is encouraged to ensure we have captured views of a range of students, participation in the survey is entirely voluntary. You can withdraw by emailing your University contact (see details at the end) with your student ID number before anonymization of the data takes place. You are not required to give a reason for withdrawal and it will not affect the teaching or support you receive as part of your course.

**6. What do I have to do? / What will happen to me if I take part?**

We need you to fill in questionnaires as honestly as possible. Do not spend too long looking at the questions on the questionnaires; just go with your initial response. Your personal details are collected to match up responses from other visits to the maths support centre and the data will be anonymized before analysis so you will not be personally identified at any point.

**7. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

There is no risk of physical harm or distress as a result of participation in this study.

**8. What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

During the process of participating in this study, you are likely to reflect on your experienced learning statistics. The long-term benefit of this study is that the information provided will help us evaluate the service provided and how this impacts on anxiety and confidence. The results of the study will also be of interest to other support centres and lecturers and subsequently benefit a wide range of students in the future.

**9. What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?**

If the study needs to finish earlier, we will let the participants know as soon as possible.

**10. What if something goes wrong?**

If you have a complaint concerning your participation, please email your designated institution academic in the first instance.

**11. Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

We are asking for your student number to act as a unique ID and because we may need to link your results to other data e.g. other survey results or grades. Apart from in this circumstance, personal information e.g. your name will not be linked to this number and no individual will be personally identified in any presentations or publications resulting from this study. Please be as honest as you can with your answers and be assured that under no circumstances will your responses affect the level of teaching or support you receive. Data will anonymised as soon as possible and stored securely on a University server.

**Legal basis for research for studies**. The University undertakes research as part of its function for the community under its legal status. Data protection allows us to use personal data for research with appropriate safeguards in place under the legal basis of public tasks that are in the public interest. A full statement of your rights can be found at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-this-website/privacy-policy/privacy-notices/privacy-notice-for-research>. However, all University research is reviewed to ensure that participants are treated appropriately and their rights respected. This study was approved by UREC with Converis number ER20973393. Further information can be found at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/ethics-integrity-and-practice>

**14. What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The results of the study will add to our understanding of anxiety about maths and statistics and how maths support centres can effectively support teaching. The results will be of interest to anyone teaching or learning maths and statistics so it is likely that we will disseminate our findings through presentations, publications and self-help material without any identification of individuals.

**15. Who is organising and funding the research?**

The study, which is not funded, will be carried out by maths centre support staff at Sheffield Hallam University, the University of York and Coventry University.

**16. Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This project received ethics approval through the Sheffield Hallam Ethics committee.

**17. Contact for further information**

If you have any further questions relating to the study, you are welcome to speak to one of the team undertaking this research. The lead researcher for this study is Ellen Marshall ellen.marshall@shu.ac.uk who coordinates the Statistics Support Service at Sheffield Hallam University in addition to lecturing. The other researchers involved in the study are:

*Sheffield Hallam University (maths support):* Vijay Teeluck v.teeluck@shu.ac.uk

*University of York*: Anna Riach anna.riach@york.ac.uk

*University of Coventry*: Alun Owen, aa5845@coventry.ac.uk

**Data protection information**

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| **You should contact the Data Protection Officer if:*** you have a query about how your data is used by the University
* you would like to report a data security breach (e.g. if you think your personal data has been lost or disclosed inappropriately)
* you would like to complain about how the University has used your personal data

DPO@shu.ac.uk | **You should contact the Head of Research Ethics (Professor Ann Macaskill) if:*** you have concerns with how the research was undertaken or how you were treated

a.macaskill@shu.ac.uk |
| Postal address: Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street, Sheffield S1 1WBT Telephone: 0114 225 5555 |