CV19 impact on Researchers

**INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS**   Ethical Clearance Reference Number: MRA - 19/20 - 18347   SMaRteN, in partnership with Vitae, is conducting research into the impact of COVID-19 on the working lives of doctoral researchers and research staff.  
   
SMaRteN is the UK Research and Innovation funded student mental health research network [www.smarten.org.uk](http://www.smarten.org.uk)   Vitae is a non-profit programme supporting the professional and career development of researchers.  [www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk&nbsp;)   I would like to invite you to participate in this research project to look at the impact of COVID-19 and the national lockdown on your experience as a researcher. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

**What is the purpose of the project?** The purpose of the project is to better understand how the national lock down in response to COVID-19 has influenced your experience and mental wellbeing as a researcher.

**Why have I been invited to take part?** All doctoral students and early career researchers, usually resident in the UK or currently working / studying in the UK are welcome to participate.

**What will happen if I take part?** If you choose to take part in the project you will be asked to complete a set of questions via our online survey platform:

* You can complete these in your own time.
* We estimate that it will take you 25 minutes to complete the survey.
* The question set relates to your experience as a researcher and the impact of COVID-19 on your research, your relationship with your university, living arrangements, mental health and wellbeing.
* The online survey will be completed anonymously.
* There is an option at the end of the survey to register interest in taking part in future iterations of the survey - if you would like to do this, you will be redirected to a separate survey where you can leave your email address. This ensures that your contact details are NOT linked with the responses you enter in this survey - maintaining the anonymity of your survey responses.

**Do I have to take part?** Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in anyway. Once you have read the information sheet, please contact us if you have any questions that will help you make a decision about taking part. If you decide to take part in the online survey, you will be asked to indicate that you have read and understand the information provided and that you consent to your anonymous data being used for the purposes explained.

**What are the possible risks of taking part?** We do not foresee any specific risks in taking part.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?** You will be contributing to work designed to try to improve support and provision for researchers.

**Data handling and confidentiality**

Please do not include any personal identifiable information in your responses.

While the survey is anonymous, it is up to you to consider how you answer qualitative text answers - please do not include details that would reveal your identity.

Our aim is to keep the data collection anonymous to ensure that nobody, including the researchers, will be aware of your identity, and that nobody will be able to connect you to the answers you provide, even indirectly.

Your data will be held securely on the online survey platform and then on a password protected KCL SharePoint site.

We are supporting open science: the data set from this survey will be released online, via the SMaRteN website (www.smarten.org.uk) for researchers to download and analyse.

**Data Protection Statement**

Your data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). If you would like more information about how your data will be processed in accordance with GDPR please visit the link below: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

**What if I change my mind about taking part?** You can withdraw from the survey by closing the browser page. However, please note that once you complete the survey, it will no longer be possible to withdraw from the study because the data will be fully anonymous. 

**How is the project being funded?** This project is being supported by the UKRI funded SMaRteN research network and Vitae.

**What will happen to the results of the project?** The results will be summarised in a report to be shared with universities and research funders with the objective of guiding their longer term response to supporting researchers through and following the pandemic.  We plan to disseminate research findings through academic publication and conferences within the UK.

**Who should I contact for more information?** If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact the SMaRteN network coordinator using the following contact details: Miss Laura Beswick Email: smarten@kcl.ac.uk

**What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?** If this project has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information: The Chair, Psychiatry, Nursing and Midwifery Research Ethics Subcommittee, rec@kcl.ac.uk

**Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.**

**CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES**  
You should only complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet.  
Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in.  
To consent to participate, you must agree to each of the statements listed below:

* I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet above. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and / or asked questions which have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study. (2)

End of Block: Information sheet and Consent form

Start of Block: PhD Student?

Are you currently a doctoral student?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)

Skip To: End of Block If Are you currently a doctoral student? = No

Are you studying full time or part time?

* Full time (1)
* Part time (2)

Which year of study are you in?

* 1st year (1)
* 2nd year (2)
* 3rd year (3)
* 4th year (4)
* 5th year (5)
* 6th year or beyond (6)

Has the deadline for submission of your thesis been extended changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* N/A (3)

End of Block: PhD Student?

Start of Block: University position / contract

Which best describes your current position within academia?

* Employed primarily to undertake research (e.g. research assistant, post-doctoral researcher, research fellow) (2)
* Employed to undertake teaching and research (4)
* Employed to undertake teaching only (5)
* Other (please specify) (6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What is the nature of your contract?

* Fixed term (1)
* Open ended (can be known as permanent) (2)
* Open ended but limited by funding (3)
* Casual (4)
* Not sure (5)

Prior to COVID-19 was your university contract full time or part time?

* Full time (1)
* Part time (2)

Display This Question:

If Prior to COVID-19 was your university contract full time or part time? = Part time

Please specify your nearest full time equivalent (FTE)

* 0.2 (1)
* 0.4 (2)
* 0.6 (3)
* 0.8 (4)

How many years have you been a researcher (excluding doctoral research)?

* < 1 year (1)
* 1 - 2 years (2)
* 3 - 4 years (3)
* 5 - 10 years (4)
* > 10 years (5)

End of Block: University position / contract

Start of Block: Academic descriptors

What is your academic area?

* Clinical Medicine (1)
* Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care (4)
* Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy (5)
* Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience (6)
* Biological Sciences (7)
* Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science (8)
* Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences (9)
* Chemistry (10)
* Physics (11)
* Mathematical Sciences (12)
* Computer Science and Informatics (13)
* Engineering (14)
* Architecture, Built Environment and Planning (15)
* Geography and Environmental Studies (16)
* Archaeology (17)
* Economics and Econometrics (18)
* Business and Management Studies (19)
* Law (20)
* Politics and International Studies (21)
* Social Work and Social Policy (22)
* Sociology (23)
* Anthropology and Development Studies (24)
* Education (25)
* Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism (26)
* Area Studies (27)
* Modern Languages and Linguistics (28)
* English Language and Literature (29)
* History (30)
* Classics (31)
* Philosophy (32)
* Theology and Religious Studies (33)
* Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory (34)
* Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies (35)
* Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management (36)

Which university are you attached to **primarily?**

What is your **primary** source of funding for your current studies / research?

* AHRC (1)
* BBSRC (4)
* EPSRC (5)
* ESRC (7)
* MRC (9)
* NERC (10)
* STFC (11)
* EU/EC Funding (12)
* NIHR (National Institute of Health Research) (29)
* Wellcome Trust (13)
* Arthritis Research Campaign (8)
* British Heart Foundation (14)
* Cancer Research UK (15)
* Leverhulme Trust (19)
* Nuffield Foundation (20)
* Other charity (21)
* British Academy (16)
* Royal Academy of Engineering (17)
* Royal Society (18)
* Industry funding (22)
* UK Government funding (23)
* Non-UK Government funding (28)
* My University (24)
* Self-funding / doctoral loan (27)
* I do not know (25)
* Other (26)

What is the end date for your current funding / contract?

* I don't know (10)
* April - June 2020 (11)
* Jul - Sept 2020 (2)
* Oct - Dec 2020 (3)
* Jan - June 2021 (4)
* July - Dec 2021 (5)
* 2022 (6)
* 2023 (7)
* 2024 (8)
* 2025 or later (9)
* Not applicable (1)

Skip To: End of Block If What is the end date for your current funding / contract? = Not applicable

Has your research funding been extended since the COVID-19 pandemic?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* I don't know (3)

End of Block: Academic descriptors

Start of Block: Your mental wellbeing

Please indicate the extent to which each of the following statements describes your experience of the **last 2 weeks**.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | All of the time (1) | Most of the time (2) | Some of the time (3) | A little of the time (4) | None of the time (5) |
| I've been feeling optimistic about the future. (1) |  |  |  |  |  |
| I've been feeling useful. (2) |  |  |  |  |  |
| I've been feeling relaxed. (3) |  |  |  |  |  |
| I've been dealing with problems well. (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| I've been thinking clearly. (5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| I've been feeling close to other people. (6) |  |  |  |  |  |
| I've been able to make up my own mind about things. (7) |  |  |  |  |  |
| I feel connected to my peers and/or colleagues (10) |  |  |  |  |  |

Please indicate the extent to which each of the following statements describes your experience of the last 2 weeks.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Hardly ever (1) | Some of the time (2) | Often (3) |
| How often do you feel that you lack companionship? (1) |  |  |  |
| How often do you feel left out? (2) |  |  |  |
| How often do you feel isolated from others? (3) |  |  |  |
| How often do you feel lonely? (4) |  |  |  |

How has the national lock down influenced your social contact?

* I feel more lonely since the lock down (1)
* There has been no change (2)
* I feel less lonely since the lock down (3)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Page Break |  |

The following questions ask about how you have been feeling during the **past 30 days**. For each question, please identify the option that best describes how often you had this feeling.  
  
  
During the **past 30 days,** about how often did you feel...

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | All of the time (6) | Most of the time (7) | Some of the time (8) | A little of the time (9) | None of the time (10) |
| Nervous? (1) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hopeless? (2) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Restless or fidgety? (3) |  |  |  |  |  |
| So depressed that nothing could cheer you up? (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| That everything was an effort? (5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Worthless? (6) |  |  |  |  |  |

The last six questions asked about feelings that might have occurred during the past 30 days.   
  
  
Taking them altogether, did these feelings occur **More often** in the past 30 days than is usual for you, about the **same as usual**, or **less often than usual?**   
  
  
(If you never have any of these feelings, please select, "same as usual")

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | More often than usual | | | About the same | Less often than usual | | |
|  | A lot (1) | Some (2) | A little (3) | About the same (1) | A little (1) | Some (2) | A lot (3) |
| These feelings have occured (5) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

End of Block: Your mental wellbeing

Start of Block: Impact of CV 19 on Research Activity

Are you going into your university for work at the moment?

* Yes - regularly (1)
* Yes - infrequently (2)
* No (4)

Please identify the tools that you typically used to support your research and whether you currently have access to these during the COVID-19 pandemic:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | N/A  I don't use this (1) | I have the same access now (2) | I have reduced access now (4) | I have no access now (5) |
| Computer or laptop (2) |  |  |  |  |
| Software to support your research (11) |  |  |  |  |
| Internet (13) |  |  |  |  |
| Assistive technology (12) |  |  |  |  |
| Laboratory equipment (7) |  |  |  |  |
| University library (8) |  |  |  |  |
| Archives / special collections (10) |  |  |  |  |
| Access to patients / research participants (9) |  |  |  |  |
| Other (please specify) (6) |  |  |  |  |

Please review the following items. For each area in which you might be working, what impact has COVID-19 had on your ability to engage in this work:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not applicable (8) | Strongly negative (9) | Negative (10) | No impact (12) | Positive (13) | Strongly positive (15) |
| Literature review (1) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Data collection (2) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Data analysis (3) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Writing (4) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Discussing ideas / findings with colleagues / peers (5) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dissemination - sharing research findings with stakeholders / other researchers (6) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Preparing grant / fellowship proposals (11) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other (please specify): (9) |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Have there been any benefits to the COVID-19 pandemic for your work?

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What have been the most challenging aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic for your work?

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End of Block: Impact of CV 19 on Research Activity

Start of Block: Supervision

Please review the following items related to the information and support you have had from your **PhD supervisor or supervisory team or line manager**since the COVID-19 pandemic.   
  
  
**My supervisor / line manager has**...

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree (16) | Somewhat agree (17) | Neither agree nor disagree (18) | Somewhat disagree (19) | Strongly disagree (20) |
| Provided clear guidelines on how they will support me to manage any changes in my ability to work. (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Provided support and / or advice to help me continue my work remotely. (5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Been in contact with to check how I am managing. (8) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Made clear arrangements for our progress meetings to continue. (13) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Made arrangements to support me to stay in touch with other PhD students / researchers at my university. (11) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Done all I believe they can / should do to support me at this time. (10) |  |  |  |  |  |

We are looking to collate examples of good practice:   
  
What **one** thing has OR could your **supervisor / line manger** do to help you manage the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on your work?

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End of Block: Supervision

Start of Block: Institutional support

Please review the following items related to the information and support you have had **from your university** since the COVID-19 pandemic.   
  
  
This information or support might have come from your **central university services** or your **department** or **faculty**.  
  
  
My department / faculty / central university services has...

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree (16) | Somewhat agree (17) | Neither agree nor disagree (18) | Somewhat disagree (19) | Strongly disagree (20) |
| Provided clear guidelines on how they will support me to manage any changes in my ability to work. (4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Provided support and / or advice to help me continue my work remotely. (5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Been in contact with to check how I am managing. (8) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Made arrangements for skills training to take place online. (9) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Made arrangements to support me to stay in touch with other PhD students / researchers at my university. (11) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Provided an option to extend the deadline / end date for my doctoral studies / current contract (14) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Done all I believe they can / should do to support me at this time. (15) |  |  |  |  |  |

We are looking to collate examples of good practice:   
  
What one thing has OR could your university central services / faculty / department do to help you manage the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your work?

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How has your relationship with your university changed since the COVID-19 pandemic

* More positive (25)
* No change (26)
* More Negative (27)

Skip To: End of Block If How has your relationship with your university changed since the COVID-19 pandemic = No change

Please explain why you think your relationship with the university has changed.

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End of Block: Institutional support

Start of Block: Employment Outside of Academia

Do you usually have employment outside of academia?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)

Have your employment options changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)

Display This Question:

If Have your employment options changed since the COVID-19 pandemic? = Yes

Do you expect these changes to have an impact on your finances for the next academic year?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)

Display This Question:

If Do you expect these changes to have an impact on your finances for the next academic year? = Yes

Can you tell us more about this.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Employment Outside of Academia

Start of Block: Caring responsibilities

Do you have caring responsibilities (e.g. children, family members)?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)

Skip To: End of Block If Do you have caring responsibilities (e.g. children, family members)? = No

Who do you normally care for? Please tick all that apply.

* Pre-school aged children (1)
* Primary school aged children (5)
* Secondary school / college aged children (6)
* Another dependent family member (3)
* Other (please specify) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How have your caring responsibilities changed since the COVID-19 outbreak?

* Increased considerably (14)
* Increased to some extent (15)
* Unchanged (16)
* Decreased to some extent (17)
* Decreased considerably (18)

Display This Question:

If How have your caring responsibilities changed since the COVID-19 outbreak? = Increased considerably

Or How have your caring responsibilities changed since the COVID-19 outbreak? = Increased to some extent

What impact has this had on your ability to meet the needs of your work?

* Strong negative (1)
* Negative (2)
* None (4)
* Positive (5)
* Strongly Positive (6)

End of Block: Caring responsibilities

Start of Block: General impact of Covid-19

Over the past week, how stressed or worried have you felt about the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not at all (1) | A little (2) | Very (3) | Not applicable (5) |
| Your family or friends (1) |  |  |  |  |
| Your child(ren) (12) |  |  |  |  |
| Household chores (20) |  |  |  |  |
| Living conditions (24) |  |  |  |  |
| Work (even if you feel your job is safe) (3) |  |  |  |  |
| Losing your job / unemployment (28) |  |  |  |  |
| Finances (30) |  |  |  |  |
| Future plans (37) |  |  |  |  |
| The long-term impact this will have on your job prospects (40) |  |  |  |  |
| Your Visa (39) |  |  |  |  |
| Getting medication (31) |  |  |  |  |
| Getting food (32) |  |  |  |  |
| Your own safety / security (33) |  |  |  |  |
| Your own health (34) |  |  |  |  |
| Internet access (35) |  |  |  |  |

End of Block: General impact of Covid-19

Start of Block: About You: The following questions focus on your as individual and as a student.

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| --- |
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**This section asks you about you**  
  
How old are you?

* under 20 (2)
* 21 - 25 (3)
* 26 - 30 (4)
* 31 - 35 (5)
* 36-40 (6)
* 41 - 50 (7)
* 51 - 60 (8)
* 61 - 70 (9)
* Over 70 (10)

How would you define your gender?

* Female (1)
* Male (2)
* I use another term (for example, non-binary) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* I prefer not to say (5)

Are you a UK citizen?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)

Display This Question:

If Are you a UK citizen? = Yes

Ethnicity

* White (British) (1)
* White (Irish) (2)
* Any other white background (3)
* Mixed (White and Black Caribbean) (4)
* Mixed (White and Black African) (5)
* Mixed (White and Asian) (6)
* Any Other Mixed background (7)
* Asian or Asian British (Indian) (8)
* Asian or Asian British (Pakistani) (9)
* Asian or Asian British (Bangladeshi) (10)
* Any other Asian background (11)
* Black or Black British (Caribbean) (12)
* Black or Black British (African) (13)
* Other Black groups (14)
* Chinese (Or Chinese British) (15)
* Other ethnic group (16)
* I'd rather not answer (17)

Display This Question:

If Are you a UK citizen? = No

What is your home country?

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Disability and health: Please select all the situation(s) that describe you.

* I have a physical disability or illness (e.g., asthma) (1)
* I have a sensory disability or illness (e.g., hearing impairment) (2)
* I have a learning difference such as dyslexia or dyspraxia (3)
* I have a long-term mental health condition (e.g., depression or anxiety) (4)
* I have another long-term condition, diagnosis or illness. Please enter here: (5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* None of the above apply to me. (6)
* Prefer not to say (7)

Are there any other comments you want to make about your experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic?

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End of Block: About You: The following questions focus on your as individual and as a student.