

Transforming Psychological Assessment Reports

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Team:

- Dr Elly Quinlan, Chief Investigator, School of Psychological Sciences, University of Tasmania
- Dr Donna Gayton, Senior Psychologist within the Department for Education, Children and Young People.
- Dr Jake Kraska, Director, Australian Educational and Development Psychology Association.
- Meg Crocker. Meg is completing her Master of Psychology (Clinical) at the University of Tasmania.

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What is the purpose of this study?

Psychological assessment reports are important tools for supporting children and young people, but they are often hard to understand. To improve their accessibility, this study asks two key questions: what makes a report clear and helpful, and how can we improve the way psychologists write reports so that parents, teachers, and psychologists can use them more easily?

Why have I been invited to participate? You are eligible for this study because you:

- You are a **parent or carer** of a child aged 5–18 who has received a psychological assessment; or
- You are a **teacher** who is currently teaching (or have taught in the past 12 months) in an Australian primary, secondary, or specialist setting; or

Additionally, all participants need to be at least 18 years old, live in Australia, and can speak and read English. Taking part is entirely your choice. Saying “yes” or “no” will not affect your relationship with the University of Tasmania or your access to any services now or in the future.

What will I be asked to do? Depending on your eligibility, you may choose to take part in an online interview, an online surveys, or both. Everything is conducted online, so you can participate from home at a time that suits you.

1. Focus group or Interview (teachers and parents/carers)

We will be holding focus groups (60-90 minutes) and individual interview (30-45 minutes), online via Zoom. Parents/carers will attend a focus group with other parents/carers, and teachers will attend a focus group with other teachers. These will involve open-ended questions about your preferences when reading psychological assessment reports. You can skip any question, take breaks, or stop at any time. To thank you for your time, you will receive an e-gift voucher of \$30 (for interviews) or \$50 (for focus groups).

2. Online survey (teachers, parents/carers, and psychologists)

The survey takes about 15 minutes, where you will be provided with a de-identified report and asked questions about the clarity, usefulness, readability and overall satisfaction of it. To access the survey, you will follow a secure link to a REDCap survey. No names, e-mails or IP addresses are stored with your answers.

3. Stakeholder Review (teachers, parents/carers, and psychologists)

Using the information we learn from the focus groups, interviews, and online survey, we will develop resources to help those in the community write better reports. We will be inviting a small group of stakeholders to give us feedback on these resources before we release them. Participants will be asked to review a draft plain-language reporting guide and one-page checklist, then provide structured feedback via an early survey on their wording, layout, and practical usefulness. To thank you for your time, you will receive a \$50 e-gift voucher.

How is the study funded? This study is funded by Dr Elly Quinlan and the Australian Educational and Development Psychology Association. Additional support is provided by the University of Tasmania through research infrastructure such as secure data storage, REDCap survey hosting, and licensed software (e.g., Zoom, NVivo, SPSS).

Are there any benefits from participating in this study? We cannot promise you any benefit from participating in this research. Taking part may give you the opportunity to reflect on your experiences with psychological assessment reports and may contribute to changes that support clearer, more user-friendly communication in education and mental health services.

Are there any possible risks of participating in this study? Reflecting on your experiences with psychological assessment reports may bring up feelings of frustration, confusion, or dissatisfaction. You are welcome to skip any question, take a break, or stop participating at any time if you feel uncomfortable. If you take part in a focus group, there is a small chance you may recognise other participants. Everyone will be reminded not to reveal the identity of fellow participants, but complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. All survey responses are anonymous and interview/focus-group data will be de-identified in reporting, so the risk to your privacy remains low. No physical, legal, or financial risks are anticipated.

What if I change my mind during the study? You are free to stop at any point without giving a reason. If you withdraw during the focus group or interview, all recordings and notes will be deleted. Once transcripts have been de-identified and the linkage file destroyed, removal is no longer possible because the data can no longer be matched to you. The online survey is anonymous. You can stop at any point and close your browser before submitting. After you click "Submit," the responses cannot be removed as they will be anonymous. If you later decide you would like to discuss any aspect of withdrawal, you can contact the Chief Investigator.

What will happen to the data when this study is over? When the study ends, all interview and focus group recordings will be securely deleted, and your transcript will be stripped of any names or identifying details. De-identified transcripts and anonymous survey data will be stored on the University of Tasmania's secure research server for a minimum of five years, in line with university policy. Only the research team can access them. Results may appear in a journal articles or conference presentations. De-identified data may be shared with journals under strict agreements. After the retention period, all files will be permanently destroyed.

How will the results of the study be published? The findings from this study will be published in peer-reviewed academic journals and presented at national and international conferences. Your contribution may be included in these publications in the form of de-identified quotes or group-level results. Although data will be anonymised by pseudonym, you may be able to recognise quotes that you have given in the final publication. In some cases, scholarly journals may require access to the dataset used in the analysis. If this occurs, only fully de-identified data will be shared under strict confidentiality agreements.

A plain-language summary of the key findings will be posted on the project's Facebook page, which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576061698357> . Data from this study may also be used to answer future research questions, but in doing so will remain broadly within the general aims and scope of the current study.

What if I have questions about this study? If you have queries, concerns, or complaints, please contact the Chief Investigator on Elly.Quinlan@utas.edu.au. This study has been approved by the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). If you have complaints or concerns about the conduct of this study, contact the Executive Officer of the HREC on (03) 6226 6254 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au . Quote reference number 32101.

Thank you for your time.