# S&S Experimenter Protocol

Session Overview:

* Consent & Setup: 5-10 min
* Baseline Measures and Heart Rate Monitor Fitting: 10-15 min
* TSST Instructions: 3 min
* TSST Preparation: 5 min
* TSST (Interview+Math): 10 min
* Recovery, questionnaires & debriefing: 60 min

The experimenter should maintain a professional, *neutral* demeanour when interacting with the participant. The participant should feel welcome and comfortable in the lab, but the experimenter should *avoid* being overly friendly or chatty (this is important to ensure that the influence that the experimentermight have on participants’ stress levels is consistent across all sessions).

**Consent & Setup**

On arrival the research participant is welcomed outside the experimental rooms by the experimenter.

Thank you for coming today (*their name*), please take a seat and make yourself comfortable. My name is (*your name*) and I am a Research Assistant at the Social Health lab. I’ll be telling you what we will be doing today and taking you through the study. In order to keep everything consistent for all of our study participants, I’ll be reading most of the instructions off of this script.

First please put your name and student number on this sign-in sheet here.

Give them sign-in sheet.

Great! Now I’ll give you the consent form. Please look it over and let me know if you have any questions.

Give them the consent form. Let them read it over and sign it. Answer basic questions.

To give you an overview of the session today, we will be measuring your heart rate and taking some saliva samples from you throughout your lab visit, and you will be asked to complete three different tasks. You will also be asked several times to smell shirts which may be either worn or unworn, based on the condition you were randomly assigned to. I don’t know which condition you are in. There is a low probability that the shirt you smell has been worn by someone you know. I will be giving you more detailed instructions for each section of the study as we go through them.

Are you chewing gum? (if yes) Please spit it out now.

Please make sure your cell phone is turned off or in silent mode; I’ll be taking your belongings to another room now, and I’ll make sure they’re stored safely while you are doing all the tasks.

Store their belongings in a safe space.

If you need to use the washroom, please do so now, as it will be difficult to do so in the middle of the session.? [Of course if it’s an emergency you should let them, but try to avoid this] Do you need to use the washroom?

## Heart Rate Monitor Fitting

As mentioned before, we will be recording your heart rate throughout the study. Here is the heart rate monitor that you will be using. Before you put it on, I will show you how it works.

Demonstrate the following on yourself over your shirt.

The strap is moistened with water to ensure contact with your skin. You will fasten it like this, except *under* your shirt. It should fit snugly, but comfortably against your skin right under your bra. The monitor should be to left, like this (show position) You’ll be wearing the wrist piece around your wrist as you would a normal watch. I will now leave the room so that you can put the belt on. Please open the door when you are ready.

Leave room to let the participant put on the heart rate belt. Re-enter the room when they are ready.

Is the belt comfortable? [help adjust if necessary]

I’m going to give you the wrist piece and start your heart rate monitor now. By pressing the red button here you will be placing a time marker. We will ask you to do this a few times during the visit. Please only set a marker when I tell you to do so.

Directions to us: hit the red button 2 times to start recording; if asks to combine exercises select “no” by pushing right top bottom

**Saliva Sample #1**

We will be collecting seven saliva samples from you throughout the experiment. It is important that we keep to the schedule of predetermined times for each sample. We will be using these salivettes (show salivettes) When I tell you to, please chew on the cotton piece for one minute so that it is completely wet. I will be timing you and will tell you when to stop. At this point, please put the salivette back in its container and put the cap back on.

Open the “demo” salivette and show the participant the cotton piece.

When I tell you, you can put the cotton piece in your mouth and start chewing. As you’re chewing, please fill out the questionnaires on the clipboard until you see the instructions to “stop.” Please put an “X” through each line to indicate how you feel, between 0 and 100. You may now start chewing and filling out the questionnaire.

Start the stopwatch; note the (actual clock) time on session log. Time one minute, and then collect saliva sample #1.

**Standing Baseline Heart Rate**

We will now measure your standing heart rate for five minutes. Please stand up and remain standing, calm and relaxed. While you are standing, you may read a magazine (hand participant a magazine). I will let you know as soon as the five minutes are up. When I tell you to, please set a marker by pressing the red button that I showed you earlier—Set the marker NOW (marker 1).

Note the stopwatch time on session log and leave the room. Time five minutes and re-enter the room and pick up the bag and shirt

### Smell Shirt #1

You can now take a seat.

When I tell you to, please open this bag and inhale deeply, keeping your nose directly at the opening of this bag for one minute. This part of the study is very important to keep standardized, so I'm first going to show you how to do it. [demo] Any questions? OK, please open your bag now.

Note the stopwatch time on session log

Your minute is up; please reseal the bag and set it down.

**TSST Instructions**

Your first task will be to give an interview speech. Imagine that you are applying to your ideal job. It can be any job of your choice. Your task will be to convince a panel of interviewers in five minutes why you think you are the best candidate for this position. The panel members are trained in behavioural analysis and will take notes during your talk. You will be recorded by a camera and a microphone for later voice and behavioural analysis.

You should try to leave the best possible impression on the panel. Assume that you are competing against a number of candidates. You should focus primarily on your personal qualities and the personality traits that distinguish you from the other candidates and qualify you for this position. The panel will be less interested in your academic qualifications and work experience (assume that your resume and details about your education and background have already been provided to the panel).

The panel may ask follow-up questions in case of uncertainties to receive all the necessary information from you. Following your talk you will then be given a second task, which will be explained to you by the panel.

In a moment, you will have five minutes to prepare for your interview speech by taking some notes, but you will not be able to take the notes into the interview with you. You can use pages 2 and 3 on your clipboard for your notes. Do you have any questions?

Answer any questions and then move on to “Smell Shirt #2” before giving the participant five minutes of prep time.

### Smell Shirt #2

Once again, when I tell you to please open this bag and inhale deeply, keeping your nose directly at the opening of this bag for one minute. You can start now.

Note the stopwatch time on session log.

Your minute is up; please reseal the bag and set it down. When I tell you to, please set another marker by pressing the button on your watch—Set it NOW (marker 2).

Note the time on session log.

You can now start taking your notes on pages 2 and 3 on your clipboard. I will be back in 5 minutes.

The experimenter then leaves and the participant stays in the room.

## TSST Preparation

Experimenter times five minutes and then returns to the room

**Smell Shirt #3**

Your five minutes are now up. Once again, when I tell you to please open this bag and inhale deeply, keeping your nose directly at the opening of this bag for one minute. You can start now.

Note stopwatch time on session log.

Your minute is up; please reseal the bag and set it down.

### Saliva Sample #2

When I tell you to, please set another marker by pressing the button on your watch—set it NOW (marker 3).

Note stopwatch time on session log.

Here is your second salivette. You may now start chewing the cotton piece and filling out the next part of the questionnaire until your reach the written instructions to stop.

Note stopwatch time on session log. Time one minute, and then collect saliva sample #2.

## TSST (Interview + Math)

It is now time for the interview. Please leave your clipboard, notes, and pen here, and follow me.

Experimenter leads participant to TSST room. (knock on closed judges room door)

Please stand on the marked line. You will now have five minutes to give your interview speech. The panel members are trained in behavioural analysis and will take notes during your talk. You will be recorded by a camera and a microphone for later voice and behavioural analysis. Please pay attention to your posture, gestures, and facial expressions.

The panel may ask follow-up questions in case of uncertainties to receive all the necessary information from you. Following your talk you will then be given a second task, which will be explained to you by the panel.

When I tell you to, please set another marker by pressing the button on your heart rate watch—set it NOW (marker 4).

Note the stopwatch time on session log.

*(See panel protocol. Judges will collect saliva sample and VAS #3.)*

Exit the room and then wait near the room after ~10 minutes have passed. Judge 2 will open the door.

**Recovery**

Note the stopwatch time on session log. Then, restart the stopwatch. Lead participant back to the waiting room.

Please follow me back into the waiting room (once in waiting room) When I tell you to, please set another marker by pressing the button on your heart rate watch—set it NOW (marker 5).

Note the stopwatch time on session log.

### Smell Shirt #4

You may take a seat.

Once again, when I tell you to please open this bag and inhale deeply, keeping your nose directly at the opening of this bag for one minute. You can start now.

Note the stopwatch time on session log

Your minute is up; please reseal the bag and set it down.

For the rest of the session, I will ask you to fill out a few questionnaires and provide more saliva samples. For the next few minutes, please relax and read one of these magazines, if you like. I will let you know when it is time for the next task.

### Leave the room,

### Re-enter (Time on stopwatch: 5:00 post-TSST end)

When I tell you to, please set another marker by pressing the button on your heart rate watch—set it NOW (marker 6).

Note the stopwatch time on session log

Continue what you were doing. I’ll come back when it is time for the next task.

### Leave the room.

### Smell Shirt #5 (Time on stopwatch: 8:30 post-TSST end)

Once again, when I tell you to please open this bag and inhale deeply, keeping your nose directly at the opening of this bag for one minute. You can start now.

Note the stopwatch time on session log

Your minute is up; please reseal the bag and set it down.

### Saliva Sample #4 (Time on stopwatch: 10:00 post-TSST end)

When I tell you to, please set another marker by pressing the button on your watch—set it NOW (marker 7).

Note the stopwatch time on session log.

Here is your next salivette. You may now start chewing the cotton piece and filling out the next part of the questionnaire until your reach the written instructions to stop.

Note stopwatch time on session log. Time one minute, and then collect saliva sample #4

I will now get you to take off your watch (get watch).You can now also take off the heart rate strap. I will leave the room while you do this and I will come back when it is time for the next saliva sample. If you like, you may read a magazine while you wait.

Leave the room. Take watch to give to judges.

### Saliva Sample #5 (Time on stopwatch: 20:00 post-TSST end)

Here is your next salivette. You may now start chewing the cotton piece and filling out the next part of the questionnaire until your reach the written instructions to stop.

Note stopwatch time on session log. Time one minute, and then collect saliva sample #5

### Smell Shirt #6

Please take a deep inhalation form the bag and then fill it out this questionnaire on your clipboard. The questions are about the scent, so please continue to inhale from the bag while completing the questions. Complete the questions until you reach the instructions to stop.

Note the stopwatch time on session log

Take the shirt.

Please complete all of the remaining questions on the clipboard. When you are finished you can read a magazine. I will come back when it is time to give another saliva sample.

**Saliva Sample #6 (Time on stopwatch: 40:00 post-TSST end)**

Please put down the clipboard (or magazine) for a minute. Take the next salivette and be ready to chew it. You may now start chewing.

Note stopwatch time on session log. Time one minute, and then collect saliva sample #6.

Experimenter brings panel judges into the waiting room. Judges should be given time to greet the participant, assure her that she did a great job in the interview, shake hands, explain that their role was to stress her, and can make friendly small talk for a minute before leaving.

If you haven’t completed the questions on the clipboard, please do so now. I will come back when it’s time to give you the final saliva sample.

### Saliva Sample #7 (Time on stopwatch: 60:00 post-TSST end)

(If participant is still filling out the questionnaire) Please put down your clipboard/magazine for a minute.

Here is your next salivette. You may now start chewing the cotton piece.

Note stopwatch time on session log. Time one minute, and then collect saliva sample #7.

**Debriefing**

The study is now over. I’ll you a little more about the study now, and then I will give you your payment/HSP credit.

You were not actually being evaluated or scored for your interview performance. Your performance is not compared to other participants. We are measuring a naturally occurring stress hormone on the body called cortisol. We wanted to see what happens to this hormone in your body under stress, that’s why we have been collecting samples from you. We are sorry that we weren’t transparent up front about everything, but if we had, the situation wouldn’t be stressful. You did a good job. Thank you for taking it so well. Are you feeling ok, and do you have any questions?

We’d like to ask you for one more favour, and that is not to discuss the details of this procedure (especially the stressful parts) to any of your friends and classmates who might participate in this study in the future. If our future participants come in with prior knowledge about the procedure, it won’t be stressful for them, and we won’t be able to measure their responses in a meaningful way. Can you help us with this?

[written debriefing/HSP form goes here as needed]

**Payment/Granting of Credit**