

Multi-player online video games for cognitive rehabilitation

Researcher: Jason Colman, student at University of Portsmouth

Supervisors: Dr Paul Gnanayutham and Dr Louise Turner

My name is Jason Colman and I am a student at the University of Portsmouth. I am conducting a study to investigate the therapeutic potential of playing an online multi-player video game, for people who have survived a brain injury.

The potential benefit of the research is that it may help you to improve your skills in areas such as communication, memory, and planning. Overall, multi-player online games may be identified as a form of therapy, which could be used to help other people who have suffered a brain injury.

Who can take part ?

I am looking for people who are over 18 years old, who have an acquired brain injury, who are interested in playing video games. You should not already be regularly playing a multi-player online video game.

You need a computer (Windows PC or Mac) which is connected to the internet. You need to be able to see the screen and be able to move and click the mouse cursor, using any controller that suits you.

You need to be able to give your consent to participating (there is a consent form at the end of this document).

What you will be asked to do

You will be asked to download a special video game and play for up to one hour each week, for 21 weeks.

During the study you will be asked to perform tasks in the game, like moving around the game world, and sending messages to other players. You will not be talking to random strangers. Only invited players are able to log in to the game, so you would only be playing with other people who have kindly agreed to help with this research project.

There are tests in the game, which you are asked to take, which will be used to measure the beneficial effect of playing the game.

Potential risks or negative effects associated with participation

Staring intently at a monitor can cause visual fatigue, and flashing images are known to cause seizures in people susceptible to photosensitive epilepsy. (This is a rare condition.) To minimise these risks, gaming sessions will be kept short and regular breaks scheduled.

Video games have been criticised for their violent content. Some games contain other offensive content. Some researchers consider video game 'addiction' to be a risk for gamers. The game you will be playing will not have violent content.

What if I want to withdraw from the study ?

You may at any time withdraw from the study. You do not have to give any reason, and no one can attempt to dissuade you.

Confidentiality and privacy

Your identity will be kept confidential. Your written permission would be sought before publishing information which could identify you. Material which could not be used to identify you may be published or presented with the aim of benefiting others.

Your email address is used as a way of identifying you when you first log in to the game – but it will not be shared with anyone else.

How can I join in ?

If you would like to participate, Please send me an email to let me know of your interest. My email address is Jason.Colman@port.ac.uk.

Before you can participate, you must give your consent. Please can you print off and sign the consent form below. (If you are unable to sign, I am allowed to accept verbal consent in front of a witness.)

Once I have your consent, I will email you a link to download the special video game, with instructions.

Any questions ?

If you have any questions about this research project, now or in the future, please feel free to contact me or my academic supervisors:

Jason Colman
Jason.Colman@port.ac.uk
Phone: 07902 454279

Dr Louise Turner
Louise.Turner@port.ac.uk

Dr Paul Gnanayutham
Paul.Gnanayutham@port.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM

Multi-player online video games for cognitive rehabilitation

Researcher: Jason Colman

Jason.Colman@port.ac.uk

Phone: 07902 454279

Please initial each numbered item if content

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the attached information sheet for the above study. I confirm that I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and that these have been answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.
3. I agree to take part in this study.

Name of participant:

Your email address (please write clearly!):

Date:

Signature:

Now please send this form to:

**Jason Colman (PhD Student)
School of Computing
Buckingham Building
Lion Terrace, Portsmouth, PO1 3HE**