

The Risks and Benefits of Social Media, and its Place in Higher Education: A Study

Consent form

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You have been invited to participate in a research & development study to help find out if a student social media platform could benefit the academic and social aspects of university life. The purpose of the study is to find out if a student only social media platform would benefit social life at university, encourage collaboration by connecting students and assist students learning with built in features in a more effective way than the what is currently offered.

The study is conducted in two parts:

Platform testing: One set of participants will be testing the Falmouth University student portal, while the other set of participants will be testing the prototype social media platform. Both groups will be given the same set of tasks to complete. Once the tasks are fulfilled you are welcome to move on to the next part of the study, though you are encouraged to explore and use as many features as possible that are available on whichever platform you are testing.

Questionnaire/survey: In this phase you will be given two short questionnaires to complete. One is a Likert scale survey (multiple choice, rate 1 -7) to gauge your interaction with the platform, while the other is more qualitative and will ask you to complete questions with some text, describing your experience and thoughts.

The tasks will involve:

- Find course related content.
- Look for a space where you might find conversations or community chat regarding your modules or course.
- Posting into forum relating to a module or course that you are studying.
- Finding your account settings.

Answering questions based on your experience of completing these tasks will give a valuable insight into how much the platform benefits you as a student, and your university life.

Your participation in its entirety is not expected to take longer than 20-30 minutes.

The potential risks from this study include:

- Privacy concerns regarding personal information and security.
- Strain on eyes and neck due to prolonged screen use.
- Repetitive Stress injuries due to prolonged mouse and keyboard use.

Your name does not have to be your real name it will be used only for referencing should you wish to withdraw. It will no identifying or personal data used as part of the study.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time before beginning the questionnaire. Should you complete the questionnaire you will have a 3-week grace period from which you may contact the study conductor via email to withdraw your information. After this period your data will be included in the study regardless.

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you have read the information provided, understand the procedures and requirements involved in the study, and voluntarily agree to participate in the study.