

Version 1 05/02/2021

**Participant Information Sheet**

 **The Effect of Social Media on Academic Performance, Mental Health and Sleep: A Feasibility Randomized Control Study: SMAMS Study**

*Before you decide if you would like to participate in this study, it is important to understand why the research is being done and what it involves. Please read this leaflet carefully. Discuss it with your friends, family members, peers or doctor if you want to.*

**Part 1 – An Introduction**

The average person spends 2 hours and 24 minutes per day on social media in 2020. Social media is also being used in increasingly younger age groups. Previous studies have suggested that regular social media use may impact both psychological and physiological health. We do not yet know the causes of the impact of regular social media use well or how it affects our mind, body and our daily activities.

**Why have I been asked to take part?**

All university students aged 18+ who are active users of social media (at least daily) will be asked to take part in the study.

**Do I have to take part?**

No! It is completely up to you. You should not feel pressured to take part in the study in any way if you don’t want to, and you can withdraw consent from being a part of the study at any stage in the process.

If you do decide that you would like to be part of the study:

* You will be asked to sign a form giving your agreement to take part
* You will be given a copy of this information sheet to keep

**You are still free to stop taking part at any time during the research and you do not have to give your reasons for doing so. In addition, you could request any collected data from the onset of the study to be deleted and destroyed before the data are published.**

**What will happen to me if I take part?**

You may be asked to either deactivate your social media platforms or keep using social media for a period of 1 month. All those taking part will be asked to send weekly screenshots of their screen-time activity and number of daily steps, and will be asked to monitor their sleep duration and sleep quality via a mobile application. Participants will be asked to complete 2 online surveys (baseline and follow-up) which will include questions about their grades, mood, self-esteem, wellbeing and sleep habits (duration and sleep quality via an app). All data gathered will be anonymized and stored safely. This data will only be seen by those involved in the study

**What are the advantages of taking part in the study?**

We hope that this study may help shed some light on the way social media impacts university students.

\*Lea Yerevanian who is in charge of this research will be responsible for all of the information when the study is over. She can be contacted on 07400949012.

\*No one apart from the people who do this study (researchers) will be able to see this information. The researchers will try to publish the findings in a scientific/medical journal and no information that identifies you will be published. So, no one will be able to know the names of those people who took part.

\*Taking part in the study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw consent if you change your mind during the study

**Thank you for reading so far – if you are still interested, please go to Part 2:**

**What if there is a problem?**

There is no reason to believe that the study can create any adverse or negative effects which may put you in danger or have any (bad) effects linked with it. However, it is possible that if asked to deactivate your social media account, you may feel irritated/distressed or feel the urge to get back onto one or more of the platforms you have deactivated. If this occurs, there is no problem whatsoever. You are free to reactivate any of your accounts at any point during the study. If this occurs, just kindly email the researcher (lea.yerevanian@kcl.ac.uk) and let her know.

 **Will anyone else know I’m a part of this study?**

No. If you agree to take part of this study, no one other than the team of researchers will know you are a part of the study.

**What is this research being done for?**

This research is being done to establish feasibility of undertaking RCTs in the field of social media and mental health

**Who has reviewed the study?**

King’s College London research ethics committee reviewed and approved this study.

Do you have any other questions? If so, please contact Lea Yerevanian via email or telephone (lea.yerevanian@kcl.ac.uk) or +447862476208.