



Participant Information Sheet

Researchers

This study is being carried out by Chief Investigators Dr Sarah Walker and several research assistants.

Project Title

Student transition to employment support

Outline of the project

Description and Methodology: This is a semi-structured individual interview that aims to explore, understand and examine the experiences of individuals from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds who completed a degree at ANU. It is done through interviews to ensure the experience is directed by you, the interviewee, to allow you the space to tell your personal experience. We're doing this to learn more about the transition to employment, and career development and employability experiences of students. The interview is usually audio-recorded to allow the researcher to concentrate on the discussion. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, it will still go ahead, and notes will be taken instead.

Participants: We are inviting former ANU students who are from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds to participate. Students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education includes, but is not limited to, those who are from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, from rural and remote locations, those with a disability and are in the first-generation of their family to attend university. Information coming out of the interviews will be shared in a way to reduce the potential that individuals will be identifiable, this is to allow you to openly share your experience without others being aware that the experience is yours. It should be noted there is always the potential that individuals can be identified from the way they speak and the stories they tell. Steps will be taken to reduce the potential for you to be individually identified but it is always a risk with interviews.

Use of data and Feedback: Zoom's inbuilt transcription service utilising advanced speech recognition software will be employed to translate the audio/video recording into a transcript at which time the interviewer will remove identifying items and then utilise the transcripts with the research team for analysis. Your responses will be used, de-identified, as part of an internal report to evaluate the University's transition to employment and career development programs and make recommendations for improvements, and may be published as traditional research as part of journal articles, chapters and presented at professional conferences. All results will be presented to minimise the likelihood of individual participant identification. Participants will be able to view the final written report with the results of the study upon completion here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/f627gbctzurhxrfp91ts1/AMzXtG97qYtCO99ehMg14zl?rlkey=utoapr97xief4ibexd6gkk8ze&st=ln3x739g&dl=0>

Participant Involvement

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may decline to take part or withdraw from the research without providing an explanation at any time until the findings are prepared for publication. You can refuse to answer questions in the interview. Your decision not to participate or to withdraw will not affect your relationship with The Australian National University. If you decided to leave the research study, no additional information will be collected from you. If you choose to withdraw completely the recording and transcription will be deleted.

What does participation involve: If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in an interview where you will be asked questions about your transition from ANU, what you may be struggling with most finding and adjusting to work, what challenges and barriers you might be facing during your time, and what has been most supportive and helpful after your studies were finished. You will also be asked some demographic questions such as what you studied, what you currently do for work and whether you've had to move around. As this is a semi-structured interview other topics can be discussed if you choose to raise them. The interviewer may reach out to clarify something you have said with further questions once we begin reviewing the transcripts. As with the rest of this project, your participation in additional questions or conversations is voluntary and you can, without negative consequences, decline to answer additional questions or engage in a further conversation without providing an explanation.

Location and duration: The interviews will be conducted online via Zoom and is estimated to take **1 hour** to complete. The interviewer may request additional conversations in order to clarify something you have said or if something arises during the analysis.

Remuneration: Eligible participants in an interview will receive branded University merchandise to thank you for your participation. The merchandise will be sent to your nominated address within 7 days of your interview being conducted.

Risks: Due to the sensitive nature of some of the questions in this study (i.e. reflecting on potentially difficult situations you have been in in relation to your time at or after graduating from ANU which could include experiences of homelessness, financial hardship, poor mental or physical health and family pressure, or experiences of social harm caused by the structure of society and its impact on you), there is a risk that you may feel psychological distress when reflecting on certain experiences. The interview has been designed so you can determine what information and experience you share to allow you to only raise issues and experiences you are comfortable discussing but distress is still possible. If the questions do raise feelings of discomfort or distress, we can pause or stop the interview at any time and you are also able to withdraw your participation.

There are also support services available through the community (see below), and the interviewer can discuss these with you during or after the interview if you wish. All interviewers have experience in supporting students to understand and access various services.

Interviews carry a risk of individual identification due to the way individuals speak and the stories they tell. We will take a number of precautions in an attempt to prevent this from occurring including utilising a pseudonym that will only be known to the interviewers on the research team, and amending key specifics within the experience such as changing the name of your degree, where you work, etc. but it should be noted that there is still the potential you can be recognised by someone who reads a resulting publication and we must advise you to avoid defaming anyone or revealing information that you may later regret or that could put you at risk.

Benefits: It is unlikely that you will benefit personally from participating in this research, but you will have the opportunity to provide insight we do not yet have regarding the post university experience of ANU students, and how the institution can impact on long-term academic and personal achievement. This insight will help us make changes and improve the experience students have at ANU. An improved student experience increases the likelihood of the overall success at and after university of other students like yourself.

Confidentiality

Interviews are non-anonymous by nature, particularly when conducted via video conference. As such, your data in this study will be confidential, but not anonymous. What this means is that your responses will not be linked to your name, and you will be offered the opportunity to choose a pseudonym at the start of the interview which will be utilised in all reports and papers to “identify” you. All data will remain confidential to the researchers involved in this research project, as far as the law allows. Data, including audio/video recordings, transcriptions and analysis, will be stored securely within ANU OneDrive, with raw data, audio/video recordings and transcriptions with identifying items such as names in a folder that only the interviewers have access to. Transcriptions would be provided to the rest of the research team once identifying items have been removed/modified, i.e. the name of residential halls changed to a different name. You will have the opportunity to review your de-identified transcript before it is provided to the research team if you wish.

Privacy Notice

In collecting your personal information within this research, the ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy is available at <https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP 010007>. It contains information about how a person can:

- Access or seek correction to their personal information;
- Complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint

Data Storage

Where: The data will be held within ANU OneDrive accessible only by the researchers. Data will continue to be stored according to ANU privacy requirements and will not be linked to participants’ identifying data.

How long: The research team will store data collected from you for this research project for a minimum of five years after the date of any publication of research results.

Handling of data following the required storage period: After your data is no longer needed for the current research, it will be retained in a de-identified format in ANU OneDrive. In the consent form, you will be asked whether it is okay for your de-identified data to be used by the research team or shared with other researchers for the purposes of research that extends on, is closely related to, or is in the same general field as the current research.

Queries and Concerns

Contact details for more information: If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you can contact the Chief Investigator Sarah Walker sarah.swenson@anu.edu.au

Contact details if in distress:

For immediate mental health support (available 24 hours, 7 days a week)

- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

If you are in an emergency situation or need immediate assistance, call emergency services on:

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Ethics Committee Clearance

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 2026/0214).

If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee
The Australian National University
Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427
Email: Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au