<u>Information sheet</u>

**Research Project:** Access and Higher Education: Inclusive Online Learning for Deaf Students
**Project Team Members**: Prof. Suzanne Graham; Professor Richard Mitchell; Dr Yota Dimitriadi; Ms. Gail Hickman; Mr Ilan Dweck; Ms Helen Lansdown; Ms Debbie Flory

**Dear Student**

### Research Project: DEAL – Digital Education Accessible Learning

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study we are undertaking.

**What is the study?**

Our study is funded by the Leverhulme Trust. It aims to investigate the accessibility of online learning materials for university students who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). It hopes to make recommendations as to how we can make online learning materials more accessible to a range of students, not only those who are DHH but also to others, including those who have dyslexia or speak English as an Additional or Second Language.

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

Invitations to participate have been sent to all undergraduate students across a range of UK universities. You have responded positively to that invitation and belong to one of the three student groups our research aims to support.

**Do I have to take part?**

It is entirely up to you whether you give your consent to participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any repercussions to you, by contacting the Project Administrator, Ms Debbie Flory, email: d.flory@reading.ac.uk

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

**Baseline tasks (approx. 30 minutes)**

You will be sent a link to short online tasks which we will ask you to complete prior to the main data collection. These tasks will assess your English language reading comprehension level, as well as your prior knowledge of various topics addressed in the study.

Following these tasks, you will be invited to participate in an online meeting in Microsoft Teams with one of the research team members listed at the top of this letter, at a mutually convenient date/time. You will need access to a laptop or PC, with internet connection and web camera, to take part. A BSL interpreter will be available if needed.

**Online meeting (1.5 hours)**

You will be asked to view two sets of online learning materials. Each set of materials will be followed by a short test and a brief, simple and accessible questionnaire about the presentation and design of the online learning material. The researcher will also ask you a few questions orally about the materials. With your consent, this last part of the meeting will be video recorded using the recording function within Microsoft Teams, and then transcribed for analysis.

**What are the risks and benefits of taking part?**

The information given by participants in the study will remain confidential and will only be seen by the research team listed at the start of this letter. Neither you nor the University will be identifiable in any published report resulting from the study. Information about individuals will not be shared with the University.

**Please note that some of the materials deal with issues relating to mental well-being.**

Participants in similar studies have found it interesting to take part. We anticipate that the findings of the study will be useful for those developing and using online learning materials.

**A payment of £10 will be paid after the online meeting to cover out of pocket expenses involved in participation, including internet and electricity use.**

In addition, you will be entered once into a prize draw for £25. A draw will be made every two months (January, March, May, July). Furthermore, for every person you recommend the study to, who also enrols for participation, you will be entered again into the prize draw.

All payments will be made to the bank account details given on your completed Human Study Volunteer Form.

**What will happen to the data?**

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this study or in any subsequent publications. We will transcribe the recordings from the meetings and anonymise them before analysing the results. Participants will be assigned a number and will be referred to by that number on all tasks and recordings. Research records will be stored securely on a password-protected computer and only the research team will have access to the records. In line with the University's policy on the management of research data, anonymised data gathered in this research may be preserved and made publicly available for others to consult and re-use. All anonymised research data will be retained indefinitely whereas any identifying information such as consent forms will be disposed of securely after the research findings have been written up. The results of the study will be presented at national and international conferences, and in written reports and articles. We can send you electronic copies of these publications if you wish.

**Who has reviewed the study?**

This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

**What happens if I change my mind?**

You can change your mind at any time without any repercussions. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, we will discard your data.

**What happens if something goes wrong?**

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Professor Suzanne Graham, University of Reading; Tel: 0118 378 2684, email: s.j.graham@reading.ac.uk

**Where can I get more information?**

For more information, please contact Ms Debbie Flory, email: d.flory@reading.ac.uk

If you are happy to take part, please complete and return to Debbie Flory the attached consent form.

Yours faithfully

DATA PROTECTION FOR INFORMATION SHEETS

The organisation responsible for protection of your personal information is the University of Reading (the Data Controller). Queries regarding data protection and your rights should be directed to the University Data Protection Officer at imps@reading.ac.uk, or in writing to: Information Management & Policy Services, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P O Box 217, Reading, RG6 6AH.

The University of Reading collects, analyses, uses, shares and retains personal data for the purposes of research in the public interest. Under data protection law we are required to inform you that this use of the personal data we may hold about you is on the lawful basis of being a public task in the public interest and where it is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes. If you withdraw from a research study, which processes your personal data, dependant on the stage of withdrawal, we may still rely on this lawful basis to continue using your data if your withdrawal would be of significant detriment to the research study aims. We will always have in place appropriate safeguards to protect your personal data.

If we have included any additional requests for use of your data, for example adding you to a registration list for the purposes of inviting you to take part in future studies, this will be done only with your consent where you have provided it to us and should you wish to be removed from the register at a later date, you should contact Professor Suzanne Graham – s.j.graham@reading.ac.uk

You have certain rights under data protection law which are:
- Withdraw your consent, for example if you opted in to be added to a participant register
- Access your personal data  or ask for a copy
- Rectify inaccuracies in personal data that we hold about you
- Be forgotten, that is your details to be removed from systems that we use to process your personal data
- Restrict uses of your data
- Object to uses of your data, for example retention after you have withdrawn from a study

Some restrictions apply to the above rights where data is collected and used for research purposes.
You can find out more about your rights on the website of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) at https://ico.org.uk
You also have a right to complain the ICO if you are unhappy with how your data has been handled. Please contact the University Data Protection Officer in the first instance.