

Teacher Participant Information Statement

Research study: Investigation of Australian secondary mathematics teachers' implementation of challenging tasks

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Participants should download a copy of this Participant Information Statement for their own reference if they want to.

1. What is this study about?

We are conducting a research study about Australian secondary mathematics teachers' implementation of challenging tasks. We aim to investigate secondary mathematics teachers' conceptions of and orientations towards challenging tasks, and enablers and barriers to their implementation. Participation is voluntary.

2. Who is running this study?

The study is being conducted by Dr Ben Zunica (Responsible Researcher - Lecturer in Secondary Mathematics Education), Dr Bronwyn Reid O'Connor (Senior Lecturer in Secondary Mathematics Education) and Michelle Cheung (PhD candidate) at The University of Sydney.

3. Who can take part in the study?

We are seeking secondary mathematics teachers who have taught or are teaching mathematics in Australian high schools.

4. What will the study involve for me?

If you decide to take part in this study, you can participate in one, two OR all three stages of data collection.

- Stage 1 - Online questionnaire: You will answer questions about your conceptions of and orientations towards challenging tasks (10 mins)
- OPTIONAL: Stage 2 - Online semi-structured interviews via Zoom: You will be asked follow-up questions from the online questionnaire and explain how your example of a challenging task is a challenging task. In the case that you don't have a challenging task, you will review a prepared example of a challenging task (30 mins)
- OPTIONAL: Stage 3 - Lesson observations at case study high schools: You will invite the research team to observe the implementation of challenging tasks in your classroom at your school and take written field notes (2-3 school visits). Semi-structured interviews will also be conducted with you during the school visits.

The estimated time commitment for each stage is mentioned above. With consent, video recordings will be made of Stage 2 for the researcher's personal reference. With consent, audio recordings will be made of Stage 3 for the researcher's personal reference. Any recordings made will be deleted after interview transcription is complete. Participants will have the opportunity to review their interview transcripts prior to publication.

5. Can I withdraw once I have started?

Participating in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part.

Your decision to withdraw will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at The University of Sydney.

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind, you can withdraw by emailing the Chief Investigator, Dr Ben Zunica, at any point in the online semi-structured interviews (Stage 2) or lesson observations at case study high schools (Stage 3). If you choose to withdraw, we will stop collecting information from you. If you don't want the information already collected to be in the study results, please tell us at the time you withdraw and your data and/or information for Stages 2 and 3 will be deleted.

By submitting your questionnaire, you are consenting to take part in the study. You can withdraw any time before submitting by exiting the questionnaire. Once your anonymous questionnaire response is submitted, it will be given a code, and we won't be able to tell which one is yours. This means you cannot withdraw after submitting the questionnaire. If you decide to withdraw, we will stop collecting information from you. Any information that we have already collected will be kept in our study records and may be included in the study results.

If you opt in to participating in the online semi-structured interview (Stage 2), you will be asked to provide your full name and personal email address for the researcher to contact you to arrange the interview. Your questionnaire responses will remain private and confidential within the research team.

If you take part in an interview you may refuse to respond to any questions that you do not wish to answer.

6. Are there any risks or costs?

Apart from sharing your time with us, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

7. Are there any benefits?

You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in the study but you may enhance your teaching practice. The wider mathematics education community may also benefit from the list of recommendations produced at the end of the study.

8. What will happen to information that is collected?

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting information from or about you for the purposes of this study.

Your information will be securely stored, and results may be published. You will not be identifiable in these publications.

Any identifiable information you provide us will be stored securely and will only be disclosed with your permission unless we are required by law to release information.

We may use software tools such as Zoom AI to transcribe interviews. This will involve sharing your information with Zoom and/or Microsoft. We will not share this information with anyone else without your consent unless we are required to do so by law. Zoom is owned by Zoom Video Communications Inc. and is located in San Jose, California, US. Microsoft Stream is owned by Microsoft and located in Redmond, Washington, US.

We will store this information and dispose of it securely following the University's Recordkeeping Policy. For more details about how your information will be handled please see the University's [**privacy webpage**](#).

9. Will I be told the results of the study?

You have the right to hear the results of this study. You can indicate interest in receiving feedback about the study by checking a tick box for the relevant question in the online questionnaire. This feedback will be provided as a plain language summary.

10. What if I would like more information?

For any questions or further discussions, please contact

- Dr Ben Zunica (Responsible Researcher): benjamin.zunica@sydney.edu.au
- Dr Bronwyn Reid O'Connor (Researcher): bronwyn.reidoconnor@sydney.edu.au
- Michelle Cheung (PhD student): mche0016@uni.sydney.edu.au

11. What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of The University of Sydney [ethics identifier: 2025/HE000191] according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.

If you have any concerns about the study procedures or would like to make a complaint to someone not involved in the study, please contact the University's Human Ethics Manager (human.ethics@sydney.edu.au or +61 2 8627 8176).