

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

04 July 2024

Project Title

"Baby, I was born this way" – representation of Rainbow identities in Aotearoa academic dress.

An Invitation

My name is Scott Pilkington (he/they/any) and I'm one of the co-chairs of the Out@AUT staff network. I'm interested in what fashion we wear and why we wear it the way we do, and I have a particular interest in academic dress (the regalia we wear to graduation) and uniforms.

This study examines how Queer people choose to dress at graduation time, why they dress the way they do, and what the implications are. This includes how people choose to be 'out' with friends and at university, with whānau, and in the rest of the world.

Graduates in Aotearoa have more flexibility and opportunity in their choice of fashion and costume in university graduation ceremonies outside of the prescribed academic dress than in other countries in the world and I want to explore that and share it. I will be talking to 12-15 AUT graduands and recent graduates about their identity and what they plan to (or did) wear to university graduation ceremonies.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to investigate how outside influences determine academic dress choice for Rainbow Communities at graduation ceremonies in Aotearoa. How people choose to dress is a representation of their identity, and being able to comfortably embody that identity is important for wellbeing. This is an area that has not been studied before and this is an opportunity to share insights of Aotearoa's Rainbow Communities and lead to the development of best practice or to facilitate change. The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you would like to take part in the research, please send me an email so we can schedule an interview. You'll have a minimum of two weeks to consider this information sheet. When we meet, you'll be provided with a physical copy of this information sheet and a consent form. A digital copy of the consent form has also been sent to you.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

The research will be an interview, which should take 30-40 minutes. We'll meet in the AUT Rainbow Room or a collocated meeting room or via Zoom. The interview will be a conversation between us and will follow where it goes. I have some guiding questions to point us in the right direction, but none of them are compulsory and we can skip over any topic you don't want to talk about or feel uncomfortable with.

Before the interview starts, I'll provide you with this information sheet and a consent form and give you time to review and complete those. Once complete, we'll begin the interview. I'll record the audio of the interview to allow me to transcribe the interview afterwards so you can review and edit anything you've said. At this point you can also remove or correct anything you wish to take back.

Data from the interviews can be represented through one of four ways: I can refer to you by your participant number (e.g.: "Participant 4 dyed their hair to match their hood colour"), by a substituted name (e.g.: "Alex and Bobby both wore rainbow Chucks"), by your initials (e.g.: "MEB did not change their dress for the ceremony and wore the same t-shirt and jeans they wore to lectures), or by your first name (e.g.: "Bernie chose a silk jacket that had been owned by a grandparent to bring a representation of their culture").

Data will be analysed after the interviews by me. I'll look for themes in the interview transcripts based on similarities and patterns.

If you would like, you can send me a photo of clothes, outfit, or look, to be included in publications about this research. It may be described and included but without further analysis. You will retain copyright of your image and any intellectual property included in that image.

What are the discomforts and risks and how can these be alleviated?

Talking about Queer identity and being 'out' can be uncomfortable. If anything comes up that you don't want to talk about or makes you uncomfortable, we can skip to something else. Nothing is compulsory.

There is a risk that you may be identifiable from the data, but I will do everything I can to maintain your privacy and confidentiality.

AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email counselling@aut.ac.nz or call 921 9292.
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health>

What are the benefits?

The research aims to generate insights that will directly benefit participants and their community by addressing issues relevant to the Rainbow Communities. This could include recommendations for improving support services or highlighting areas for policy change. I will present my findings to AUT's Rainbow Inclusion Manager to help ensure that AUT provides the best support for Rainbow students. Including photos in academic research provides visual evidence of self-expression and cultural identity through clothing. It allows me to illustrate and demonstrate how fashion and costume communicate identity, value, and social meanings better than words alone.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your contact details and name will be kept separate from your responses, and you will only be referred to by the details you agree to.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The interview will take approximately 30-40 minutes of your time, plus about 15 minutes for reviewing the information sheet and consent form.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes. A poster summarising the research will be placed in the AUT Rainbow Room and a summary and any resulting publications can be emailed to you.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to me (contact details below). You can also let AUT Rainbow Inclusion Manager Jessica Lewthwaite know.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Scott Pilkington (he/they/any)

scott.pilkington@aut.ac.nz

WU building Level 5