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**PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION**

<b>HREC Project Number:</b>	<i>To be advised</i>
<b>Project Title:</b>	An exploration of handwriting and keyboarding skills of boys aged 13-14 years
<b>Chief Investigator:</b>	Associate Professor Courtenay Harris
<b>Co-Investigator:</b>	Associate Professor Annette Joosten
<b>Student researcher:</b>	Jane Milne
<b>Version Number:</b>	4
<b>Version Date:</b>	01/09/2017

**What is the Project About?**

Staff at Scotch College have partnered with Curtin University to explore student's handwriting skills, given the increased use of digital technologies requiring less use of handwriting. This study will also offer the opportunity to explore whether exam provisions are relevant and fair considering that the development of handwriting might have changed over the years. Students will undertake three different handwriting tests with some keyboarding tasks. We will also access an essay sent by teachers that your child has already completed in class to use as a comparison to handwriting tasks completed in timed conditions.

We are hoping that the results of this study will tell us if handwriting speed has changed in 21 years since the currently used measure, the 1996 Handwriting Speed Test, was developed, and how this compares to keyboarding skills. With this information, we will be better informed and in a position to advocate for suitable examination conditions.

**Who is doing the Research?**

The project is being conducted by Jane Milne, a third-year student of the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy and the Honours Program. This study will contribute to her thesis publication and completion of the Honours Program. Jane's supervisors are Associate Professor Courtenay Harris (Chief Investigator) and Associate Professor Annette Joosten (Co-Investigator), senior staff at Curtin University and the Australian Catholic University. The project is funded by Curtin University and there will be no costs to you, nor will your child be paid for participating.

**Why is my child being asked to take part and what will they have to do?**



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We have asked your child to participate as he is currently enrolled in Year 9 or 10 at Scotch College. The school has asked for this research to take place to explore handwriting and computer skills and how this may be relevant when considering students exam considerations. Data collection will take place outside of normal curriculum time. A final date has yet to be decided, but is most likely in fourth term, 2017.

Your child's involvement in this study should take no longer than an hour. He will be required to complete three different tests. Two are handwriting assessments and one is a typing assessment using his own computer. Each is very easy to complete. We will ask students to complete simple tasks such as writing a single sentence as many times as they can in three minutes, or writing a short paragraph on "my life".

### **Are there any benefits to being in the research project?**

There may be no direct benefit to you or your child for participating in this research. However, the results from this study may benefit other students in the future, especially when completing their Year 12 exams. There are strict conditions that students must follow if they are applying for special considerations for exams. These rules may no longer be considered relevant if it is found that handwriting speed of young people is slowing. We hope the results of this research will allow us to begin a review of the conditions that students must follow when applying for exam considerations.

### **Are there any risks, side-effects, discomforts or inconveniences from being in the research project?**

There are no perceived risks to your child by engaging in this research. Some tasks are timed which may result in your child feeling some low pressure to complete the tests within time. If any students feel anxious during completion of the assessments then they can withdraw from the study. The assessments should take no longer than one hour and will occur outside of curriculum time.

### **Who will have access to my child's information?**

This study is confidential. Educators will have access to information from the study for educational purposes. Researchers will access data when it has been de-identified. De-identified data will be stored securely in a locked cupboard in the Chief Investigator's office at Curtin University for 25 years and then destroyed as per ethics protocols.

### **Will you tell me the results of the research?**

We will provide a report of the results to the school principal at the end of the project (November 2018). This will be based on all the information we collect and review as part of the research. Academic support staff may let you know of your child's assessment results for education purposes.

### **Does my child have to take part in the research project?**

Taking part in a research project is voluntary. It is your choice and your child's choice to take part or not. You do not have to agree for them to participate if you do not want to. Please let us know if you want him to stop so we can make sure you are aware of anything that needs to be done so he can withdraw safely. If you or your child choose not to take part, it will not affect your relationship with the University, staff or colleagues. If your child withdraws from the study, we will use any



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information collected unless you tell us not to. If you do not want your child's assessment results to be used, we will destroy them.

### **What happens next and who can I contact about the research?**

The Scotch College Headmaster has consented for students to participate in this project. All students will have the study explained to them and will be given the opportunity to decide if they want to participate or not. If you do not want your child to participate or have any questions please contact the Chief Investigator Associate Professor Courtenay Harris at [c.harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:c.harris@curtin.edu.au), or the Co-Investigator [annette.joosten@acu.edu.au](mailto:annette.joosten@acu.edu.au).

*Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) will approve this study. Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular, any matters concerning the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or you wish to make a confidential complaint, you may contact the Ethics Officer on (08) 9266 9223 or the Manager, Research Integrity on (08) 9266 7093 or email [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au).*