

## Introduction

### Who am I? A comparison of digital and offline identities

We are interested in digital identity, and if (and how) it might differ from traditional forms of identity. By digital identity we mean "who you are, and how you are represented, in online settings".

In the present study, all you have to do is write down 20 unique responses to the question "*who am I?*". We will ask you to complete this task twice: once thinking about your identity as you usually would, and another time thinking about your digital identity.

Don't worry about if you end up with some or even all of the same answers for both sets of questions - that's absolutely fine. You will need to complete all 20 'I am...' statements for both sets of questions to finish the survey.

To continue to the briefing information and participant consent form, press the arrow to the right.

## Briefing information

This information sheet forms part of the process of informed consent. It should give you a basic idea of what the research is about, and what your participation would involve. Please read this information sheet carefully. If you have any questions, please contact one of three researchers named below.

### ***Why have I been invited to take part in this research?***

You have been invited to take part in this research as someone who uses the internet. There are no exclusion criteria preventing you from taking part in this study.

### ***Do I have to take part?***

No. It is completely up to you whether or not you decide to participate in this study. You can withdraw from this study at any point before submitting your responses by simply closing the survey.

After you have clicked 'submit response', you can withdraw your survey data for up to seven days by emailing the lead researcher at [jj518@bath.ac.uk](mailto:jj518@bath.ac.uk) with your Prolific ID.

After seven days the data will be anonymised, meaning it will not be possible to identify your responses to remove them. Any unfinished surveys will be deleted after seven days of inactivity.

### ***What are the possible benefits of taking part?***

By participating in this research, you will help to improve our understanding of (digital) identity. You will also be paid for your time.

### ***What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?***

There are no known disadvantages or risks to participating in this research. If you feel uncomfortable at any point during the survey, you can withdraw by simply closing the survey.

### ***Who will have access to the information that I provide?***

The only individuals that will have access to the information you provide are the researchers. All information collected will be anonymous and stored securely.

### ***What will happen to the data collected?***

All data collected during the project will be anonymous and kept in an encrypted password protected file on the University of Bath's secure server (X: drive). No personal data will be collected. The data will be stored in accordance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act (2018). Retained data will be kept for a minimum of 10 years.

For more information about how your data will be kept, please see the University of Bath's privacy notice: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/university-of-bath-privacy-notice-for-research-participants/>

### ***Will my data be shared?***

No identifying information will be collected or disclosed in any presentation or publication of the research. If you would like a summary of the results once the project is finished, contact any of the three researchers. They will be happy to share it with you.

### ***What happens if there is a problem?***

If any part of the research project causes you concern, contact any of the three researchers. They will do their best to answer any questions. If the researchers are unable to resolve your concern, or if you wish to make a complaint regarding the project, then please contact the Chair of the Psychology Research Ethics Committee:

Dr Chris Ashwin  
Email: psychology-ethics@bath.ac.uk  
Tel: +44 (0) 1225 383502

The Psychology Research Ethics Committee reviewed this project [reference number: 23 040].

**Thank you for your interest in this study. For more information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.**

Jessica Johansen  
Email: jj518@bath.ac.uk

Prof. Adam Joinson  
Email: aj266@bath.ac.uk

Prof. Catherine Hamilton-Giachritsis  
Email: chg26@bath.ac.uk

**If you are happy to participate in the study, please continue to the consent form by pressing the arrow to the right.**

**Consent form**

Please answer the following yes/no questions. Have you...

	Yes	No
read the information about this study?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
had an opportunity to ask questions that you have about this study?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
received satisfactory answers to any questions that you asked? (If you haven't asked any questions, select 'yes'.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
received enough information about the study for you to make a decision about participating in it?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you understand that...

	Yes	No
you do not need to give a reason for withdrawing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
you do not need to give a reason for withdrawing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
once your survey answers have been submitted, you will only have seven days to withdraw them?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
your data will be kept in accordance with Data Protection Regulation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Do you fully and freely consent to participate in this study?**

Selecting yes and proceeding to the next page to start the survey will be taken as evidence of consent to participate.

- Yes
- No

**Demographic information**

Please enter your age (in years) below

What country do you currently live in?

To which gender do you mostly identify?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Please enter your Prolific ID below (this is to ensure that you are paid)

**Default Question Block**

Please write down 20 responses to the question “Who am I?”.

Don’t worry about evaluating the logic or importance of your responses—just write the statements quickly and in whatever order they occur to you. Give yourself no more than five minutes to complete this task.

I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
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I am	<input type="text"/>
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I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>
I am	<input type="text"/>

**Digital Identity**

Please write down 20 responses to the question “Who am I?” when thinking about your **digital identity**. By digital identity we mean "who you are, and how you are represented, in online settings".

Don’t worry about evaluating the logic or importance of your responses—just write the statements quickly and in whatever order they occur to you. Give yourself no more than five minutes to complete this task.

I am

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I am

**Debrief**

**Thank you for participating in the study.**

Your contribution is much appreciated and will contribute to greater understanding of what it means to have a digital identity.

**To record your submission on Prolific...**

Either visit this link: <https://app.prolific.co/submissions/complete?cc=CC73FG19> or enter this completion code: CC73FG19 or click the next button at the bottom of this page...

**What was the point of this study?**

This research is interested in digital identity, and if (and if so, how) it differs from traditional forms of identity. As a standardised measure of self-concept, The Twenty Questions Test (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954) should provide a valuable insight into whether our digital identities are distinctly different from their offline identities. Specifically, this study allows us to compare the “I am...” statements that people make when think about their identities generally, versus the “I am...” Statements that people make when thinking about their digital identities.

**What will happen to the data?**

First, data collected in this study will be aggregated and analysed by the researchers (Jess, Adam, and Catherine). The results of this analysis will be reported in a research paper, contributing to my (Jess’) PhD thesis. Neither the researchers nor anyone reading the published results will be able to identify you as a participant. If you would like to receive a copy of any published results, please contact the researchers and they will send them to you.

Then, the data will be securely stored on the University of Bath’s X: drive in an encrypted folder for a minimum of 10 years. This is in accordance with the University of Bath’s rules on human data management; the Data Protection Act (2018); and the General Data Protection Regulation. You can read more about the University of Bath’s Research Data Policy on their website:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/research-data-policy-guidance/#:~:text=Unless%20legal%2C%20regulatory%2C%20or%20funder,which%20retention%20will%20be%20revie>

**What if I need further support?**

If you feel you need any support as the result of the study, then please feel free to contact the researchers who will do their best to guide you to the appropriate help:

Jessica Johansen

Email: [jj518@bath.ac.uk](mailto:jj518@bath.ac.uk)

Prof. Adam Joinson  
Email: [aj266@bath.ac.uk](mailto:aj266@bath.ac.uk)

Prof. Catherine Hamilton-Giachritsis  
Email: [chg26@bath.ac.uk](mailto:chg26@bath.ac.uk)

If you need urgent help for mental health, you can call the following helplines:

1. Your local NHS urgent mental health Helpline in England
2. Samaritans, on 116 123 or via email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)