The University of Sydney

Candidate Information Sheet

Research Project Title :
Negotiating the Faultlines: A study of PhD development by creating a blogging community of PhD candidates.

This is a study being undertaken at The University of Sydney to investigate the development of PhD candidates through the keeping of weblogs, or blogs. The text of these blogs will be used by the researcher when writing her PhD, the subject of which is: "To what extent can PhD candidates be sustained in their development as researchers through the use of blogging?"

As a participant in this study you would be asked to:
- maintain and regularly update a weblog over a period of up to two years
- regularly read and comment on the blogs created by others in the study (up to 20)

No special IT skills will be required, other than the ability to use a web browser and basic word processing. Full support will be provided by the researcher.

Each participant will own their own weblog, and will be free to write whatever they wish, providing they do not use racist, sexist or abusive language. Participants will also be free to remove any comments that they object to from their weblog, although no commenting will be tolerated if it transgresses university policy or social convention. Anonymous commenting will not be allowed, and repeat offenders may be removed from the study.

The weblogs will be held on a secure server at the University of Sydney. No-one will be able to read them or comment on them unless they are a member of the community that forms this study.

The weblogs will be archived periodically by the researcher for purposes of security.

Participation is voluntary. **Participants will be able to withdraw from the project at any time** and remove their blog postings from the body of data, although the researcher may contact them to negotiate use of any previously archived blog entries and comments.

Data from the study will be reported in the PhD thesis of the researcher and may also be presented in journal articles, conference presentations and professional literature.

If you would like to discuss the project further, or have any problems, please feel free to contact Mary-Helen Ward email mhward@usyd.edu.au

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Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager for Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811.