Participants needed:

Test anxiety and the autistic spectrum: What is students' experience of dealing with exam pressures and how do they regulate test anxiety?

The University of Manchester

Ethics ref: 2026-27041-49576

About this research

This research explores how autistic students experience test anxiety in relation to high-stakes examinations. It seeks to understand students' experiences of exams and the strategies and support that help them manage anxiety.

Who am I?

My name is Zoe Potts and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at The University of Manchester.



Who can take part?

- Autistic students aged 16–18 in post-16 education, or autistic undergraduate students (both within England, Wales or Northern Ireland)
- Those with experience of high-stakes exams (e.g. GCSEs or A-levels, or equivalent)
- Undergraduate students: A-levels (or equivalent) must have been completed within the last 3 years
- Experience of test-related anxiety/worry
- As a thank you for your time, participants will receive a voucher



What is involved?

- An initial rapport building meeting
- A one-to-one semi-structured interview (up to 60 minutes)
- Held face-to-face or online, depending on preference
- Reasonable adjustments available



Why take part?

- Improve understanding of test anxiety in autistic students
- Inform future educational support and practice
- Ensure autistic voices are central to research



How to take part



- If you are interested in taking part, you can contact the researcher directly by email to find out more: zoe.potts@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
- If you are a post-16 student, you can also tell a member of staff in your setting that you are interested, and they can contact the researcher on your behalf if you prefer
- You will receive full information about the study before deciding whether to take part, and participation is completely voluntary