

Aspirations through time:

The Year 10 transition planning experience of Queensland students on the autism spectrum

QUT Ethics Approval Number 190000836

Research team

Principal Researcher:	Mrs Lara Maia-Pike	PhD candidate
Associate Researchers:	Professor Linda Graham	Principal Supervisor
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Why is the study being conducted?

This research project is being undertaken as part of a PhD for Lara Maia-Pike.

Transition planning in secondary school involves preparing young people to live in the adult world through the development of post-school goals and engagement in activities that offer students the skills to successfully participate and navigate adult settings.

In Queensland, state schools are required to complete the Senior Education and Training (SET) Plan for each student in Year 10. Non-state schools often have a similar transition planning process but may name this process differently. For the purpose of this document, transition planning in both state and non-state schools are referred to as SET planning.

The purpose of this study is to learn about the transition planning experiences of students on the autism spectrum who attend regular schools in Queensland. Also, the study will investigate how these experiences in the senior years of schooling may influence students' aspirations for the future.

You are invited to participate in this research project because you are a parent or caregiver of a child on the autism spectrum who is starting Year 10 in 2021 and will be undertaking the SET plan process in their school.

What does participation involve?

We are seeking the participation of six (6) students on the autism spectrum (including Asperger's Syndrome) and their parents/caregivers.

To be included in this study, students must be starting Year 10 in 2021 in a mainstream school in Queensland. Your child must also not have an intellectual disability or be a student in a special school. We will also be seeking a staff member in your child's school who is involved in your child's transition planning to participate in this study. Advice about a relevant staff member and permission to approach will be sought from students and parent/caregivers prior to any contact with the school or relevant departmental authority.

Student participation will involve:

1. Students will be asked to take part in two (2) activity-oriented interviews in Year 10 (before and after SET plans), then two (2) follow-up activity-oriented interviews as they progress through Year 11 and Year 12 (4 interviews in total). The activity will involve the creation of a "Map of Aspirations" document. Similar to a mind map, this document will help us to visually map the student's ideas and experiences. Students will be able to choose to complete this activity together with the principal researcher (either in person or via Zoom) or by themselves at their own time. There will be also options for completing this activity in print form or using an electronic web-based mind mapping application. These options will be discussed with the student throughout the project and they will be able to change their mind on how they complete the activity at any time.
2. Completion of a short online questionnaire (4 or 5 questions), that will be sent to students chosen email address once every school term for the duration of the study, or until the student chooses to remain a participant in the study. The online questionnaire will contain open-ended questions and will focus on career planning and experiences at school.

Parent/caregiver participation will involve:

Two (2) audio recorded interviews that will take approximately one hour (either in person or via Zoom). One interview will be scheduled before the student begins the SET plan (term 1 or 2, 2021) while the second interview will be scheduled after the completion of the SET plan (term 3 or 4, 2021).

Questions will include:

- Have you had discussions about what your child might do after Year 12?
- How would you describe your child's experiences at school?
- How would you describe your relationship with your child's school?
- What types of information have you received about your child's SET planning?

Your participation and consent to your child's participation in this research project is entirely voluntary.

If you agree to participate as well as your child, you and your child do not have to complete any question(s) you are uncomfortable answering. Your decision to participate or not participate will in no way impact upon your current or future relationship with QUT or your child's school. If you do agree to participate and consent to your child's participation, please note that you and your child can withdraw from the research project anytime without comment or penalty. Please note that if your child decides to withdraw, you and the staff member in their school will no longer be able to participate in the study.

Interviews will be audio recorded. If the interview is completed via Zoom only the audio (no video) will be recorded. This will help the researcher review and analyse the data. You will have the opportunity to review the transcripts for your interview and consider if there is anything you would like to change or remove. The interview will take place at a mutually convenient location.

What are the possible benefits for me if I take part?

You may benefit from the opportunity to share your experiences. Results from this research may also be used to inform guidelines and policy on transition planning that may benefit other students on the autism spectrum, their families and are likely to contribute to the whole of the community.

What are the possible risks for me if I take part?

There are some risks associated with your participation in this research project. These may include inconvenience, discomfort and apprehension, which refers to the experience of being interviewed may feel unfamiliar and uncomfortable and/or if you choose to discuss events that have been personally distressing.

To reduce discomfort, you and your child can withdraw consent at any time before an interview session, choose to have a break during the interview or even leave the interview without comment or penalty. To reduce apprehension, both you and your child will have the opportunity to view the interview questions and discuss any concerns that you or he/she may have before attending the interview. You and your child are not required to reveal distressing events and can choose what information to provide. Interviews will be informal conversations focused on the student's educational experiences career planning and aspirations, and there will not be any expectations regarding questions that must be answered.

QUT provides limited free psychology, family therapy or counselling services (face-to-face only) for research participants of QUT research projects who may experience discomfort or distress as a result of their participation in the research. Should you wish to access this service please call the Clinic Receptionist on **07 3138 0999** (Monday–Friday only 9am–5pm), QUT Psychology and Counselling Clinic, 44 Musk Avenue, Kelvin Grove, and indicate that you are a research participant.

Alternatively, Lifeline provides access to online, phone or face-to-face support, call **13 11 14** for 24-hour telephone crisis support.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

All comments and response will be treated confidentially unless required by law, that is, where reasonably necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to life, health, safety or welfare. The names of individual persons are not required in any of the responses. Data will be anonymised using pseudonyms and care will be taken to remove any identifiable markers that could possibly identify you, your child or their school in all publications arising from this research.

This project involves an audio recording. The audio recording will allow the researcher to review and transcribe verbatim the interview data.

Please note:

- You/your child will be free to skip any interview questions you/they do not wish to answer.
- You/your child will have the opportunity to verify your/their comments and responses before they are included in the research.
- All audio recordings will be transcribed by Lara Maia-Pike and may be reviewed only by the research team for the purpose of coding.
- The recording will not be used for any other purpose.
- The recording will be destroyed 5 years after the last publication.
- Only the named researchers will have access to the recording.
- Analysis of the data will be performed by the research team.
- You/your child can cease participation at any time. However, if you or your child decide to withdraw after data has been de-identified and verified, the anonymised data will continue to be analysed and used.

Any data collected as part of this project will be stored securely as per QUT's Management of research data policy. That is, raw physical data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet within a staffed secured area. Electronic data will be stored on the QUT server, behind a network firewall, accessible only with password protected credentials, held only by the research team.

How do I give my consent to participate?

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to your participation and agreement to your child's participation in the study.

Once you have signed the form, please either return it by email to l.maiapike@hdr.qut.edu.au or by using the reply-paid envelope (attached).

At the time of consent, we will ask you to advise if your child has any comorbidities that may require additional support and discuss what types of adjustments and/or accommodations may be required to support their participation in this study.

What if I have questions about the research project?

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact one of the listed researchers:

Lara Maia-Pike

l.maiapike@hdr.qut.edu.au

07 3138 3738

Linda Graham

linda.graham@qut.edu.au

What if I have a concern or complaint regarding the conduct of the research project?

QUT is committed to research integrity and the ethical conduct of research projects. If you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, particularly in relation to matters concerning policies, information or complaints about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, you may contact the QUT Research Ethics Advisory Team on 07 3138 5123 or email humanethics@qut.edu.au.

Thank you for helping with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.