

Dear Parent/Carer

Improving Gender Balance Programme

St Aidan's has volunteered to take part in the Improving Gender Balance (IGB) programme. The programme aims to improve the gender balance of pupils taking A Level Physics. This letter informs you of our plan to process data and your right to object to that data being processed.

What will the programme look like?

The IGB programme is delivered by the Institute of Physics and the effectiveness of the programme will be researched by a team from UCL University. The programme will recruit 160 secondary schools. We will work with half of these schools and the other half will be the "comparison group" and will not take part. Whether your child's school will be one we work with or part of the comparison group will be decided randomly. Deciding which schools end up in the two groups using random allocation is necessary to help us understand whether the programme is effective. Schools have an equal chance of being in either group.

What does this mean for me as a parent/carer?

Neither you nor your child will be required to provide UCL with any information.

In order to measure the success of the programme, UCL need to measure how many pupils progress to A Level Physics. UCL will access information on subject choice using the Department for Education's National Pupil Database, which records which exams pupils take. In order to look up this information, UCL need to know which pupils took part in the IGB programme. To do this, we are planning to obtain your child's name, date of birth, gender and Unique Pupil Number (issued by the Department for Education) from their school. We will not identify your child or their school in any report arising from the research, and no information that could otherwise identify your child will be made public.

UCL will obtain the data using a secure data transfer method and then store it in a secure system. This data will not be shared with anyone outside the UCL research team and the Office for National Statistics. We will securely destroy the data as soon as the research project is completed (2026).

UCL will process the data under the legitimate interest lawful basis, on the grounds that this research project should benefit society by providing new evidence on improving gender balance in science and the impact on pupils and parents will be negligible. UCL will be both controller and processor of the data and will not process any sensitive (special category) data.

Your right to object to data processing

Although UCL will not identify your child or their school in any report arising from the research, and no information that could otherwise identify your child will be made public, you and your child have the right to ask us not to use their data in this way. We suggest you discuss this with your child before making a decision, to ensure that they are aware how their data will be handled and their rights to object. If you or your child **DO NOT** want UCL to process information about them in order to understand whether the IGB programme helps improve gender balance at A Level physics you need to tell your school. To do this, please complete the form below and return it to the office at your child's school within two weeks. If you do this then no information about your child will be shared with UCL. You can object to the data processing at any time.

For information about all your rights under the General Data Protection regulation, including your right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioners Office, see here: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individual-rights/>. If you have any concerns or questions please contact Sam Sims at UCL Institute of Education either by email at s.sims@ucl.ac.uk or by post at 20 Bedford Way, Bloomsbury, London WC1H 0AL. The Data Protection Officer at UCL is Lee Shailer and you can contact them at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

Objection Form - Improving Gender Balance Trial Data Processing

(If you and your child are happy for the programme to use their data then you DO NOT need to return this form or take any other action.)

I/my child **DO NOT** wish data about them to be processed as part of this research.

Child's name:Date of birth:

School:.....

Parent name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Parent signature:

Date