



Department of Computer Science
Mel Slater
Professor of Virtual Environments

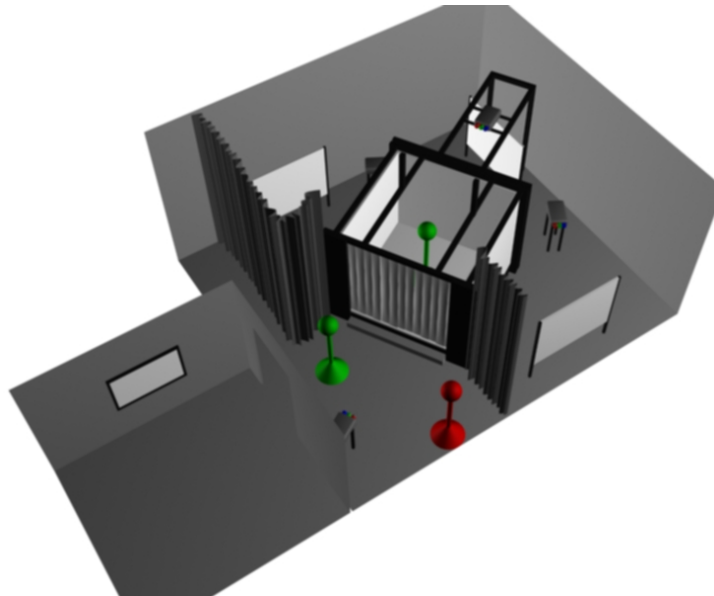
University College London
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT UK

+44 (0)20 7679 3709
+44 (0)20 7387 1397 Fax
M.Slater@cs.ucl.ac.uk
<http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/M.Slater>

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for participating in our study. This is one of a long series of studies into understanding the responses of people within virtual environments or virtual reality (VR). This study has been approved by *University College London's Committee on the Ethics of Non-NHS Human Research*. Please read through this information sheet and feel free to ask any questions. The experimenters will answer any general questions; however the specific aspects regarding this study cannot be discussed with you until the end of the session. The whole study will take about one hour.

You will be using a Cave-like virtual environment system called the ReaCTor (see the figure below). The ReaCTor is a virtual environment system made up of 3 walls measuring roughly 3m x 3m x 3m. You will wear special glasses and which has a lightweight tracking device on top. The virtual reality viewing equipment can be worn over eyeglasses. You will be asked to take off your shoes in order to protect the virtual reality equipment. In addition to the glasses, you will also be fitted with physiological equipment designed to measure your heart rate, respiration and galvanic skin responses whilst you are in the immersive virtual environment.



In this particular study you will be interacting with a female virtual character. You will be reading out sets of 5 words. The first word each time is a cue, and the next four words are in potential associations with the first word, only one of which is correct. The virtual character will call out one of the words. If it is correct you will be proceeding to the next set, otherwise, you will administer a 'shock' to the character using a machine that will be on a desk in front of you, read out the correct answer and then move on to the next set. This procedure will be explained more later.

You should be aware that some people may find the experience stressful. Remember that you can stop at any time.

Please ask any questions that come to mind. Read and sign the **Consent Form**.

Information that we collect will never be reported in a way that specific individuals can be identified. Information will be reported in a statistical and aggregated manner, and any verbal comments that you make, if written about in subsequent papers, will be presented anonymously.

IMPORTANT

When people use virtual reality systems, some people sometimes experience some degree of nausea. If at any time you wish to stop taking part in the study due to this or any other reason, please just say so and we will stop.

There has been some research, which suggests that people using head-mounted displays might experience some disturbances in vision afterwards. No long term studies are known to us, but the studies which have been carried out do testing after about 30 minutes, and find the effect is still sometimes there.

There have been various reported side effects of using virtual reality equipment, such as 'flashbacks'.

With any type of video equipment there is a possibility that an epileptic episode may be generated. This, for example, has been reported for computer video games.

PROCEDURES

- You will be asked to read, understand and sign a **Consent Form**. If you sign it the study will continue with your participation. **Note that you can withdraw at any time without giving any reasons.**
- You will be asked to complete a number of questions online and on paper, so that we can try to understand your responses during the study.
- You will be asked to remove your shoes and switch off mobile phones before using the VR equipment.
- You will be seated on a chair inside the Cave and you will be fitted with sensors to measure your heart rate, respiration and galvanic skin responses.
- You will then meet a virtual character depicting a female who will greet you, and then the experimental trials will start when you are ready.
- Finally there will be a small discussion with the experimenters about your experiences while reviewing your experience in the virtual environment on video. During this time, you might be audio or video taped.
- **Thank you** for your participation. Please do not discuss this study with others for about **six months**, since the study is continuing.
- Any other questions?

In case you have any enquiries regarding this study in the future, please contact:

Mel Slater
Department of Computer Science
University College London
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT

+44 (0) 20 7679 7215 *Tel*

+44 (0) 20 7387 1397 *Fax*

M.Slater@cs.ucl.ac.uk
<http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/m.slater>