Scaffolded Student Learning

Participant Information Sheet

Information sheet version: pilot-information-2026-07b
Registered study title: Scaffolded Student Learning
Project type: MSc Artificial Intelligence project at King's College London
Student researcher: Mustafa Ali Baig
Supervisor: Dr Hannah Cao
Ethics clearance: King's College London minimal-risk route, reference MRSU-25/26-55827 (16 April 2026)

1. Purpose of the study

This study evaluates Scaffolded Student Learning, a pedagogically controlled, retrieval-grounded AI tutoring system for Network Security. The application supports guided study, reasoning, explanation checks, knowledge reflection, and quizzes rather than simply providing final answers.

2. What participation involves

You must be a university student aged 18 or over and be enrolled in, or have previous exposure to, Network Security or a related computing course. You must be able to provide informed consent and use the English-language website. I would like to invite you to participate in this research project which forms part of my MSc Artificial Intelligence Individual Project research. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Participation is voluntary and takes place entirely through the website. If you choose to take part you will be asked to provide your consent. To do this you will be asked to indicate that you have read and understand the information provided and that you consent to your anonymous data being used for the purposes explained. Participants read this sheet, create a fresh anonymous study username and a new temporary password that is not used elsewhere, choose a week, follow the study checklist in the left panel of the chat interface, use the tutor, attempt a knowledge-check/quiz question, and complete the final website feedback form.

3. Data recorded

The website stores structured study records linked by the chosen anonymous study username: login record, consent version and acknowledgement time, sessions, selected weeks, messages, tutor responses, state transitions, quiz state, retrieval and course-grounding traces, timing and application metadata, and questionnaire feedback. The password itself is not stored.

4. What not to enter

Do not enter names, student numbers, email addresses, telephone numbers, dates of birth, raw IP addresses, real credentials, or other personal, sensitive, or special-category information in the username, tutor messages, or feedback.

5. Risks and limits

The AI tutor may produce incorrect, incomplete, or misleading information. Important module information must be verified, and the tutor must not be the sole source for assessed work or real-world security decisions. Eligible sanitised anonymised messages, bounded current-session context, selected course material, and tutoring instructions may be sent to DeepSeek. The sanitiser is limited and is not complete data-loss prevention. The tutor may redirect out-of-course requests. Participation has no effect on assessment, marks, progression, or teaching access.

6. Benefits

There is no guaranteed educational or personal benefit. The system is under evaluation and does not replace module teaching or authoritative guidance.

7. Confidentiality, anonymity, and withdrawal

Records are linked through the chosen study username, which acts as an anonymous relational key. The withdrawal deadline is 17 July 2026 at 23:59 British Summer Time. After pending requests are processed and the analysis mapping is removed, participant withdrawal may no longer be possible.
To request withdrawal, email mustafa_ali.baig@kcl.ac.uk with the exact study username. Do not send the password.

8. Data Use, reporting, and retention

Optional feedback may be coded and reported only as aggregate themes and counts. Study records are intended to be retained securely until 31 December 2026 on King's College approved systems (Microsoft OneDrive) accesible only to researcher and their supervisor. Minimum supporting data may be retained longer if required by King's College London for the approved research purpose. Your answers will nevertheless be treated confidentially and the information you provide will not allow you to be identified in any research outputs/publications.

9. Contact for further questions and support

- Researcher and withdrawal contact: Mustafa Ali Baig mustafa_ali.baig@kcl.ac.uk
- Supervisor: Dr Hannah Cao hannah.cao@kcl.ac.uk
- Ethics reference: MRSU-25/26-55827

10. Consent

By registering as a new user, a participant confirms that they have read this information sheet and understand the website-only procedure, DeepSeek processing, withdrawal deadline, retention position, and the voluntary nature of participation.