

Additional File Three: Suspected Fraudulent Participant Profile

Adapted from Pennesi JL, Pellizzer ML, Wade TD. Safeguarding Online Research in Eating Disorders Against Fraud: Increasing Risks and Practical Recommendations. *Int J Eat Disord.* 2026;59(7):1451-68. doi:10.1002/eat.70083.

Domain	'Flags'
<i>Online Form Data</i>	
Name	-First or last name only -Unusual name or unlikely spelling -Duplicate names
Email address	-Emails unrelated to the participant's name -Emails of the format first and last name followed by numbers @ generic email provider.com
Postcode	-Invalid postcode for country of residence -Similar or unlikely postcodes (Central business district postcodes, cluster of sign-ups with same postcode) -No postcode provided
Age	-Age not provided -Age patterns in consecutive respondents
Occupation	-Lack of relationship between qualification and occupation (e.g. retail assistant with a Bachelor's degree)
Demographic form metadata	-IP address outside Australia or New Zealand -Same IP address for multiple consecutive participants
Demographic form start or completion time	-Completed between 11pm and 6am Australia or New Zealand local time
ReCAPTCHA	-ReCAPTCHA score <1 (note that this was not included in the demographic form, but was used in a later stage of the co-design project)
<i>Interview Data</i>	
Camera	-Declined to turn on camera for interview -Declined interview video recording
Identifying data	-Did not volunteer identifying data (e.g. names of places or services) during the interview
Transcript review (for suspect participants)	-Required extensive interviewer prompting -Unusual language used (e.g. 'elementary' school is a term not usually used in Australia/New Zealand contexts) -Lacked a coherent 'storyline'
<i>Other</i>	
Compensation	-Requested a specific type of compensation (other than that offered) -Insisted on compensation immediately following the interview -Follow up emails to the researcher asking about compensation

Note that presence of the above 'flags' do not necessarily indicate fraudulent participation, especially in isolation. Participants with 3 or more flags were reviewed by the research team, who considered whether there was additional data indicating that they were a genuine participant (e.g. referred by someone known to the research team, online presence consistent with data provided). Where there was not, the interview transcript was reviewed by several members of the research team (see flags above) and excluded if suspicious. This resulted in exclusion of two interviewees, both of whom declined to turn their camera on for the interview recording and whose transcripts included suspicious features.