

CHECKLIST FOR PAPERS ON THE AVON LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN (ALSPAC)

All ALSPAC papers (including monographs and book chapters) must be sent to the ALSPAC Executive for approval prior to journal submission. Please note that if there are any significant changes to the paper after Executive approval, re-approval must be sought. We expect to process all papers within two weeks of receipt. We read all papers to check confidentiality is protected and to ensure that the paper will not bring the study into disrepute. We also provide advice and feedback to authors where we feel this may be helpful. We list below a checklist of requirements for ALSPAC papers along with some accompanying notes either explaining these requirements and/or containing appropriate text to insert. A signed and completed checklist must be included with each paper, monograph or book chapter submitted for approval. Please send to alspac-exec@bris.ac.uk.

CHECKLIST FOR ALSPAC PAPERS

Name of corresponding author:

Title of paper:

Type of paper: Peer review Working paper

ALSPAC Data Buddy:

Proposal/B number:

Funding body:

- 1a. The specific research presented in this paper is wholly or partly funded by Wellcome or RCUK or other charity mentioned in footnote 1 overleaf¹
- 1b. At least one contributing author is wholly or partly funded by Wellcome or RCUK or other charity mentioned in footnote 1 overleaf¹
- 2. If 1a or 1b ticked, I understand that I am responsible for making the paper **open access** and will publish in a compliant journal¹
- 3. I have included **ALSPAC as a keyword**
- 4. I have included an accurate description of the **study numbers² and the correct reference(s) to the cohort³**
- 5. For papers using data gathered from participants at 22 years and onwards, I have included a **citation to REDCap⁴** (see <https://projectredcap.org/resources/citations/>)
- 5. I have included reference to the ALSPAC **data dictionary⁵**
- 6. I have included an accurate description of the **ethical approval⁶**
- 7. I have included an accurate **acknowledgements sections⁷**
- 8. I have included an accurate **funding section⁸**, please note the specific requirements for child GWAS data and individual primary exposure and outcome variables.

9. I have not used the term **statistical significance**⁹ (optional)
10. I have included all **supplementary materials**
11. I will **return any derived variables** and accompanying documentation¹⁰
12. I will send a copy of the **final submitted manuscript and revised versions**
13. I have not used cell counts smaller than n=5
14. I will let the Executive know **when the paper is accepted for publication**
15. I will send through **a paper and electronic copy of the final paper**
16. I will liaise with the **ALSPAC public relations team** over media coverage¹¹
17. I will provide a **short scientific summary** of this paper if required by the Executive¹²
18. I have used data from ALSPAC only -OR- I have used data from ALSPAC and other sources
19. I will provide a lay summary if requested by the Executive¹³

Signature:

Date:

1. Open Access

ALSPAC fully supports Wellcome and the RCUK policies on open access.

Please refer to the ALSPAC access policy for further details:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/researchers/data-access/>

A number of other charities now provide open access support. Please see here for details:

<http://www.amrc.org.uk/our-work/open-access/open-access/charity-open-access-fund-coaf>

2. Description of study numbers

ALSPAC recruited 14,541 pregnant women resident in Avon, UK with expected dates of delivery 1st April 1991 to 31st December 1992. 14,541 is the initial number of pregnancies for which the mother enrolled in the ALSPAC study and had either returned at least one questionnaire or attended a "Children in Focus" clinic by 19/07/99. Of these initial pregnancies, there was a total of 14,676 fetuses, resulting in 14,062 live births and 13,988 children who were alive at 1 year of age.

When the oldest children were approximately 7 years of age, an attempt was made to bolster the initial sample with eligible cases who had failed to join the study originally. As a result, when considering variables collected from the age of seven onwards (and potentially abstracted from obstetric notes) there are data available for more than the 14,541 pregnancies mentioned above.

The number of **new pregnancies** not in the initial sample (known as Phase I enrolment) that are currently represented on the built files and reflecting enrolment status at the age of 18 is 706 (452 and 254 recruited during Phases II and III respectively), resulting in an additional 713 children being enrolled. The phases of enrolment are described in more detail in the cohort profile paper (see footnote 4 below).

The total sample size for analyses using any data collected after the age of seven is therefore 15,247 pregnancies, resulting in 15,458 fetuses. Of this **total sample** of 15,458 fetuses, 14,775 were **live births** and 14,701 were **alive at 1 year of age**.

A 10% sample of the ALSPAC cohort, known as the **Children in Focus (CiF) group**, attended clinics at the University of Bristol at various time intervals between 4 to 61 months of age. The CiF group were chosen at random from the last 6 months of ALSPAC births (1432 families attended at least one clinic). Excluded were those mothers who had moved out of the area or were lost to follow-up, and those partaking in another study of infant development in Avon.

3. Reference to the cohort

The following references should be cited where the cohort is first described in the methods:

Boyd A, Golding J, Macleod J, Lawlor DA, Fraser A, Henderson J, Molloy L, Ness A, Ring S, Davey Smith G. Cohort Profile: The 'Children of the 90s'; the index offspring of The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC). *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2013; 42: 111-127.

Fraser A, Macdonald-Wallis C, Tilling K, Boyd A, Golding J, Davey Smith G, Henderson J, Macleod J, Molloy L, Ness A, Ring S, Nelson SM, Lawlor DA. Cohort Profile: The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children: ALSPAC mothers cohort. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2013; 42:97-110.

4. Reference to REDCap

For paper using data gathered from participants at 22 years and onwards, you should also include a citation to REDCap, as the tool that ALSPAC have used to collect the data. Please see the REDCap website for details (<https://projectredcap.org/resources/citations/>).

5. Data dictionary

We ask that you include the following statement as part of your methods section: "Please note that the study website contains details of all the data that is available through a fully searchable data dictionary" and reference the following webpage:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/alspac/researchers/data-access/data-dictionary/>

6. Ethical approval

ALSPAC has its own Ethics and Law Committee that reviews all proposals for new data collection and approves policies for data handling and analysis. Proposals for new data collection are also approved by the Local Research Ethics Committees (LRECs). A statement describing this that should be included in all papers is shown below:

"Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the ALSPAC Ethics and Law Committee and the Local Research Ethics Committees."

Please note that some journals are now requesting precise details on the ethics committee/institutional review board(s) that approved aspects of the study when submitting your paper. A list is here:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/researchers/research-ethics/>

You may choose the ethic approvals relevant to your paper or simply refer to the webpage in your submission.

7. Acknowledgements section

We have agreed a standard acknowledgements section that should be included in all publications as is or in a modified form to fit the journal requirements for all papers:

“We are extremely grateful to all the families who took part in this study, the midwives for their help in recruiting them, and the whole ALSPAC team, which includes interviewers, computer and laboratory technicians, clerical workers, research scientists, volunteers, managers, receptionists and nurses.”

8. Funding section

We have standard wording that must be included in all publications to acknowledge our core funding:

“The UK Medical Research Council and Wellcome (Grant ref: 102215/2/13/2) and the University of Bristol provide core support for ALSPAC. This publication is the work of the authors and <INSERT NAMES> will serve as guarantors for the contents of this paper.”

In addition, you are expected to acknowledge the grant(s) which supported the collection of the **primary exposure(s) and outcome(s)** used in your study and any other grants in the checklist, which are pertinent to your study. The following sentences should be included with the above section:

“A [comprehensive list of grants funding \(PDF, 459KB\)](#) is available on the ALSPAC website. This research was specifically funded by <INSERT DETAILS FOR SPECIFIC PROJECT(S) WHERE APPROPRIATE, including grant number(s)>.”

We have provided a [table of grants for data collected since 2006 \(PDF, 450KB\)](#). Please consult this and ensure all grants are acknowledged. If you can't find the specific grant for the data you have used in the table please email alspac-data@bristol.ac.uk, including 'Grant query' in the subject, who will try and assist.

If your paper uses child GWAS data, please also include the following sentence in the funding section:

“GWAS data was generated by Sample Logistics and Genotyping Facilities at Wellcome Sanger Institute and LabCorp (Laboratory Corporation of America) using support from 23andMe.”

9. Statistical significance

We discourage the use of the term “statistical significance” and encourage authors to describe the observed effect sizes and the strength of the evidence that supports these effect size estimates. For a detailed justification see: Sterne JAC, Davey Smith G. Sifting the evidence—what's wrong with significance tests? *British Medical Journal* 2001; 322; 226-231.

10. Final dataset of derived variables

By derived variables we mean new variables that have been derived using at least two existing variables, (rather than simple recodes) or other variables that do not currently exist in the ALSPAC resource that will be of use to other collaborators. Derived variables will be archived by ALSPAC and will ultimately be made available to future data users and thus appropriate documentation detailing the derivation must also be provided. This will be followed up on approval of your manuscript.

11. Media coverage of ALSPAC publications

Where appropriate we encourage media coverage of ALSPAC papers to raise the study's profile and in particular to show study families that the study is producing interesting and valuable findings. Please contact the ALSPAC executive if you know there is going to be a press release or if you have given any press interviews.

12. Short scientific summary of the paper

We may ask you to prepare a short summary of your paper that we can include with reports to our funders.

13. Lay summary of the paper

Once your paper is accepted for publication we may ask you to prepare a lay summary of your paper for circulation to ALSPAC staff. This may also to be used to publicize your paper.