

Welcome to the latest Psychology newsletter

May 2019

In this month's newsletter, you'll find the regular updates on our activities, from learning and teaching achievements, new grants and publications, to the conferences and outreach events we've been part of.

To keep up to date with the latest news from the team as it happens, follow us on Twitter [@HWPsych](#) or find us on [Facebook](#).

Links: [Social Sciences](#) | [Psychology](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)

The newsletter displays best on tablets (PDF attached also).



Follow our updates on Twitter [@HWPsych](#)

Exams over for another year...and a fond farewell

With the exams now complete, we hope all our students have been able to enjoy a bit of time away from the books. No rest for colleagues of course as we are in the middle of a busy period of marking, moderating and finalising awards, with the Final Year degree classifications already released! We were delighted to see many of our Final Year undergraduates getting their degree classifications hot off the presses (and hope everyone enjoyed the Graduation Ball the night before!), and are looking forward to celebrating graduations with our students in Edinburgh, Dubai, and Malaysia next month. There will be more on the graduations in the next newsletter, but for now, from all the team a very well-deserved congratulations on completing your studies and all the best for what comes next!

Although a month of celebrations for our students, we are also bidding a very fond farewell to Annie Crookes who heads to Fiji to take up a new challenge. Annie joined Heriot-Watt Dubai in 2010 to set up our programmes there, and has led the team from those very earliest days to the strong group we see today. Thank you to Annie for her commitment over the years, and from the whole HWPsych team, good luck for the future.



Forthcoming events

Research Seminars/Events
- OK Computer or Paranoid Android? 7 & 15 August, New Town Theatre (Edinburgh Fringe)

[Tickets](#)

- This Show Will Make You Sharper! 10 & 14 August, New Town Theatre (Edinburgh Fringe)

[Tickets](#)

- Disgust for Dummies 19 August, New Town Theatre (Edinburgh Fringe)

[Tickets](#)

Full **Psychology Research Seminar** details are available on [Facebook](#).

Latest publications

Tamariz, M. (2019). Replication and emergence in cultural transmission. *Physics of Life Reviews*. doi: [10.1016/j.plrev.2019.04.004](#)



Our latest publications are listed here, but you can find a full list via the [Heriot-Watt Research Portal](#).

In the news

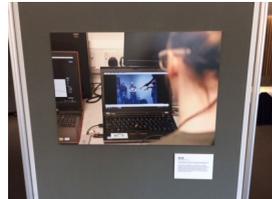
[Heriot-Watt's Dubai campus named best in Middle East](#)

Principal's Blog: [My day out in Psychology](#)

[Alyx the Social Robot at Edinburgh Science Festival](#)

Conferences and outreach activities

Our Psychology Research Seminars have finished for this semester, but other events continue to occur throughout the Spring and Summer; full details are available on [Facebook](#).



To celebrate Heriot-Watt's Year of Health, Thusha Rajendran and Mel McKendrick from our Edinburgh team joined around 150 delegates including inspiring academics, patients, charity representatives and funders from around the world to represent Psychology in the Health Innovation and Technologies Research Festival in April. Thusha presented his work on the use of social robots in the 'Robotics for a Safer World' session. He talked about the SoCoRo project in which a robot 'boss' is being used to help people with autism understand emotional expressions, so that might they might better understand if their boss is pleased or displeased with them. He also talked about how technology offers a society a different way of looking at disability, through the lens of neurodiversity, a perspective based on ability not disability. Mel presented her work from the Social Training and Anxiety Research (STAR) Lab and her collaborative work with the Medical Education Lab (@HeriotWattMEL) in the Healthy Ageing session. She talked about how eye tracking and virtual/augmented realities might be used to help older people with cognitive impairments to reduce anxiety caused by the social impact of age or illness related changes. She also discussed the role of eye tracking and simulation in helping to enhance wellbeing and recovery in anaesthesia by training Anaesthetists in minimally invasive interventions. Rounding out our contributions, PhD Student Calum Marr presented a poster summarizing his systematic review exploring how personality traits might influence the benefits of different interventions in cognitive ageing.

Looking ahead to the summer months, there are a number of engagement events being planned. The Cabaret of Dangerous Ideas returns to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this August. We're delighted that not only are there six Heriot-Watt researchers appearing this year, but three are from our own department. You can join Anna Sedda for [Disgust For Dummies](#), Thusha Rajendran for [Ok Computer or Paranoid Android?](#), or Alan Gow for [This Show Will Make You Sharper!](#) Watch out for more details as the Fringe approaches.

The team regularly present at national and international conferences and at a range of public engagement events. A selection of the most recent include:

Gow, A. J. (2019). How are lifestyles associated with brain health? Identifying protective factors from ageing cohorts to develop real-world interventions for cognitive ageing. Research seminar at IB3 (School of Engineering and Physical Sciences), Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK, 22nd May 2019.

Learning and teaching



We had a fantastic evening at the Heriot-Watt Union Oscars last month. The event, now in its 10th year, provides an opportunity for students to nominate lecturers and support staff who have made valuable contributions to their time at Heriot-Watt. Although Alan Gow (shortlisted for the Thinkers Award) didn't pick up a prize, it was a great night for the School of Social Sciences, with multiple nominated and shortlisted colleagues across all categories, and a clutch of SoSS winners on the night! Well done to the Union for organising such a great event!

Meet the team

Each month we profile members of our team based across our campuses in Edinburgh, Dubai and Malaysia.



Calum Marr, PhD Student (Edinburgh)

Calum started his PhD at Heriot-Watt in September 2017. Prior to this he completed his undergraduate and Master's degrees at the University of Edinburgh. As a member of The Ageing Lab, he is currently working on the Intervention Factory project led by Alan Gow, which explores whether taking up a new activity can help people maintain their cognitive abilities as they age. Specifically, his research will explore whether new activities are beneficial for adults aged 75 and over, and whether individual differences such as personality might influence any effects.



Lauren Potter, Assistant Professor (Edinburgh)

Lauren studied Counselling before achieving a first class honours degree in Applied Psychology (Heriot-Watt, 2001), followed by a PhD in the Psychology of Ageing (Strathclyde University, 2005). Lauren returned to Heriot-Watt as Lecturer in 2005. She is a Chartered Psychologist and Scientist, Associate Fellow of the BPS, and Fellow of The Higher Education Academy. Current roles include Year 4 Coordinator for Psychology, Global RM Working Group Lead, Disability Coordinator, and Appeals Assessor. Lauren teaches/is Global Course Coordinator for Research Methods 1, and Cognition across the Lifespan. Lauren's research interests include normal ageing and the control and regulation of everyday actions.

Team news

As above we wish Annie Crookes all the best as she takes up her new post in Fiji this month.

Ryan Gray joined the team as Research Assistant in The Ageing Lab.

David Finkelstein has been made Visiting Professor at the Research Institute for Media Art and Performance, University of Bedfordshire. In the role, he'll be working with colleagues to develop funded initiatives related to organisational culture and the business and economic management of creative culture in 19th and 20th century print and filmed media.