

Welcome to the latest Psychology newsletter

May 2020

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).



PSYCHOLOGY

Exams over for another year!

For our students who had exams at the end of this semester, well done! Exams always bring challenges, more so recently as those were completed under different circumstances than we had been expecting at the start of the year. Now those exams are 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. The various exam boards will be held throughout next month, so we look forward to sharing the outcome of those with our students soon!

If you are missing seeing our team in person, you'll be pleased to hear we're continuing to get involved in a range of activities online. Below you'll be able to access links to videos created for Mental Health Awareness Week, for example. If you find any of those hints and tips useful, do share them with your friends and families.



We are also pleased to launch a new video showcasing Psychology at Heriot-Watt, which you can view at <https://youtu.be/tSGvuHFASY>.

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

Forthcoming events

Research Seminars/Events - Given the current situation, we're exploring how our events/activities might move online over the summer and into the new academic year. Check our social media channels for regular updates ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).

Latest publications



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

Craig K. & Grainger C. (2020). Metacognition in Autism. In: Volkmar, F. (Ed) Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders. Springer, New York, NY. [doi:10.1007/978-1-4614-6435-8_102530-1](#)

Cristea, M., Francisco Valencia, J. & Curelaru, M. (2020). Quantitative and Qualitative Centrality of a Social Representation's Core Elements: The Use of the Basic Cognitive Schemes Model. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 8, 351–367. [doi: 10.5964/jcpp.v8i1.771](#)

Craig, K., Hale, D. R., Grainger, C., & Stewart, M. E. (in press). Evaluating Metacognitive Self-reports: Systematic Reviews of the value of self-report in metacognitive research. *Metacognition and Learning*. [doi: 10.1007/s11409-020-09222-y](#)

Delicato, L. S. (2020) A robust method for measuring an individual's sensitivity to facial expressions. *Attention, Perception & Psychophysics*. [doi: 10.3758/s13414-020-02043-w](#)

Each new paper is accompanied by a brief and accessible summary. Just search #HWPsychResearch on Twitter, or look in the "Our latest research" album on our Facebook page: <https://facebook.com/pg/HWPpsych/>.

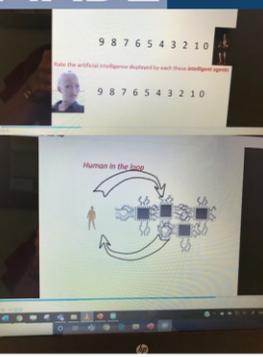


In the news

[Heriot-Watt Malaysia researchers awarded second COVID-19 grant](#)

[How does our intelligence change with age?](#)

Learning and teaching



In the past few weeks, we were pleased to hear that the Malaysian Qualifications Agency have provided full accreditation for our BSc Psychology programme in Malaysia. Well done to Mandy Wong and the team in Malaysia for their efforts on that, and for the support provided by Monica Tamariz as Director of our Undergraduate Programmes.

Although we're off-campus, a range of learning and teaching activities continue remotely. Across our campuses in Edinburgh, Dubai and Malaysia, the team have been hosting webinars and virtual open days for our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. In Dubai, for example, an undergraduate webinar was led by Greg Fantham and Mercedes Sheen providing an insight into Psychology for attendees with an interactive video. There was interest from those who took part in hearing more about the programmes offered at the Dubai Campus. Lucy Bolton and Greg also led a successful webinar on our MSc Business Psychology and MSc Business Psychology with Coaching programmes, providing an overview of these and answering questions about careers in the field. Over 30 people were attended remotely with much interest in the programmes. Thanks to Zuhrah Beevi and Mandy Wong, and Mioara Cristea and Maria Garraffa for leading similar sessions for the Malaysia and UK programmes.

Back in Dubai, the team have continued to engage the next generation of psychologists. Over the last few weeks the team delivered virtual sessions to Repton School Dubai on various introductory Psychology topics to their IB2 students. Kirin Hilliar ran a session on an 'Introduction to Forensic Psychology' detailing some interesting case studies for the students. Lucy Bolton and Greg Fantham then ran two sessions, one on the 'Psychology of Coaching' exploring the skills and processes behind coaching, and a session on Psychology and 'Artificial Intelligence', discussing human-machine interaction and technology addiction. The use of technology during the current situation gave rise to some interesting questions from the students! Repton are keen to keep links with the team in Dubai for future guest sessions for their students studying, and pursuing further study in, Psychology.

Research updates and funding

A Global Challenges Research Fund COVID-19 Urgency Grant has been awarded to Ke Guek Nee and Dasha Grajfoner. Their project (to be undertaken with the Malaysian Psychological Association (PSIMA), Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER) and University Malaya) will focus on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the psychological wellbeing of vulnerable groups in Malaysia. These groups might be more likely to experience higher rates of financial loss and negative impacts on their psychological well-being and resilience. The psychological well-being of Malaysians following a crisis of this kind has not been studied before, so will contribute to the longer-term plans by developing a strategic psychological interventions concept to improve and strengthen mental health.

Guek Nee, K., Grajfoner, D., Khairuddin, R., & Wee Yeap, L. Psychological Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis; A Recovery Framework for Malaysia. GCRF, £19,854.78, May-July 2020.

Mel McKendrick has also been involved in a new international partnership. Dattum is a global collaborative ecosystem that facilitates the sourcing of trusted domain-specific data from experts around the world. The immediate focus is to address the COVID-19 pandemic by providing heterogeneous analytics for: treatment schemes, medical experiments, and vaccine evolution. Dattum is backed by a business and research consortium of experts in healthcare research, strategy, data privacy and artificial intelligence.

The Dattum platform works as a macro-tool that allows medical teams to coordinate their efforts and obtain faster solutions to problems. By testing more combinations in parallel, a bigger search space can be explored faster. The platform tracks information about the treatment methods (existing and new), medical conditions and the contextual evolution of the virus. Mel's role is to help understand the decision making processes of medical experts and to help to connect with clinicians through her network within the Heriot-Watt Medical Education Lab and company Optimize Ltd., which is involved in medical training innovation. More details can be found at <https://www.dattum.ai/#home>. The Dattum team were recently placed in the top three of a EUvsVirus Hackathon (Health & Life - Research category); the team go forward to a Matchathon later this month to facilitate match-making with end-users, such as hospitals, and provide access to investors, corporates, foundations and other funding opportunities from across the EU.

Conferences and outreach activities

While our face-to-face Psychology Research Seminars and other events have been postponed, many more activities are appearing online. Event details for the next activities are above, and check our social media channels for fuller details and updates (including [Facebook](#)).



The last few weeks have seen the team supporting a range of online activities and events. For example, at the start of the month Mary Stewart hosted an EICC Live Online event on social interaction. The event was sold out and received positive feedback from those who took part. If you weren't able to join the event live, it will appear on the EICC's YouTube channel in the coming weeks <https://www.youtube.com/user/eiccvenue>.

In the same week, Alan Gow appeared in a BBC Horizon programme, The Great British Intelligence Test. Alan's contributions focused on how our thinking skills might change with age, and some of the lifestyle factors that might promote brain health. The programme can be viewed at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000hy39>.

Kirin Hilliar was recently interviewed by Dennis Relojo-Howell for his YouTube channel. Dennis speaks to psychologists and psychological researchers, and in her episode on "Forensics and Psychology and COVID-19", Kirin explored Forensic Psychology as well as mental health strategies for coping with the stress associated with COVID-19. You can watch the interview (already viewed over 13k times) here <https://youtu.be/wq78fkJs3Ps>.

Closing out the month, Anna Sedda, Maria Garraffa and Kirin Hilliar created videos as part of Mental Health Awareness Week. You can view those on the University's social media channels, but for a taster here's one each from Anna (<https://www.instagram.com/p/CAYEdj0jszL/>), Maria (<https://twitter.com/HeriotWattUni/status/1263856047061598208>), and Kirin (<https://youtu.be/xcprYQWuwNs>).

And rounding out a bumper month, you can also read Anna's "Self isolation for beginners!" in the recent Konekt magazine: https://issuu.com/hjgs/docs/may-2020_digital_edition_issuu_30

And finally...

We wish Michael Craig all the best as he leaves the team this month, having joined us as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow almost five years ago. Over that time, Michael has contributed to every aspect of our work, securing funding for both his own and others work, supporting public engagement events and student recruitment activities, and with teaching and supervision on our UG programmes. We will miss his contributions, but are also delighted that he is taking up a very well-deserved Senior Lectureship. Good luck Michael.