

Welcome to the latest Psychology newsletter

November 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 [@HWPpsych](#) 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 [@HWPpsych](#)

Re-connecting

It's fair to say that throughout most of 2020, we've probably met fewer people than we normally would. Those in person opportunities might have reduced but we've been pleased to see our students and staff connecting through various online events. For example, our 2020/21 Research Seminar Series coordinated by Mary Stewart has had a successful and well-attended run throughout October and November, with about 4-5 times as many joining the sessions as would be possible in person. And the advantage is that students and colleagues from all locations have been getting involved by sharing their work or joining the discussions. There's one more seminar to go this semester—see the right-hand panel for details. We've also had the first two sessions in our new Psychology on Tap series, while colleagues have been continuing to 'attend' meetings and conferences, albeit remotely!

We know those ways of connecting aren't always easy ("you're on mute!"), and it's important to say how much we appreciate everyone for continuing to engage with us or by trying new things. For all our students, remember to speak to your lecturers or Personal Tutor if you have any questions.

Not long to go until we will all get a well-deserved break from our screens...

Forthcoming events

Research Seminars/Events

Given the current situation, our events/activities are being hosted online. Check our social media channels for regular event updates ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).

- Catherine Crompton (U. Edinburgh)

1 December

[Details](#) | [Speaker's profile](#)

Latest publications

Gallagher, M., Colzi, C. & Sedda, A. (2021). Dissociation of proprioceptive drift and feelings of ownership in the somatic rubber hand illusion. *Acta Psychologica*, 212, 103192. doi: [10.1016/j.actpsy.2020.103192](#)

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



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

In the news

['Game changing' medical training platform to deliver unique learning experience](#)

[National Robotarium unveils £3m research project](#)

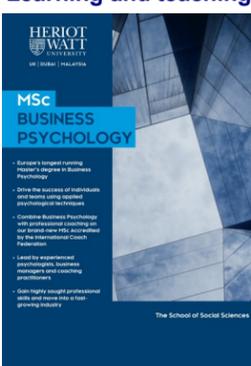
Speaker Buzz: [Leadership & mental health: why leaders need to look after themselves during the Covid crisis](#)

Observer: [PsyCorona: A world of reactions to COVID-19](#) (page 40)

insider.co.uk: [New multi-million academic project will research trust in robots](#)

[Heriot-Watt researchers are gearing up for Explorathon!](#)

Learning and teaching

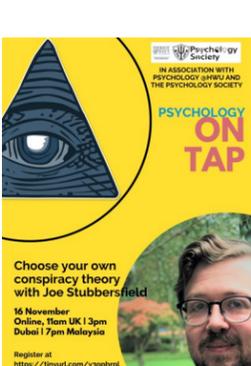


Our recruitment activities have continued remotely, including post-graduate Open Days in Dubai and Edinburgh led by Lucy Bolton and Mioara Cristea respectively.

We were also pleased to see the launch of the new Book Collaboration Project, a partnership between the Student Union, Information Services, the School of Social Sciences and the Development & Alumni Team. Basically, if you've got a textbook from a course earlier in your degree that you no longer need, chances are someone else could benefit from it. The scheme takes those textbooks and ensures they get to those who need them. More details at <https://www.hwunion.com/books/>, and if you donate, do consider including "a note to the new owner of their textbook to let them know a little about the journey of not only the book, but its owner".

Conferences and outreach

Our Psychology Research Seminars have been running all month with one more this semester; event details for the next seminar are above, with a fuller list available on [Facebook](#).



This month we also had the second of our Psychology on Tap events, with Joe Stubbersfield inviting the audience to "Choose your own conspiracy theory". The event was well attended and provided many topical issues to consider. Incidentally, Joe had a busy few days as he presented "Conspiracy Theories: Tasty Burgers for the Mind" for the Watt Club...on Friday the 13th no less! The event considered why every major event over the past 2,000 years has had some form of conspiracy theory attached to it.

We've got new Psychology on Tap events planned for next year too, providing a chance to explore some of the big topics that might affect our lives in an informal setting. See [Facebook](#) for event listings as they are confirmed.

Volunteers.ae partnered with the Emirates Foundation to present the inaugural Ideathon 2020 - an idea-based hackathon bringing together volunteers from across the world with the aim of "Building Resilience Within Communities". The virtual Ideathon was a three-day marathon, during which volunteer teams from major NGOs and volunteering organisations from around the world came together to develop sustainable and impactful solutions to challenges from the global response to the pandemic. The NGO 4get-me-not Alzheimer's (<http://www.4get-me-not.org/>), who raise awareness about dementia and Alzheimer's Disease and coordinate social outings for older people in the UAE, was the only UAE-based organisation that was selected to participate in the final 23 applicants (across 20 countries), from an initial 282 registrations across 81 countries! Colleagues in Dubai have partnered with 4get-me-not on two occasions so far - one for an awareness-raising event where a team of seniors performed a play about Alzheimer's at the Dubai campus, and one where students paired up with older people to give them tech guidance, helping them install and use useful apps on their phones. Kirin Hilliar was their E-Coach for the Ideathon, providing advice and feedback. While the team didn't take the top prize, everyone took a lot from their experience of taking part.



This month, Kirin also participated in [The Digest](#), a student-centred YouTube channel tailored for educators and young people hosted by Andy Pacino and Faiza Qureshi. Their conversation focused on youth mental health, tips for teachers to be aware of, and the challenges of being a young person in the time of COVID, which you can view at https://youtu.be/OL_67nC4ZUs and <https://youtu.be/x1ZLER83b-g>.



November also saw the launch of Heriot-Watt's Engaged Research Strategy and Alan Gow was part of a discussion panel at the launch event (<https://twitter.com/HWEngage/status/1321444105742737412>). Alan also gave a keynote on "Social connections and healthy ageing" at the Befriending Networks Annual Conference, before rounding out the month with a workshop for Glenmorangie on "Ageing at work". The workshop was part of a Diversity and Inclusion series developed by Edinburgh Business School, with previous workshops on disability, health and gender led by Kate Sang and Heather McGregor.



Rajendran, G. (2020). The role of socially assistive robots in understanding and treating developmental disorders. Computers and Learning Research Group (The Open University), 12th November.



Brusa, F., Erden, M. S. & Sedda, A. (2020). Sense of Ownership and body in action. British Neuropsychological Society Autumn Meeting, 5th November, London (Online).

Gow, A. J. (2020). Ageing at work. Workshop as part of Diversity and Inclusion series, Glenmorangie, UK, 11th November.

Gow, A. J. (2020). Social connections and healthy ageing. Keynote presentation at the Befriending Networks Annual Conference, online, 3rd-5th November.

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

Student voice

In "Student voice", we hear from our students. Every contribution is different, so if you have something you'd like to share, get in touch with [Alan Gow](#). This month we're hearing from recent Psychology graduate and current Student Success Advisor, Jenny Panton.

By Jenny Panton, Student Success Advisor: Starting university is daunting, especially during these uncertain times. I came to Heriot-Watt in 2016 to study psychology. Lock-down last March was tough, I wanted to give up due to the amount of coursework, my dissertation and the uncertainty of online exams. But you've got to remember - your classmates are in the same boat and most likely struggling too. Reach out to your lecturers for support and guidance, better to ask for help than be overwhelmed. It's okay not to be okay!

My advice to current Psychology students is to not give up. Take things as they come and don't set yourself unrealistic expectations. Don't tell yourself you will study all evening if you realistically don't see yourself doing that. I fell into this trap and then felt worse when I didn't do the work. Pick hours of the day you are most productive and make a check-list of things to be completed. Even if they are small, one little thing ticked off is better than nothing.

The friendliness and approachability of my lecturers inspired me and I knew I wanted to be in a job where I too could help people who struggle. I am now one of the Student Success Advisors (SSA) at Heriot-Watt. My SSA role involves helping students and pointing them towards the appropriate resources available at the university. Sometimes it is hard to reach out for help, but as a recent graduate, I can listen and give advice from a student's perspective.

Thanks to Jenny for sharing her experience and advice, For all our students, the university's wellbeing and support services are there to help, guide and advise. For full details of the support they provide, see <https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/health-wellbeing.htm>.

Team news

And finally this month, we were delighted to welcome (back) Michael Craig, appointed as an Honorary Research Fellow in SoSS until July 2022. Michael was a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Memory Lab from September 2015 until May 2020 when he took up a Senior Lectureship at Northumbria University. He also headed the HW EEG Lab from 2018 and trained many junior researchers in EEG, as well as supporting UG Open Days and other teaching activities. Due to the pandemic Michael had to pause his data collection in the Memory Lab and EEG Lab; his Honorary Fellowship will allow him to continue the productive collaboration across our universities.

Research in the Department of Psychology, School of Social Sciences, at Heriot-Watt University is grouped by three main themes: Cognition, Brain and Behaviour; Lifespan Health and Wellbeing; and Work, Society and Environment. Find out more about our research at www.psych.hw.ac.uk or follow updates on Twitter [@HWPpsych](#).