

ATP TODAY

JUNE 2024

www.theatp.uk

The Magazine of the Association
for the Teaching of Psychology



AI and neurodiversity in the classroom

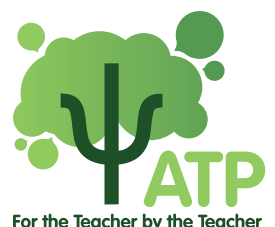
Artificial intelligence (AI), in particular generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), has taken the world by storm in the last year.

HIGHLIGHTS

Helsinki
Conference 2024

Teaching maths
in psychology

Psychstix Student
Winners



For the Teacher by the Teacher

We welcome contributions and letters from readers. Please send your correspondence to the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to edit and/or amend all articles submitted.

The views expressed by contributors to the magazine are their personal views, and publication does not mean that those views are endorsed by the ATP or the publisher.

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Please send correspondence, and submissions, as a Word document. Photographs should be supplied as jpegs and as separate files not embedded into Word documents.

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From the chair

Hello dear reader and welcome to our summer issue of the ATP Today magazine. I'm writing this to you whilst enjoying some lovely April sunshine and looking forward to the fast approaching ATP Conference in the summer. If you use social media, do please follow our Facebook, Twitter/X, LinkedIn and Instagram accounts for more information and discussion on this upcoming event.

As well as providing excellent training, networking opportunities and some good old fashioned fun, we also hold our AGM and committee selection at conference. This year's conference will sadly see us waving a fond farewell to the amazing Deb Gajic as she steps down from the committee. As you will read further in the magazine, Deb has been nothing short of a legend in the ATP Committee having held virtually all of the roles at some point or another over her decades of dedication to the ATP. I first met our glamorous globetrotter at a CPD event she had organised in Darlington, which was, of

course, a resounding success and something that I personally found to be extremely useful as I started to teach 'A' level Psychology. It's not going to be the same without you, Deb!

Amy Halsall
#Psych4Life



Introducing our fabulous
ATP Conference 2024
Keynote speakers

From the editor

Welcome to the latest edition of ATP Today magazine! As the editor, I am thrilled to present to you a compilation of thought-provoking articles and insightful contributions from our talented students and educators.

This edition is particularly special as we showcase the remarkable achievements of students who participated in the PsychStix competition. Their contributions not only demonstrate their academic brilliance but also their passion for psychology; I couldn't help but feel an immense sense of pride as I read through their articles.

Their articulate perspectives and innovative ideas are truly inspiring, and I have no doubt that they will continue to make significant contributions to the field of psychology in the future.

This edition also features a range of teaching and learning articles aimed at enhancing our understanding of one of the parts of the specification that students often find most challenging, particularly the mathematical elements in psychology. By addressing these difficulties head-on, we hope to provide educators with valuable insights and strategies to

support their students effectively. Building on the student contributions on how AI is transforming psychology we also have some useful suggestions of how you too can use AI in the classroom. In addition, we have a wonderful article on neurodiversity.

I would like to extend my thanks to all the contributors, both students and educators, who have made this edition possible. Your dedication and enthusiasm are truly commendable, and I am honoured to have had the opportunity to work with such a talented and passionate group of individuals.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of ATP Today magazine as much as I have enjoyed editing it. May it spark new ideas, ignite curiosity, and fuel your passion for psychology.

Warm regards,
Sarah Moseley
ATP Today Editor



From the BPS

By the time you read this the exams will be nearly over, and another year will have passed. How does it go so quickly? This year the pre-university strategy group on ETB has been very busy, we have done 2 webinars: - Meet the Psychologist, Ciara Wild and Understanding Pre-university Psychology in Schools and Colleges in the UK aimed at our academic colleagues. Deb Gajic and I, with Standing Committee on Psychology Education in Schools and Colleges support, have reinstated and revitalized the Teachers Toolkit which was quiet over covid and we arranged for the BPS to re-organise it to make it more user friendly. Since October there have been 8 uploads including Starters for Psychology Lessons (PPT), Attaining Top Grades (PPT) and The Art of Questioning with an estimated 3,000+ downloads. More items will now regularly be uploaded, and we hope to add some useful resources for mental health and wellbeing. Some of the ATP committee are working with the BPS on a history of IQ testing and the end resource will also be added to the Teacher's Toolkit. It is hoped that other projects will follow this.

Deb, Jock and I have all represented ATP and BPS/ETB at the AMSP maths sessions and we are pleased to say that they have now got funding for another round of webinars next year. So, if you want to improve your maths skills for the benefit of your students look out for this great opportunity.

With the Government looking to potentially introduce new level 3 qualifications, such as the Advanced British Standard qualifications (ABS), I was asked by the BPS to complete a consultation document so they could respond to the Governments suggestions effectively. This was a big task and I did collaborate with colleagues, including Deb Gajic, so that our views could be effectively represented. I understand that much of what was included in this document was sent to Government.

To be honest if the Government is looking for inclusivity in education as seen in consultation document for the proposed new ABS qualification – then Psychology is best positioned to fulfil their aims of inclusivity because it is entirely possible to have Psychology placed in two faculties, Science and Humanities/Social Science allowing for all young people, irrespective of gender, disadvantage or SEND to study Psychology according to their intellectual interests and abilities. However, this may well all change when we get a new Government later this year!

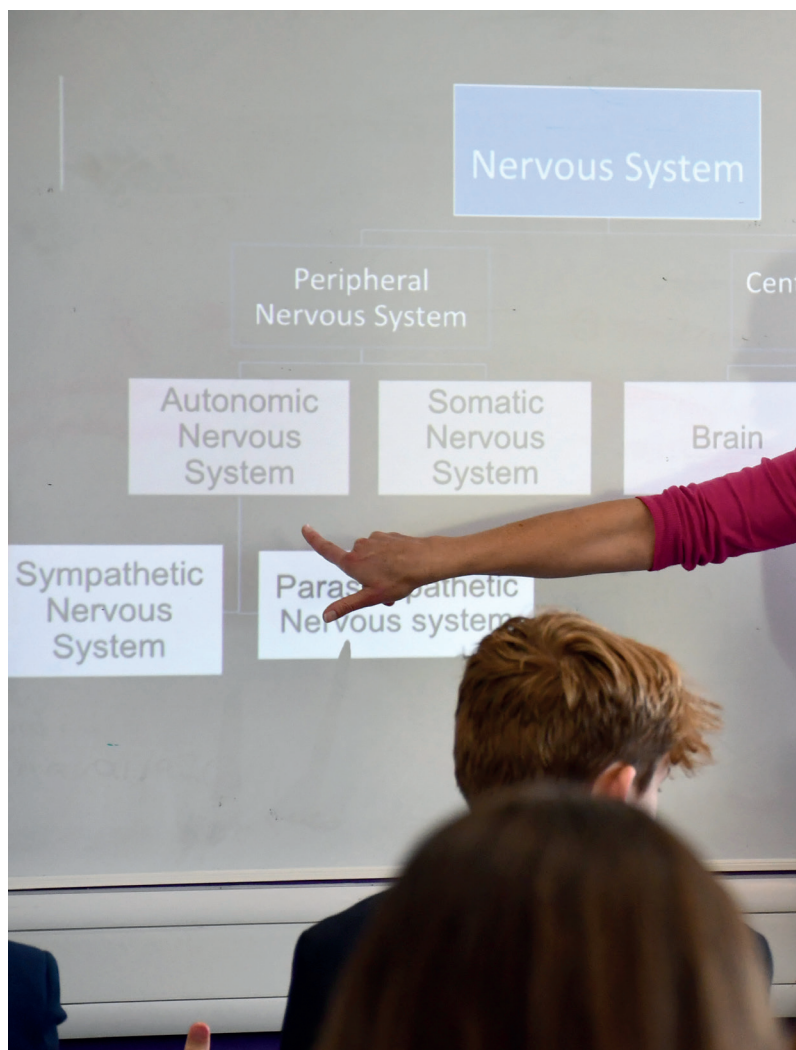
Finally, this will be the last time I will be writing this section as I have recently stepped down from ETB after 6 years driving their Pre-university strategy to engage more with school and college teachers and students. I have really enjoyed this challenge but feel now is the time for others to carry on what has already been started. However, I leave you in the very capable hands of Deb Gajic. I wish everyone all the best for the future.



Helene Ansell
CPsychol, AFBPsS
ETB Board member



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psychological society
promoting excellence in psychology



BPS Interview

Interview with the finalists of The BPS DARTP 2023/4 Pre-tertiary Education Psychology Teacher of the Year (PEPTOTY) award.



In 2023, The BPS Division for Academics, Researchers and Teachers in Psychology (DART-P), launched the Pre-tertiary Education Psychology Teacher of the Year (PEPTOTY) award. The award recognises and celebrates exceptional psychology teachers in UK schools and FE colleges. The prizes are £1000, a year of free membership to DART-P and free registration for the 2024 DART-P conference. I interviewed Lucinda Powell, the winner of this year's award, and Purvi Gandhi, the runner up, to find out more:

Lyndsey: Lucinda, Purvi, thank you for doing this interview! Congratulations for winning the award, Lucinda, and congratulations for being a finalist, Purvi!



Lucinda teaching

What made you decide to go for the award?

Lucinda: As Psychology teachers, we have a unique skill set, but this is overlooked which is slightly weird. We can offer the opportunity to contribute to staff development and have a huge amount to offer! I hoped that the award would broaden that recognition and in addition, offer a platform to highlight the podcast I do. The prize money [£1000] is of course an added incentive.

Purvi: To make a broader contribution beyond my school. We're in a privileged position as teachers to reflect upon who we are serving and who is the final consumer of our work. I'm lucky to have had the education and experience to engage a lot in research into mental health that can make a difference. This is important, especially now, as there is a need for it.

What did you have to do to be nominated?

Lucinda: First, we filled in an application form.

Purvi: It had 4 sections: Professional development, pedagogy, sharing best practice and commitment to improving student experience.

Lucinda: We then had to write a case study and do an online 10 minute presentation of it. To do this, I went to previous ones, looking at how they were written and presented. It was challenging but rewarding as it allowed me to step back and think about what to do, the purpose of it, and then organise it into a logical sequence.

Purvi: I did the same as Lucinda. I've used research when designing a curriculum so have bags of evidence that it was impactful but had to differentiate between the two when writing my application and case study.

What was your case study?

Lucinda: Why study skills need to be more than mind maps and flashcards.

Purvi: An innovative mental health curriculum for Year 9 students.

What was the experience of the process like?

Lucinda: Rewarding. I found the presentation petrifying! However, when I said 'thank you for giving me the opportunity' at the end, I meant it! I was genuinely grateful for the opportunity.

Purvi: It was challenging but gave me the chance to develop my skills, which was very rewarding. It also gave me the chance to meet new people and build relationships on the way.

How did you feel when you found out that you were finalists?

Lucinda: The waiting period was overwhelming! When I got the e-mail just before a lesson, the adrenaline was pumping, but it was really exciting too!

Purvi: It was cool! I felt that my work was being recognised and my students were also proud of me.

What would you say to other teachers who may be thinking about going for the award next year?

Lucinda: I strongly recommend the process even if you just do the first bit of the application. It's a nice process for reflecting on it [what you have done].

Purvi: Time is an issue (I work for 6 days a week as a Head of Department) but going for the award is a good way to share your work. Mental health in education is important to me. If it [going for the award] is important to you, you will find a way to do it.

For more information about Lucinda and Purvi's work, go to:

Lucinda's website:

changingstatesofmind.com/

Purvi's book:

A Little Guide for Teachers: Student Mental Health

More information about the award

The Division of Academics, Researchers and Teachers in Psychology website:
<https://www.bps.org.uk/member-networks/division-academics-researchers-and-teachers-psychology>



Lyndsey Hayes

CPsychol

ATP Representative on the DARTP committee.

ATPS Update

Mairi Rice - ATPS

ATP Scotland and BPS Scotland joined forces once again to host a one-day conference held at Strathclyde University in Glasgow on the 9th March. Entitled "From School & College to University – Contemporary Issues in Teaching Psychology", the event brought together psychology teachers and academics from across the sectors.

Among the topics explored were student transition, engagement, inclusivity, skills, career development, and mental wellbeing. Esteemed speakers from various educational sectors offered diverse perspectives, fostering a rich environment for open discussion and knowledge exchange.

Theme: Supporting Student Transition and Engagement through Inclusive Education

Joe Walker, Senior Education Officer at Education Scotland, began the day with a presentation on inclusive education, focusing primarily on transitions at various levels, and the qualifications offered in Psychology and whether we should look at developing these further. Dr. Jacqui Hutchison, a Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Aberdeen, shed light on strategies to foster inclusive learning environments from a university perspective.

Theme: Prioritising Student Mental Wellbeing

Harry Brown, Principal Teacher Wellbeing at Levenmouth Academy, delved into the crucial topic of student mental health. His session provided practical approaches used in Fife schools and best practices for supporting student wellbeing. This was followed by Susan Regnart from George Heriot's School who focused on resilience and how to overcome public shaming on social media.

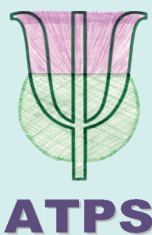
Theme: Skills and Career Development

Simon Robinson from Leith Academy looked at the SQA Mental Health & Wellbeing awards providing valuable perspectives on recognising student achievements beyond the psychology qualifications that we offer. Simon drew attention to the European context - the EU Schools4Health project which promotes whole-school approaches to student mental health.

In addition to the enriching workshops, participants had ample opportunities to network with like-minded professionals, fostering collaborations with colleagues across Scotland.



Harry Brown on mental health in Fife schools



(EFPTA) Helsinki Conference 2024

The European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations (EFPTA) Helsinki Conference 2024 - The Age of Psychology

What a conference! What a celebration! The EFPTA Conference in Helsinki Finland marked the 20th Anniversary of EFPTA. The ineffable Joe Cocker, who led the ATP and ATPS as founder members of EFPTA in 2004, was there, in fine fettle. How fitting since the 2024 EFPTA Conference was being held in the same city that EFPTA started - Helsinki, Finland.

We had a marvellous celebration with many of the former Presidents, including singing, dance and speeches. This was an inspiring 'Thank you' to all the former Presidents. Our very own former ATP Chair Dorothy Coombs, ex-EFPTA President, gave a heart-warming and characteristically amusing speech, and our current EFPTA Secretary Morag Williamson, ATP Scotland champion, received a standing ovation for her, outstanding contribution to EFPTA since its inception.



EFPTA Past Presidents



Here they are this year with me Harriet Ennis (a now thoroughly enthused ATP representative on EFPTA Board) - Morag is peeping out...(and yes, it snowed again in Helsinki this time around).

We were hosted in Eira High School for Adults by Finnish teachers' association members, and had some wonderful keynote speakers, including Professor Karen Marangio from Melbourne, Australia, presenting on "Valuing psychology teachers' expertise for teaching students in the modern day", and Professor Markus

Jokela from Helsinki University presenting on a modern “Transdiagnostic perspective in understanding mental health”.

Teachers representing 17 countries took part including all 12 EFPTA member countries, and one teacher Catherine Phelan, came all the way from the US to speak about her experience of teaching psychology in Texas. Each of the EFPTA member countries shared a poster describing Psychology teaching in their country. These can be found on the EFPTA website. www.EFPTA.org

ATP and ATPS members contributed to the programme of workshops and short talks: I presented on Collaborative projects encouraging shared blogging using the springboard of EFPTA's inaugural blog – see www.EFPTA.org. I encourage you to contribute with your thoughts and ideas – send them to us!

I also promoted an antidote to BREXIT – CONNEXIT! – in an attempt to join up classrooms across Europe. This idea was received with enthusiasm and so I hope to put out a Google form (or similar) to help teachers within the UK and across the world find a shared time to schedule a zoom call (or similar) between their classrooms.

The Age of Psychology theme was upheld by ATP Scotland rep Mairi Rice who gave a workshop on “Unveiling the Mind of AI: Exploring the Psychology of Artificial Intelligence” that I hope she will re-run at the ATP Conference this year! And Morag offered a workshop in collaboration with Swedish rep Ebba Blåvarg.

We also ran a Carousel workshop of activities for the Psychology classroom, a la ATP conference fame. Board members assisted in running these, co-ordinated by Slovakia rep Lenka Sokolová. The Finnish psychology teachers' association, PSOP RY, under President Anne Riekkinen, was invaluable. Dr Jari Lipsanen, President of the Finnish Psychological Association, which gave generous support for the conference.

Many ATP members will remember the original Carousel workshops that were held at ATP conferences in the past! They worked very effectively at the EFPTA Helsinki conference too...

Evie Bentley, a past ATP Chair and conference veteran, gave a workshop too called “ Culture: not just a human-only behaviour? ”.

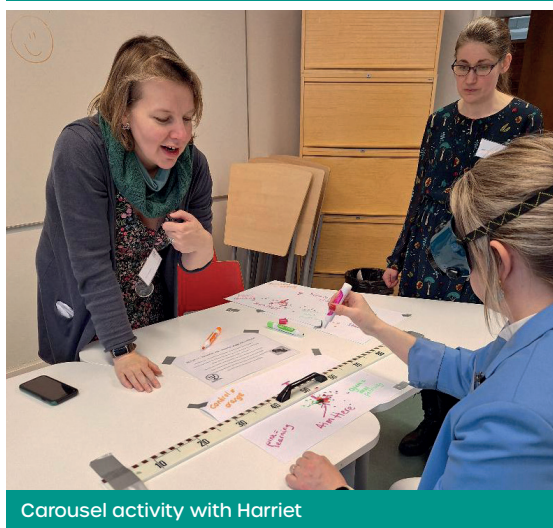
Overall it was great to get together in person again, after several years of online events, and to see so many past and present ATP and ATPS members attend..

Start planning your attendance for the spring 2026 EFPTA conference. Also I noted that there were attendees who were funded by the Erasmus scheme that has been replaced by the Turing Scheme in the UK – this could help more students attend the next EFPTA. I guarantee they wouldn't be disappointed – ‘watch this space’, as the location is yet to be decided...

Many thanks to our current President Mette and the other EFPTA Board members you know and love, who attend ATP Conferences.



Finnish psychologist Jukka enjoying a carousel of classroom activities .



Carousel activity with Harriet



Joe Cocker, founder of EFPTA



Here is the whole Conference party



This is the link to conference reports and updates, www.efpta.org



Harriet Ennis.
Head of Psychology at Bootham School in York. Harriet is part of the ATP Committee and an EFPTA Board member.

ATP International Teachers' Conference 2024

Don't miss out on three fabulous keynote speakers, a wide range of inspirational subject-specific workshops, an excellent exhibition and a whole host of networking opportunities

Have you booked for the conference yet?

If not, there is still time to book.

www.delegate-reg.co.uk/atp2024/registration



Interview on the joys of the ATP Conference with Helen J. Kitching, ATP Conference Organiser by Lyndsey Hayes

L: You've been organising the conference for a long time, haven't you?

H: Yes, this will be the 11th conference that I've organised. Not sure where the time has gone!

L: What do you enjoy most about organising the conference?

H: Definitely the satisfaction I feel when I see what a great time everyone is having.

L: What makes the ATP Conference different from the CPD you generally get in schools?

H: Goodness, just about everything. The fact that it is subject-specific means that you can immediately see how you can integrate ideas straight into your teaching. The workshops are also run by a wide variety of teachers, authors and examiners, all with a wealth of experience. Put it like this, you come away inspired with some great ideas rather than coming away feeling exhausted, with a headache, wondering how on earth you are ever going to use whatever CPD you've been at in your lessons (well that has been pretty much my experience of in-school CPD).

L: I hear teachers say that they feel too exhausted at the end of the academic year to come to the conference. What would you say to that?

H: That's a very good question and something that I hear too, but only from people who have never been to the ATP Conference. Those who have been know that it is the perfect tonic for end of year fatigue. You get to spend time with like-minded people, you will be made to feel welcome, and as well as all that brilliant CPD you have a chance to let your hair down and have fun, be silly, take part in competitions, games, kitchen parties, rub shoulders with some psychology legends and just unwind. We are also in the gorgeous historic city of Lincoln, so there is also the opportunity to take a bit of down time as well.

L: Personally, I can't wait!

H: Me neither. It is totally worth all the hard work 😊



A taster of some of the wonderful workshops available at this year's conference

- Leveraging Microsoft Teams for Teaching and Learning
- Learn with Microsoft Learn
- Gamification: Increasing Engagement and Enjoyment through Competition and Gameplay
- Reach for the stars: Attaining top grades in Psychology
- Making meaning in A-Level Psychology
- BAIEP (beyond acronyms in evaluation paragraphs)
- Going Dotty - assessment strategies for the overworked
- Adventures in Neuroscience
- Reach for the stars: attaining A/A* in psychology
- Unveiling the Mind of AI: Exploring the Psychology of Artificial Intelligence
- Stress and Stress Management
- A level psychology is actually a course in research methods
- How to become a Chartered Psychologist
- Methods for Energising, Meditation and Self-hypnosis
- Van Gogh, psychedelic dreams and popping candy. Fun, psychology-based ideas for open evenings and tasters.
- Update on the latest research on schizophrenia and criminal behaviours
- Fun without flunking- how to engage learners and hone exam technique
- Smelling Parkinson's - an engaging way to introduce Hypothesis Testing
- A refreshing approach to Psychology: Discover OCR's new and improved A Level
- OFSTED: Deep dives, no scuba equipment needed...

[days and times tbc]

Introducing our fabulous ATP Conference 2024 Keynote speakers



Professor Julie Hulme - Nottingham Trent University

Title: Psychology? It's a Mickey Mouse subject...is it?

Growing numbers of students are taking psychology at A level or equivalent, and at university in the UK. At the same time, there has been a persistent political discourse about the lack of value of psychology as a subject (for example, in the Augar Report), partly based on employability metrics from universities. Julie will share with us why psychology is one of the most valuable subjects that students can learn, because it enables them to meet their personal, professional, and community goals through a concept known as psychological literacy. Equip yourself with answers for questioning students, sceptical parents, and any politicians you happen to bump into - and find out more about the competences that you and your students can put to use to make a difference in the world around you.

Professor Amanda Roberts - University of Lincoln

Title: Disordered Gambling: Harms, Trends, Patterns and Treatment.

Whilst gambling does not result in problematic behaviour in the majority of individuals, a significant and appreciable number go on to experience serious social, financial, legal and emotional harms. For almost half a million of individuals in the UK, gambling is no longer a recreational pleasure but has escalated to become a full gambling disorder. The disorder often results in serious negative consequences including illegal activities and crime, domestic violence, self-harm/suicide and tends to cluster with other high-risk behaviours such as alcohol and substance misuse.

These problems and interpersonal harms can have large effects on families, and studies have documented associations with disordered gambling and relationship difficulties including marital dissatisfaction, reduced family stability, the worsening of intimate relationships and family dysfunction. Some of these dysfunctional relationships evolve into violence, and there is growing evidence to show that gambling related harm is a specific risk factor for family and intimate partner violence. The first part of the presentation will document analysis that was carried out to investigate the relationship between gambling and violence in nationally and internationally representative samples. The findings highlight the need for gambling treatment services to undertake routine screening for alcohol, violence and IPV and to tailor treatment for clients who present with such issues.

Another disruptive consequence of disordered gambling is gambling-related crime, and it has been suggested that disordered gamblers are three times more likely to be arrested than low-risk gamblers and seven times more likely than non-gamblers. To date, the impact and consequences of prisoners presenting with gambling related harm is unknown, and for those that do present with gambling harms, there is no standardised intervention established for use in prison. Next, the presentation will document some of our findings from a study carried out at a prison in the UK. In this study, we aimed to provide data on the prevalence of gambling in prison, and the relationship between crime and gambling, both before and within prison itself. We hope this data will provide the foundation for

further funding to develop a screening tool for use in prison settings to assist in the identification of gambling related harm and assess the feasibility of developing and implementing a brief intervention.

Finally, the presentation will focus on treatment in the UK. The Gordon Moody Association (GMA) is the UK's primary gambling-specific residential treatment facility, combining group and individual treatment programmes, in a community rehabilitation setting. Working with GMA, we sought to analyse the gambling behaviour and profile of treatment seeking gamblers. A snapshot of the data from the GMA will be presented showing that the current legislative framework overall in the UK is perhaps not quite doing enough to protect those most at risk. Related to this I will look at a brief pilot study investigating attitudes towards gambling in Primary Care settings and ask should it be General Practitioners who screen for gambling disorders in the first instance?

All our data sets have provided important information to clinicians, policy-makers and gambling legislators in the UK and beyond.

Professor Mark Forshaw - Edge Hill University

Title: Chemically Modified Minds: Are All Students on Drugs?

We know that alcohol is increasingly less popular with younger people in the UK. Does that mean it's being replaced with other things, and what are they? Do we need to be concerned about what our students might be putting into their bodies? In this talk, we take a trip through the hazy world of chemically modified minds, and learn about the pressures younger people are under, and how that translates into use of a range of substances from the socially acceptable through to the little-known and legally muddled world of cognitive enhancement.



Fun and games - Friday evening

The Theme this year is summer vibes. Feel free to dress up in your coolest summer outfit of your favourite decade.

The ATP is all about great CPD and having a great time. Join us for the Friday evening where we will be having an informal summer dinner followed by music and Taskmaster games, with our usual fabulous prizes!

BOOK NOW - YOU WON'T REGRET IT!

See you there.



Helen J. Kitching, CPsychol, FBPSS
Conference Organiser.
On behalf of the ATP Committee



Tribute to Deb Gajic

For those of you who are unaware, former Chair of the ATP (twice) Deb Gajic will be stepping down from the committee this year after 100 years. Well, 20 actually, but 100 years is the amount of time it would have taken any normal person to achieve all the work that Deb has completed for our members. In addition to Chair and treasurer Deb has led all the main committee roles, including membership, editing the magazine, representing the ATP on other bodies, and organising many amazing CPD events.

What does all this mean, you might ask? Well, it means a huge amount of hard work. For example, days spent in meetings, hours on trains, or motorways getting to meetings so that she can fight to ensure that post-16 psychology teaching is not downgraded, ignored, and undervalued. It means a lot of arguments (sorry, 'discussions'). It means endless emails, paperwork, and report writing, answering members' questions and; the sharing of resources with those in need of support. It means staying up late to do the last few bits. In Deb's case, it also means doing it all willingly and generously, as if she had nothing else in the world to do. Ping! Deb's answer arrives within ten seconds of the question being asked.

Here are a few other tributes from current and former committee members:

Mandy Wood

Deb has made an unparalleled contribution to the committee and to teachers of psychology everywhere. Over the last few years, I have had the great privilege of forming an informal 'virtual department' with her, supporting each other to navigate the world beyond the classroom. This has showcased her unwavering generosity and complete dedication to students and teachers, both newbies and those of us with a few thousand 'miles on the clock'. The ATP has been extraordinarily fortunate to have had her holding the purse strings.

Morag Williamson

It really is hard to overestimate the extent of progress that the ATP has made thanks to Deb's work. Deb's knowledge of how things work in the ATP is boundless; whenever there is uncertainty, members often resort to 'let's ask Deb!'. Her capacity for hard work is astonishing—she is scarily efficient! and unfailingly positive and cheerful! As a member of ATP in Scotland, I'm particularly grateful to Deb for her inclusive approach, always taking ATPS members into account in decisions such as timing and location of meetings, avoiding clashes of dates, etc. Will we manage without Deb? Let's hope so. She has given the ATP a fantastic role model to follow.

Dorothy Coombes

What can you say? Larger than life. Full of energy and enthusiasm. No nonsense. Her workshops on "What is Normal" at the conferences are legendary! Turning up in her pyjamas (and not just because she had slept in after a heavy night!). For years, she was the Queen of the ATP Games. She trawled every pound shop in the country, searching for suitable prizes. Deb is a font of all knowledge.

Harriett Ennis

Deb: Full to the brim of fun and incisive good advice in equal measure; Deb's wholehearted, intelligent, efficient, and perspicacious instrumental support of our beloved ATP has been second to none! The more I know her, the more I love and respect her! I would trust her with my life, let alone my money—a pretty good thing in a treasurer! Moreover, she might claim to be 'tight with money' but few people are as generous of spirit!

Helene Ansell

Deb is a talented and outstanding teacher of psychology. Her knowledge, practice, and reputation in this field are second to none. She is always willing to help anyone with resources or advice, no matter how many times someone may ask. If you ask Deb to do anything, it will be done immediately. At the various ATP conferences, her 'getting to know you' quizzes are legendary, and she could always be relied upon to host the parties in the kitchen, with a bottle or two of bubbles and a lot of laughter.

I honestly believe that one of the most important contributions that Deb has made to the community has simply been her unwavering presence; her just being there is calming. She makes everyone feel welcome, valued, and comfortable asking questions. The committee is in a great place at the moment, with a new generation of members waiting to take things forward. As Morag said, "she has given the ATP a fantastic role model to follow." I doubt you will be giving us any last words of advice Deb, but if you did, I think at some point you would remind us yet again that **"we have to remember it's our members' money!"**



Helen Gibb

For and on behalf of the ATP committee



AI tools with a chatbot interface can hold a conversation because they have access to a huge bank of vocabulary, limited memory and the algorithms to know what words typically come after another in a particular context. However, their reasoning ability is probably somewhere around the insect level.

Most of the current excitement is around generative artificial intelligence or GenAI. This produces content, most obviously text, but also images, video, music and code. There are other branches of AI of interest to psychologists, for example those dealing with facial emotion analysis, however all current AI is 'narrow' or 'weak.' This means that it is designed to carry out a narrow range of functions. We are probably decades away from developing general AI systems that can do what a human brain does.

Some practical applications of GenAI

GenAI can save the teacher a lot of time. You can for example find, summarise and structure research in a given area to create a handout or worksheet in seconds. Using prompts, you can refine this to display the length, depth and style you're after. GenAI tools respond well to prompts such as to summarise studies for the notional 17-year-old. Generic tools like *ChatGPT* and *Google Gemini* do a good job of this, but also consider more specialist academic tools like *Claude*, *Perplexity* and *Elicit*.

It's quicker to make images to liven up presentations and web pages than find them. Try *Canva* and *Stable Diffusion* for image generation. If you are prepared to throw some money at GenAI, tools like *HeyGen* and *Synthesia* generate avatars that will deliver presentations and short chunks of lessons – great for microlearning. Speaking of presentations, most GenAI tools will have a go at producing slide content, however *SlideShare* will actually take your content and output a fully-fledged *PowerPoint* file. That's a real time-saver.

As well as handouts/worksheets you can use GenAI to produce glossaries, quizzes and sample exam questions. You need never spend hours thinking up multiple choice questions again – almost any generic GenAI tool can do this. If you have the budget, tools like *QuizGecko* will take your documents, presentations or web pages and produce a quiz in a range of formats, meaning you can import it into most learning platforms.

GenAI tools will also save on admin time. Ever spent precious hours paraphrasing reports for dozens of students about whom you want to say much the same thing?

GenAI can do this, literally at the touch

Artificial intelligence: Balancing the benefits and risks in education

Artificial intelligence (AI), in particular generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), has taken the world by storm in the last year. With the (justified) excitement accompanying AI has come equally well-founded concern over academic integrity, data privacy, algorithmic bias, environmental degradation and cognitive harm. AI presents us with a dilemma; there are really good reasons not to use AI, yet it promises to improve our experience and productivity so dramatically that to not use it is almost inconceivable.

Panicked narratives

There is a narrative around that we *must* embrace AI *now* or be hopelessly left behind. Popular narratives often serve vested interests, and make no mistake; this one is essentially a sales pitch there to ensure a quick return on investments made by AI companies.

Narratives also develop from popular culture, and we typically use Sci-fi as a frame of reference for understanding new technologies. Here, AI has often been treated unkindly. Films like *Metropolis*, *The Matrix*,

Terminator, *Blade Runner* and *Alien* have portrayed AI, admittedly with varying degrees of nuance, on a spectrum of nastiness from petty through aggressive to genocidal. So, while Silicon Valley is pushing the 'everyone needs AI' agenda, we are drawing on our schemas of malevolent AI to understand it. No wonder we're anxious and conflicted about AI! While there are good reasons to worry about AI, for now at least, an AI-generated apocalypse is not one of them.

AI Literacy

The first step in introducing AI to a school or college is the development of AI literacy i.e. knowing about AI. AI literacy frameworks typically include knowing what AI is and how it can be used, understanding its weaknesses and limitations, and appreciating ethical issues around AI development and use.

So, what actually is AI? The term itself is somewhat misleading. You could be forgiven for thinking tools like *ChatGPT* have human-like intellect housed in a computer rather than a brain – same ghost, different machine. Actually, AI *simulates* intelligence.

of a button. It will also generate ideas for pedagogical activities and produce lesson plans and schemes of work.

So, what about marking? We are currently at the point where a small number of AI companies have launched extended prose marking tools and are claiming success (see for example *Graide* and *Keath*). However, AI marking tools are not yet really in the public domain for testing and many commentators are sceptical. For now, it's a case of 'watch this space.'

Are we allowed to use AI?

Teachers live in a world where killjoys take the moral high ground and usually get the last word, and where the pointless sacrifice of time is more a misconceived moral imperative than anything targeted towards benefiting students. Ours is also a world of systemic fear where senior leaders – who cannot be experts on every fast-moving aspect of education but are still accountable for them – overwhelmingly take conservative decisions out of fear of Ofsted's disapproval. It shouldn't be a surprise in this climate when SLTs take a cautious line on GenAI.

That said, according to a recent survey by Teacher Tapp, teachers are more likely to use AI in outstanding schools, so the evidence is actually with the modernisers. The government position is also surprisingly enlightened, with Gillian Keegan saying at the 2023 BETT technology exhibition that teachers' day-to-day work could be transformed by AI, and even referring to 'interesting experiments around marking.' There is thus no blanket disapproval from on high towards teacher use of AI. At the time of writing, we are waiting for Ofsted guidance on AI, but their brief has been to take a pro-innovation approach.



Arguments against the uncritical use of AI

So, AI can save teachers an enormous amount of time. Why then the caution? There are several important reasons why the incautious or uncritical use of AI can be problematic:

Academic integrity

Much of the caution around GenAI is based on its potential for cheating. This is less of an issue for Psychology than for coursework-based subjects. Students might produce homework using GenAI, but as long as you have sufficient in-class assessment this is unlikely to be a huge issue. In fact, if you flip your assessment and make homework preparation for in-class writing exercises, then the use of AI to prepare becomes a positive – developing an employability and HE transition skill.

Data privacy

Unless you're dealing with a company that has a written data sharing agreement with your school or college, uploading anything with student personal details constitutes a data breach. However, you are on pretty safe data ground with most AI use cases. Just be careful experimenting with marking tools.

Digital poverty & equity

Most AI tools have free and paid tiers. Once you introduce tasks that require or benefit from such tools you disadvantage students who can't afford the paid tier – even more so those who can't afford a smartphone or laptop. The most equitable solution – if your Management are on board – is to subscribe to one or more AI tools so that all students can benefit from paid versions.

Algorithmic bias

AI models have been trained in some haste as companies seek to keep up with competitors. One unintended consequence of this is bias in GenAI output. Research summaries are likely to over-emphasise US and European research at the expense of other regions. Images can be exclusionary and inappropriate (Bali, 2024). Ask AI for pictures of a hospital or ambulance and you will see many crosses but few crescents. A useful exercise is to challenge students to find this kind of bias.

Environmental concerns

The issues above are really reasons to use AI cautiously and critically rather than to eschew it altogether. But what if every AI prompt you write hastens environmental

collapse and our extinction? Because it might. AI servers generate a huge amount of heat, and the hardware we use to run AI locally requires the mining of rare minerals. Estimates vary as to how large these environmental degradation effects are and to what extent they are offset by using AI to plan eco-preservation. Nonetheless, on balance, using AI is probably bad for the environment.

The cognitive impact

This is perhaps the least talked about issue with the use of GenAI, but it may turn out to be the most serious. It appears that heavy use of AI can lead to a decline in accuracy of memory (Breitinger et al, 2021) and decision-making (Cai et al, 2020). Most worryingly, it also appears to impact on empathy (Druga et al, 2021). It seems that brain plasticity means that when we 'outsource' our cognition to AI we lose it. To what extent this can be mitigated and reversed is unknown, but I would make a point of having AI-free spaces, exercises and lessons in order to help preserve student cognition.



Matt Jarvis, C.Psychol, AFBPSS, PGCE, CMALT, FSET, FCCT, FRSA
Bournemouth University

Conclusions

AI is genuinely exciting, and unless policymakers make real mess of it, should be able to free teachers from most of the current drudgery. However, there are some compelling reasons for caution, and a couple of *really* inconvenient reasons why it might have been better were AI never to have been developed. That genie has well and truly bolted though, and it's too late to close the bottle. AI is here to stay. It's up to us to take control and use it responsibly.

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Easy ways to boost students' confidence with research methods



Catherine Vansaarloos
MEI
A charity improving maths education for all

The ATP began collaborating with **The Advanced Maths Support Programme (AMSP)** in 2020 to support teachers deliver the mathematical requirements in A level Psychology. This work has involved the creation of lots of free resources and the development of Professional Development courses which have received excellent feedback.

This was one of the best courses I have taken part in in 30 years - I loved it!

Participant in 2023-24 Maths for A level Psychology course

Embedding mathematical conversations

We asked the 80 A level Psychology teachers that had signed up to our online courses how they wanted to improve their teaching of research methods:

- More integrated into the course
- More engaging and interactive
- I'd like to be more confident
- **I want my students to be more confident - at the minute when I mention maths there is some unease in the classroom.**

Something that I do in my classroom is display a table, graph or infographic relating to the context we are working on. Sometimes this is data I have collected from the students and sometimes it is from an external source (e.g. Information Is Beautiful). I give the class a mini whiteboard each and ask questions like these:

- What do you notice? What do you wonder?
- What could you calculate and what would that tell you?

- Write a headline that could accompany this data/graph in a psychology paper
- Asking students to write down what they notice is such a simple activity but provides a huge range of ideas. Students that often leave research methods questions blank are encouraged to spend time considering the data and those that are more confident can share their thoughts with the rest of the group.

Example in-class activity on Conformity

The following activity replicates Jenness' 1932 study on conformity by asking students to estimate the number of jelly beans in a jar independently and then allowing them to estimate again following a discussion with a small group. The steps will show you how to get the most out of this activity with careful questioning and free online technology. These questions can be used with any set of data you are working with in Psychology.

1

Create a google form (or similar) with two opportunities for students to enter their estimates of number of jelly beans.

How many jelly beans?

Form description

How many jelly beans do you think there are in the jar?

Short-answer text

How many jelly beans do you think there are in the jar now?

Short-answer text

Students that often leave research methods questions blank are encouraged to spend time considering the data and those that are more confident can share their thoughts with the rest of the group.





2 Show the class a jar of jelly beans and ask them to independently estimate how many they think there are. They enter this number in the form under 'How many jelly beans do you think there are in the jar?'. They should **not yet press 'send'** on the form.

3 Now give them an opportunity to discuss their estimation strategies in a small group. Following the discussion tell them to enter in their second estimation on the form under 'How many jelly beans do you think there are in the jar now?'. Make sure students know that they don't have to agree with what their group says, and they can still enter in their own estimate. Once they have done this, they can then press 'send' on the form.

4 The form will provide you with a spreadsheet of data which can easily be analysed. **Before showing students the spreadsheet**, discuss the following:

- What do you think we will see when we look at the data? Why do you think that is?

In my experience, students will say that the second estimates are more likely to be close together (more consistent) because people have been influenced by what their group said. Some groups may even have calculated a mean based on their groups thoughts and all entered that.

- If we draw a histogram for each set of estimates, how do you think they will look different?

This is a follow on from the first question, it is to reinforce that the second estimate distribution is likely to be narrower than the first.

5 **Display the spreadsheet and ask and discuss the following:** (this is a sample of estimates I collected when running this activity)

- Do you think that your prediction that the second estimates are less spread out/more consistent was correct? What makes you say that?
- What could we calculate to show that this is the case? Here, you are hoping that students say range and standard deviation (please note that they won't have covered standard deviation in GCSE Maths)
- Do you think the first or second estimates are higher on average? What do you think the averages might be? You could ask students to predict the mean and median for the first and second estimates. I find that students are much more invested in the answer if they have made a prediction first.

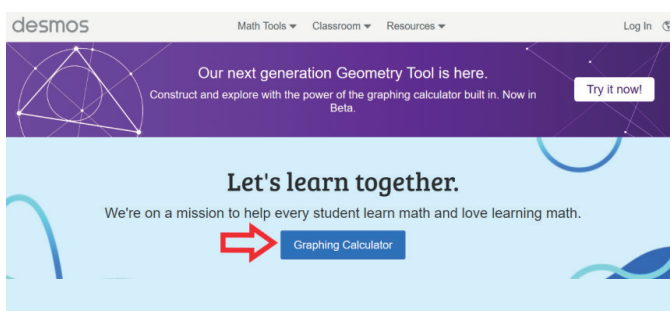
- Which mean estimate is likely to be closer to the true value of the number of jelly beans? *Every time I have run this activity the mean of the first estimates is closer to the true value than the mean of the second estimates. This could be due to the 'wisdom of the crowd' and the fact that the louder voices are influencing the others to change their minds.*



Find out more about The Wisdom of the Crowd: Scan the QR code

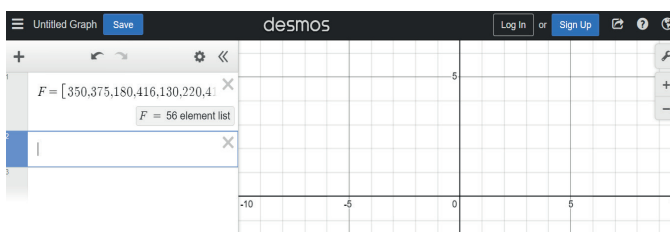
6

Copy the column of data containing the first estimates and go to [desmos.com](https://www.desmos.com) and select 'Graphing Calculator'



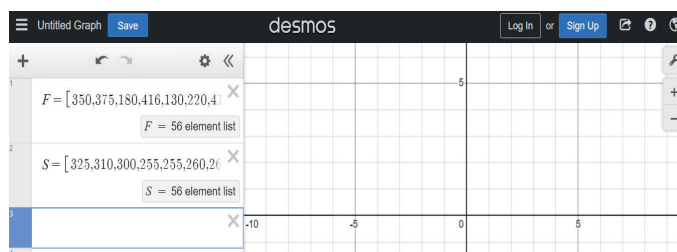
7

In the first row on the left type F= and then paste the first estimate you have copied from the spreadsheet. I have used the letter 'F' to represent the first estimates, but you could choose any letter. The square brackets automatically appear.



8

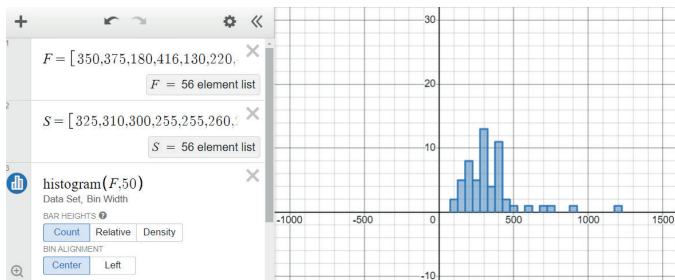
Now copy the column of second estimates from the spreadsheet. In row 2 of Desmos, type S= and paste the data.



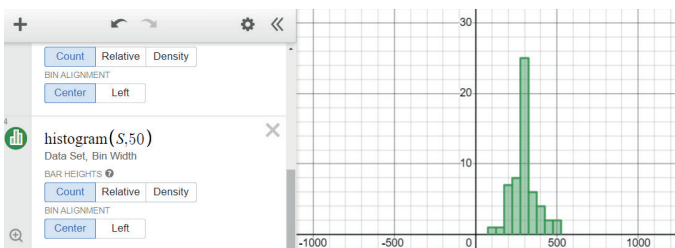
	B	C
	How many jelly beans do you think there are in the jar?	How many jelly beans do you think there are in the jar?
1		
2	350	325
3	375	310
4	180	300
5	416	255
6	130	255
7	220	260
8	410	264
9	340	360
10	300	300
11	264	264
12	289	289
13	250	250
14	350	323
15	314	323
16	256	323
17	425	375
18	280	323

9

To see the distribution of the data you can draw a histogram. Go to row 3 and type `histogram(F,50)`. Note that you must use the same letter here that you used in row 1. I have added the 50 so that each bar is 50 wide, you can change this to whatever suits your data.



And in row 4, type `histogram(S,50)` to get the distribution of second estimates:



You can ask students if these distributions align with what they predicted.

10

I would ask my students what they notice about the distributions of guesses. They may say things like: “the second estimates are more symmetrical” “there are a couple of higher first estimates” or if you have covered this already “the first estimates positively skewed”. I might also ask them what they now anticipate the mean and the median to be. Over time students will see that for positively skewed distributions the mean will be higher than the median.

To calculate the mean and the median, type `mean(F)` in row 5 and `median(F)` in row 6. You can also do this for the second estimates in rows 7 and 8. You can see with my data, although the distributions looked very different, the medians were the same. Because the first estimates were positively skewed; the mean of the first estimates was considerably higher than the second estimates.



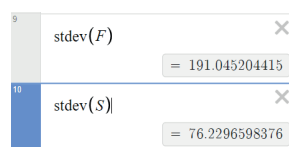
11

You can also calculate standard deviation by typing `stdev(F)` into row 9 and `stdev(S)` into row 10.

We can see that the second estimates had a much lower standard deviation, so their estimates were much more consistent after they had discussed their strategies with their groups.

There are other things that you could do with this data:

- Add another column to your spreadsheet to work out the percentage change in each person’s estimate
- Compare the class results with Jenness’ findings
- Collect data from different year groups and compare Students in your class that are also studying maths are very likely



to have used Desmos calculator before and often have already downloaded the Desmos app on their phones. This is a great opportunity to get them to share their knowledge and for you to discuss collaboration with the maths department.

Using our pre-prepared Desmos classroom activities

We have also created a growing collection of activities for the teaching of maths in A level Psychology. These can be used as homework or in lesson time. Explore the full collection:



“I have been using the resources to teach Stats and they have been amazing, the students are really enjoying them too.”
Participant in 2022-23 Maths for Psychology course

Maths for A level Psychology

By Catherine van Saarloos | 45 activities

Join the [Maths for A level Psychology course](#) starting in October 2023 (free for teachers in state funded schools and colleges in England)

Overview Video

This 10-minute video will give you an overview of the activities available and how to set and pace them for your students:



In our ‘Maths for teachers of A level Psychology course’ starting on the 2nd October 2024, you will get an opportunity to try out these activities and gain confidence in using Desmos. The eight-week online course is free for teachers in state funded schools and colleges in England. The cost to other participants is £195.



Sign up to the online course

In addition, you can get hands-on support at our workshop at The ATP Conference in July 2024.

Studying Level 3 Core Maths alongside A level Psychology

The government has announced that there will be additional funding of £900 for each Level 3 Core Maths student in 2024–2025. There is a great deal of overlap with the mathematical requirements of A level Psychology and the content of Level 3 Core Maths so now is the time to think about introducing it or strengthening numbers in your school or college.

What is Core Maths?

Core Maths is a Level 3 course, equivalent to an AS, which students take alongside their main subjects. In addition to providing ‘maths for life’ education in finance and critical analysis, studying Core Maths can increase student confidence in the mathematical requirements of their other A levels and courses.

Core Maths also provides students with reduced offers to certain courses at some universities

If you would like help setting up or strengthening Core Maths in your school or college please request bespoke support from a Core Maths Specialist Lead:

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to get in touch:

catherine.vansaarloos@mei.org.uk





Context

A key message soon emerged. Year 12 wanted more direction. They didn't really know what they were supposed to do with this wider reading, and even enthusiastic

students weren't thrilled about spending half an hour picking through a research paper from the 1990's to see if they might be able to use it to criticise one study. Could it be less about gathering more knowledge, and more about applying their learning?

Challenge

This is where, as a busy teacher, it gets problematic. Time is at a premium, and yet students needed structure. There are options such as the excellent subscription-based 'Psychology Review' by Hodder). But I was spending too much time searching, or ending up with things that were 'nice' to read but not quite relevant enough on their own.

Eventually, I found FT Schools (www.ft.com/schools). It has curated lists of reading with course-relevant questions and prompts. Even better, it's teachers who pick the articles and write the prompts. However, there was no psychology option. Fortunately, Andrew Jack enthusiastically agreed to launch a programme. I am privileged to be involved, and am delighted to share the resource (www.ft.com/psychologyclass) with colleagues more widely.

FT Schools

+ Add to myFT

Psychology class: stories for study

Read a selection of FT articles picked by our teacher advisers

APRIL 22 2024

Unlock the Editor's Digest for free

Roula Khalaf, Editor of the FT, selects her favourite stories in this weekly newsletter.

Sign up

*This article is part of the Financial Times free schools access programme.
Details/[registration here](#).*

Recommended FT articles and tasks picked by our teacher advisers to help improve study, exam and interview success.

Social Influence

Islam grapples with ‘Eichmann’ dilemma over Hamas attack trials

As a teacher, I can go straight to the psychology page, scroll through (or CTRL+F for tech wizards) to find a topic and get a link to share with students. No subscription, no log-in, it's just there. The articles are quick reads and whilst they don't directly cover a psychological study or theory, it's the questions that really make it valuable. These can be 'big' discussion/reflection style ones or knowledge and application ones that fit what I teach.

So, it saves time. It's free. And it's useful. I really encourage colleagues everywhere to have a look.

I'm also a teacher supporting the programme. Searching for articles and writing prompts doesn't take long. I'm also learning: when searching, I'm finding out about real world issues, and also thinking about how I can link to what I'm teaching, which gets me even more excited about psychology! Please consider getting in touch with Andrew and volunteering to develop this new resource. Even submitting a single 'pick' would benefit students and other teachers.

Benefits for Students

It supports literacy and real-world awareness, and A-level (and GCSE) psychology content. While it doesn't directly replace original psychological research, psychology-specific podcasts and so on, the FT schools programme carves its own niche by helping students bridge the gap between the real world and psychology learning. Students appreciate questions to guide them, and because they draw on the topics, theories and terms from their study, they see value in it. Sometimes it's a bit like revision. Sometimes it gets them to practise their application skills. Sometimes, it's simply an interesting talking point that builds engagement, thinking and argument.

In the Classroom

The programme could simply allow students to take what they want from it, when they want. But I think it works best when teachers direct students to a particular article. You could try this in a variety of ways:

- A set reading task before a lesson that supports discussion in class
- A set reading task after a lesson or series of lessons to apply concepts covered in class

- A 15-20 minute starter task with students reading the article and then discussing the prompts
- As part of an end-of-topic lesson involving application and retrieval of key concepts
- Using multiple articles as an application and revision lesson in Year 13 (e.g. assign an article to small groups who each feed back, or do it as a carousel)
- A basis for students to deliver a presentation or poster
- A club or enrichment activity

I really hope colleagues try this. It will continue to grow – even more so with your support. Teaching is tough and there isn't any time, I know. But I've enjoyed the (relatively short) time I've spent on this and I can see the value for my students.

FT Schools [Add to myFT](#)

Psychology class: Behold the Ozempic effect on business

Drug Treatments/Eating Behaviour



© Matt Kanyon

JANUARY 14 2024

Unlock the Editor's Digest for free
Roula Khalaf, Editor of the FT, selects her favourite stories in this weekly newsletter.

[Sign up](#)

This article picked by a teacher with suggested questions is part of the Financial Times free schools access programme. Details/registration [here](#).

Specification:

- Eating behaviour, biological approaches to treating mental health, impact of psychology on the economy, free will – determinism, reductionism-holism

Click the link below to read the article and then answer the questions:

[Behold the Ozempic effect on business](#)

Andrew Jack, Global education editor, Financial Times, adds:

The FT provides full free access online to students aged 16-18, their teachers and schools around the world to offer curriculum enrichment, foster media literacy and bridge the transition to the world beyond school. A staff member just needs to register at www.ft.com/schoolsarefree. Anyone with an official school email can also create an individual account for remote access. Get in touch if you would like to become involved: Andrew.Jack@FT.com

Brain Teaser

This edition's brain teaser is a nonogram. You colour in blocks of the grid according to the numbers given on the row or column. There is always at least one empty square between the different blocks in a row or column.

Scan the QR code to watch a video guide for more information.



Entries should be emailed to **UKpsychED@hotmail.com** with the subject heading: 'Prize Puzzle 6' with your name and address and a clear image of the correctly completed puzzle.

The deadline for the competition is 20th July 2024 and the winner will receive a £10 Amazon voucher. Only current ATP members are eligible.

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Well done to Kelly Wilcock for winning Prize Puzzle 5 with the correct answer of 'typo'. There was only one entry, so do make sure to enter this competition as you have a very good chance of winning!

WINNER - Y12 Student

Bella Prestney of Royal Hospital School, Suffolk

How should psychologists leverage advances in modern technology in their research and or practice?

Abstract:

Psychology is an ever-evolving field which has required the fusion of modern technology and human understanding to sculpt our current perception of human behaviour. This essay explores four of the main ways that psychologists can leverage advances in modern technology in their research and practice. In the wake of the pandemic, the development of modern technology has accelerated, providing a wide breadth of new opportunities. These hold the possibility of revolutionising our understanding of the human mind and consequently, the quality of mental health care that can be provided by psychologists.

Essay:

The symbiotic relationship between cognitive psychology and AI is one of the key factors that may help contribute to the exponential growth of both psychologist's understanding of behaviour and that of AI development. Defined by the Oxford Learner's Dictionary as 'the study and development of computer systems that can copy intelligent human behaviour,' AI is a broad spectrum of technology that provides psychologists and researchers with a wide breadth of possibilities to enhance understanding and practice that only expand looking forward into the future. By using machine learning models alongside scientific regret minimisation psychologists can begin filling the gaps in many of the current theories regarding the causation of human behaviour (Griffiths, 2023) in this way, AI can

be used as a tool to continue expanding and developing the understanding psychologists have. Therefore, developments in AI not only have the potential to lead to reciprocal growth in psychological understanding and research but they can also provide resources for psychologists to use in practice such as therapy.

Currently one of the critical problems worsening the mental health crisis is the access to therapy. Worldwide, the demand for therapy far outweighs the number of therapists able to provide such a service, one study revealed that 6 out of 10 practitioners could not provide any appointments for new patients and 46% were unable to keep up with the growing demand for therapy. (Bethune, 2022) Although much of this demand has been exacerbated by the pandemic, it did not erect it and the issue still remains prevalent years later. To combat this, AI can be harnessed to produce conversational agents feasible of delivering a web-based form of CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) and studies have proven that users exposed to the programme reported significantly reduced symptoms of depression. (Fitzpatrick et al., 2017) The importance of human connections is something that must not be overlooked, as humans from birth to death we are continually building connections and relationships with one another which has become one of the key influences over our wellbeing. Furthermore, empathy is a fundamental principle that has guided therapy to the success it now has, crucially such an intrinsically human trait is something that can never be entirely replicated by AI. Although AI can therefore be programmed to provide some forms of therapy, it would for this reason be most

The symbiotic relationship between cognitive psychology and AI is one of the key factors that may help contribute to the exponential growth of both psychologist's understanding of behaviour and that of AI development.

effectively used in conjunction with a human therapist to augment psychotherapeutic provisions and the overall experience of a patient without sacrificing the key connections made between a therapist and patient. Additionally, it must be ensured that this development does not lead to an overreliance on AI.

One of the most commonly utilised technological advancements in the 21st century is that of smartphones; a product in which consumption has grown exponentially since its release. As of 2021 88% of people over 16 owned a smartphone, a rapid growth compared to 2008 when the figures stood at 17% owning a smartphone (Hiley, 2023) and with these numbers only predicted to grow it is something firmly rested in the future of psychological knowledge. Despite the seemingly useful appeal of these devices, there are numerous studies connecting smartphone usage to addictive behaviour alongside decreased mental and physical well-being. A study by King's College London revealed that 1 in 4 children and young people use their smartphone in a way that is consistent with a behavioural addiction (Sohn & Carter, 2019) However,



psychologists can leverage these devices and their information to augment the insight that psychologists have into human behaviour. Predictive algorithms using smartphone data can be used to detect behaviours such as those linked to suicide risk in order to provide early intervention. (María Luisa Barrigón et al., 2023) By utilising and developing upon programmes such as these, psychologists can attempt to reduce the risk of suicide, something which is the fourth leading cause of death in children and adults between 15-29 (WHO, 2023). Furthermore, researchers can begin developing apps that promote improved physical and mental well-being to pivot the utilisation of devices in an increasingly more positive direction. Researchers in Sweden constructed an app designed to help users overcome social anxiety disorder (Miloff et al., 2015), something which demonstrates one of the many possibilities that these devices provide for the future of psychological practice and understanding. In this way, advancements in mobile devices are facilitating a new method of analysis into the causation of human behaviour that psychologists must utilise to enhance their research and practice.

Research in Psychology has always faced barriers, whether it be from ethical guidelines and boundaries or the influence of bias, which restrict the reliability and validity or even simply the capability of the researcher to proceed with the research. Despite this, there is one prominent example of barriers to research that has not been addressed, and that is the researcher's ability to increase the external validity of a study within a lab setting. However, one of the new areas of modern technology seeks to address this issue, VR (virtual reality), which is defined by the Oxford Learner's Dictionary as 'images created by a computer that appear to surround the person looking at them and seem almost real.' Virtual reality provides the freedom for psychologists to generalise the setting of their research to the specifics that they desire, therefore being able to increase the external validity of a study whilst still controlling the setting and variables within it. Previously one of the roadblocks to allowing such advancements was the cost of research-grade consumer systems, however, due to cost reductions and increased availability there are predicted to be 34 million of these systems installed in 2024. (Draschkow, 2022) By utilising such a resource psychologists can improve the (external) validity of their research thereby producing a more credible scientific basis

for many psychological theories.

Whilst virtual reality can be used to improve the validity of psychologists' research it can also help leverage psychological practice, particularly within the specific practice of exposure-based therapies for phobias. VR can be tailored specifically to match aspects of a patient's fear structures to allow these to be modified more effectively meaning that patients can overall be treated more successfully. Furthermore, VR appears to provide a safer environment for patients with a study showing that patient refusal rate was lowered from 27% to 3% when VR exposure was used (Maples-Keller et al., 2017). This suggests that the use of VR as one area of modern technology can help psychologists gain more precision in both their practice and research but importantly it can also be used in a way that improves patient satisfaction and willingness to engage in treatments. Despite the references to exposure-based therapy, with the extensive possibilities of technology, particularly regarding that of VR capabilities, psychologists should also explore the use of technology such as VR in the treatment of a variety of mental disorders.

Technology is not only a sector of major growth currently but also an area that is predicted to continue expanding for many years, continually providing new pathways for the field of psychology to progress and evolve. However, as this new growth explores more of the previously unknown, we must heed with caution to prevent an over reliance on AI in the future at the expense of the efficacy and reliability of psychological research and practice. Fundamentally there is a distinction between the programming of AI and human behaviour, AI behaviour is programmed to be entirely predictable whereas human behaviour by nature is unpredictable and this difference is one of the foundations for the reasons why AI cannot be solely used in the practice but also research of psychology. For this reason, we must recognise the significance of human connections and the deeply rooted role of empathy that human psychologists can provide. Despite this, modern technology is undoubtedly a resource that psychologists and researchers must use alike as within this new wave of advancements comes the potential to more easily and effectively analyse behaviour. Alongside this deepened understanding comes new development for psychological theories and therefore the ability to better

Researchers in Sweden constructed an app designed to help users overcome social anxiety disorder (Miloff et al., 2015), something which demonstrates one of the many possibilities that these devices provide for the future of psychological practice and understanding.

treat mental disorders and finally tackle the growing mental health crisis. To conclude, it would be remiss of psychologists not to enhance their research and practice when modern technology provides such rich opportunities to do so in ways that include but are not limited to those explored within this essay.

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Second Place Winner

By Freya Lawson-Jackson from Great Baddow High School, Essex



How should psychologist leverage advances in modern technology in their research and/or practice?

Abstract

This essay looks at some of the ways technology is being used in psychological research and practice. By researching various aspects, including real life examples of the tools being used in therapeutic settings, the essay sheds light on the role technology has the potential to play in shaping the landscape of psychology. It looks at the role of emerging fields such as Virtual Reality and Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation as well as more simplistic and widespread ideas such as mobile applications. It also brings up the potential issues involved with reliance on technology and addresses how these should be combatted.

How should psychologists leverage advances in modern technology in their research and/or practice?

There is a lot of emerging research on the impact of technology on human psychology, however what is less commonly talked about is the impact of technology on psychology as a field. Technological advancements vary from industry revolutionising technology such as Virtual Reality, to smaller changes with a big impact such as self-help apps and programmes.

Self-help

As the world becomes increasingly reliant on mobile phones, self-help apps are the most widespread and accessible form of psychological aid and although they are often a psychological grey area as many are unregulated services, they can play a big role in making psychological treatment more accessible to a large population. Big Health has generated two programmes, one, called Daylight, which is aimed at helping

those with generalised anxiety disorder and the other, called Sleepio, is aimed at helping those with insomnia. Across the UK and USA, these programmes have been made available to 10 million people (Weir, 2021) and both programmes are available free of charge to all residents of Scotland through the NHS (Big Health, 2021a). These programmes have proven to be successful within research. Daylight saw 71% remission in anxiety in the digital CBT group compared to 33% remission in the waitlist control group (Carl et al, 2020). Similarly, Sleepio helped 76% of patients achieve clinical improvement in insomnia (Big Health, 2021b). These results demonstrate how efficient self help programmes can be and this could easily be leveraged in psychological practice if it became available through the NHS across the UK and if it became approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the USA.

Another way programmes and self-care apps like these could be leveraged to advance psychological practice is using them in concordance with Psychotherapy. Paddle is an app currently being tested within the Thames Valley NHS Talking Therapy Services (Paddle, 2019). It is meant to be used during and after a course of therapy and aims to prevent relapse by using a questionnaire to flag negative behaviours before a full relapse (M. Lee, personal communication, November 23, 2023). If successful, the app may be useful in keeping patients healthier for a more prolonged period and may alleviate some pressure on the mental health services. This app will be prescription only and may be an opportunity to provide more effective treatment without medication through the NHS.

Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation

Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation (tDCS) allows reversible modulation of brain activity in specific areas, making it a useful tool in investigating brain-behaviour

relationships (Thair, Holloway, Newport & Smith, 2017). "Research suggests that it's possible to change the activity of these [brain] neurons and change how the brain works using a small electric current" (The Brain Centre, 2019, 00:07). It is evident there has been a lot of advancement in this area as according to Thair et al. (2017) there were only 65 articles on PubMed with the phrase tDCS between the years 2000 and 2005. Whereas in the last 5 years from 2018-2023 there have been 5,391 articles. As well as this, there has been research evidencing that tDCS can be applied to reduce symptoms of depression (Fregni et al., 2006; Nitsche et al., 2009 as cited in Thair et al., 2017). The inexpensive equipment, potential to reduce depressive symptoms and advancing research provides an opportunity for tDCS to see more use in psychological research.

Virtual Reality

Psychologists should leverage Virtual Reality in both research and practice because it serves a unique purpose in both areas. It should be leveraged in psychological practice as it has been seen to be effective in treating specific phobias such as fears of flying, acrophobia and arachnophobia (Maples-Keller, Bunnell, Kim & Rothbaum, 2017). One activity they may require you to do if they are trying to help people get over acrophobia is climb up a tree and save a cat (M. Lee, personal communication, November 23, 2023).

Virtual Reality is also a useful tool in research because it allows for a greater control of the environment, leading to results with a higher ecological validity.

Psychologists should leverage Virtual Reality in both research and practice because it serves a unique purpose in both areas.

It is necessary to point out the flaws in technology use as it provides more context on looking at the importance of how it is used. Technology should be approached as what it is: an aid not a solution.

“VR’s exciting to me as a scientist because it allows me an element of control I otherwise wouldn’t get if I was trying to study what I study [the psychology of spatial awareness] in the real world” (Smith, 2022). Virtual Reality provides a unique opportunity for psychologists because it allows them to know exactly what the participant is seeing, whilst also ensuring it will simulate the exact same experience for every participant involved.

However, it is important Psychologists use Virtual Reality in a way that does not create an unpleasant experience for participants and/or clients. Virtual Reality can often cause motion sickness due to the concept that the body movement is not in sync with the movement experienced in Virtual Reality. It is important that, if used, psychologists find a way to navigate this. Otherwise, its capacity for use in either research or practice could become extremely limited. Some ways to get around the issue of motion sickness would be having a large space that is walkable so the movements in the virtual reality can align with the real world or choose a task that does not require movement (Smith, 2022)

Possible Issues

It is necessary to point out the flaws in technology use as it provides more context on looking at the importance of how it is used. Technology should be approached as what it is: An aid not a solution. Getting lost is a behavioural marker of memory deficit (A. Smith, Personal communication, November 23, 2023). Neural plasticity works on the idea that the more a neural pathway is used, the more automatic it becomes (K. Petty, Personal communication, November 20, 2023). When technology is provided as a solution or immediate relief to the retrieval failure, for example, google maps immediately being used, people start relying less on their environment and therefore inhibit

the function of their neural pathways as technology as a solution has just offloaded the issue onto an application rather than deal with it at the root. This is different to when psychologists use technology as a tool. For example, when technology was used as an aid to training the hippocampus rather than as the actual intervention—there was less neuronal volume lost with age (Smith, personal communication, November 23, 2023).

In addition, there needs to be thought about the medium of technology as well as which companies own it. Terry Kuny in 1997 was one of the first people to propose the idea of a digital dark age (Archyde, 2021). When psychologists use any modern technology, they should make a point to note down their most important points in a medium that is easier to preserve because “Digital collections facilitate access, but do not facilitate preservation.” (Terry Kuny, 1997). For example, there have been many forms of technology that are now more difficult to access such as any research that has been recorded on a cassette would now require someone to have a cassette player or it would just lie there as unusable data. To avoid wasting research and creating a future without gaps in knowledge, it is really important psychologists think about how they’re using technology advancements in their practice/ research, especially with the rate at which technology is changing and advancing. For example, even within the 14 years since the first iPhone came out the chargers already wouldn’t fit the new ones.

Another very important factor in making sure psychologist pay attention to how they’re leveraging advances in technology is by being aware of what company owns your data stores. For example cantab is a website that allows neuropsychological tests to be run and stored for you but the major issue is it is paywalled (Smith, personal communication, November 23, 2023). Paywalls have the potential to cause big problems in the fields of psychological research. The reason for this is because, if you stopped being able to pay or something happened to the company – you would lose all your research. This means when psychologists use technology as a method of keeping track or storing data they should make a physical copy or try and go for an open access version.

Technology is advancing daily and this essay has just scratched the surface on

the possibilities posed by leveraging these advances. Psychologists embracing the changing technological world in practice and research can have a positive impact on driving forward development of more readily available treatments such as phone applications as well as allowing high levels of control within experiments. Technology can also be leveraged to improve treatment time and reduce the severity and frequency of relapses in poor mental health. The potential held by leveraging technological advances go beyond what can be known now as there will surely be new technologies appearing, which is why it is also important that when using these technologies, psychologists consider issues of media redundancy and data control. Considering these things increases the chance of protecting psychological data and allow it to stay relevant throughout time.

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Proactive inclusion of neurodiversity in education

The 18th–24th of March 2024 saw another successful Neurodiversity Celebration Week (<https://www.neurodiversityweek.com>) – a worldwide initiative that aims to celebrate different minds, raise awareness of strengths and talents of neurodivergent people, and challenge stereotypes. In keeping with this celebration, this article aims to prepare you to create an inclusive and accessible environment, so all can learn.

The neurodiversity paradigm has gained momentum since the late 90's. The term was first introduced by social scientist and disability rights activists Judy Singer, to encompass the infinite and naturally occurring variability of the human brain. This movement aims to move away from a 'deficit' based model and narrative of neuro-differences. Neurodiversity is an umbrella term for differences such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, autism, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and Tourette's syndrome – though there are several more! Neurodiversity is not a medical or diagnostic term, but a movement that aims

to recognise and celebrate different minds, acknowledging that variation and diversity are essential parts of the human experience.

Neurodiverse people might learn and process information differently, and thus see, navigate, and interact with the world differently. It is estimated that 1 in 7 of us in the UK have a neurodevelopmental difference, which is around 15%. Whilst people who are neurodivergent may experience several strengths in ways of thinking, they can also experience challenges such as information processing, concentration, reading, adapting to change, sensory sensitivities (e.g. light, sound, smells, touch), fatigue, and social-communication challenges. It is less helpful to think of neurodivergence as being on a scale from 'less functional' to 'more functional' but rather to appreciate 'spiky profiles'. This refers to areas of strength and challenges across various skills and cognitive abilities, and the variation between them is more pronounced in neurodivergent people. Spiky profiles will look differently for each person, and across different situations.

The neurodiversity movement aligns with the social model of disability, which outlines that people themselves are not 'less able' (c.f. the medical model of disability), but are disabled by society and the barriers that exist which prevent neurodivergent people from equitable opportunities. They may also experience prejudice, systematic exclusion, and restricted access. In a world which is much more geared to the neurotypical experience, neurodivergent people must navigate structures that are not always conducive to their growth or wellness. According to the social model of disability, responsibility should be upon governments, organisations, and structures, and on all of us to create a more equitable society for all. As educators, this is especially important, and we should endeavour to embrace all differences and create learning environments that are proactively inclusive.

But, what do we mean by a proactively inclusive learning environment?

Firstly, let's begin with what it is not. Proactive inclusion is not about putting the onus on an individual to advocate for themselves and their rights, and it is not about depending on individuals to disclose their conditions so that they may experience accessible education or adjustments. It is not about having a 'back up' learning experience for those who disclose that they might need it. Proactive inclusion therefore begins with fostering a culture of psychological safety, that welcomes differences, and disclosure – but only if people choose to disclose their neurodivergence.

Proactive inclusion looks beyond simply diversity, and involves creating an environment that is conducive to everybody's learning, and one which aims to reduce barriers and enhance enablers. Barriers to learning might include the physical environment (e.g. light, sound), educational systems such as focus on exams, aspects of curriculum or learning design which may disadvantage those with cognitive or social differences (e.g. overly complex assessments requiring high information processing load), and lack of staff training. Enablers may include reviewing policies to ensure they are not structurally disadvantageous or inaccessible, effective communication and an appreciation that people may have different communication preferences, physical and virtual environments that are inclusive and not overwhelming, initiatives to support belonging, and a variety of teaching methods,

adjustments, and importantly – choice.

Universal design for learning (UDL) is a term that refers to ‘designing for all’, and provides a framework for inclusive learning design and principles for everyone. People have different learning preferences, as well as their own experiences and worldview. UDL minimises barriers and maximises learning, and is about designing a flexible curriculum that works for everyone. Firstly, it is important to think of the learning goal, and the barriers that a diverse student group may experience in reaching said goal. The three UDL principles are representation, action and expression, and engagement, and aim to reduce those barriers. Representation involves providing multiple means of representing information and content (e.g. multimedia) with varied supports. Action and expression refer to multiple means of allowing students to express and demonstrate what they know, and providing feedback, models, and support for different levels. Engagement refers to providing multiple elements, autonomy, and choice to fuel students’ engagement and interest, and foster a love of learning and acceptance of mistakes.

UDL can also be seen as a ‘compassion pedagogy’. This is an approach to teaching

and learning with a focus on empathy, understanding, and care for a learner’s wellbeing and development. Compassion pedagogy recognises that a student is not only an intellectual learner, but a person with varying needs, experiences, thoughts, and feelings. Through this, compassion pedagogy guides a learning environment which is supportive and nurturing.

Accessible learning resources

To develop these, an educator must source or produce a range of accessible learning resources; for example, the use of audio-visual or other multimedia materials, background non-white colour in presentations, ‘hands on’ or experiential problem solution using physical materials.

When designing inclusive learning materials an educator should keep in mind the following:

Colours – e.g. red and yellow may be over-stimulating, as well as high contrast, and black font on white backgrounds

Font – e.g. choose sans-serif type font. Improving visual design can be an important way for supporting inclusivity as this tends to involve faster processing in less space.

Imagery – To accommodate slower or

impaired processing (especially when paired with other challenges like simultaneous talking) simplicity, good sequencing of imagery can aid access.

Reduce cognitive load– Keeping points concise can also support faster processing, as well as reducing the units of information that needs processing at a given time (i.e. avoid those overwhelming slides!).

But, there is **unlikely to be a ‘one size fits all’** accessibility measure for designing learning materials, given that ‘diversity’ is embedded in the concept of ‘neurodiversity’.

Despite much philosophical

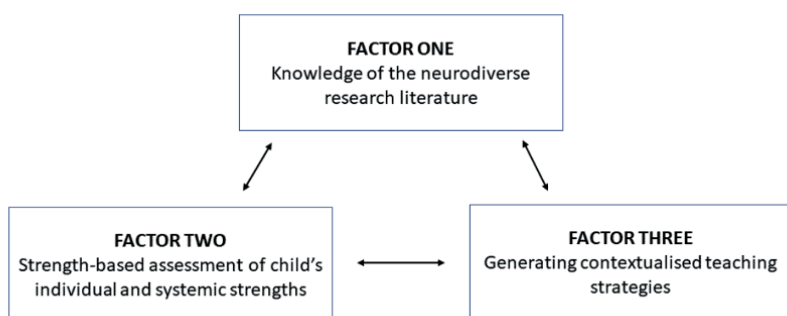
consideration around inclusive education, and nearly 30 years of international and UK policy initiatives, research on precisely which pedagogic approaches and situated practices enable inclusion at the point of delivery is less available. It is clear there are many dilemmas in implementing inclusive education, and it certainly is an evolving practice. However, what is key is a commitment and sense of responsibility as educators to move towards educational delivery and experiences that are conducive to all learners, and the reduction of barriers to those of us who are neurodivergent.

Neurodivergence in the classroom

Designing pedagogies and learning experiences that embrace neurodiversity is indeed challenging, especially within the wider context and challenges that educators already face. Educators may customise and refine learning materials, resources, and pedagogical practice so they may be inclusive of all. Sewell and Park (2021), seeking a bridge between theoretical literature and pedagogic practice, have developed a three-part model to guide new teachers through the process of meeting the range of neurodivergence in the classroom.

This model follows the following steps:

- 1. Training** - The first activity involves familiarising oneself with the available literature (for example, doing a course or attending training). This provides an oversight of the nature of need, and strategies to address them.
- 2. Assessment of the student’s strengths** - The next part entails assessing the child’s capacities and strengths, not only in the institutional context of the school, but in the wider social worlds and activities that the pupil participates in.
- 3. Generate teaching strategies** - The third develops means to unite the student’s strengths across those contexts in teaching strategies.



Extend your knowledge

At Arden University, we are passionate about Neurodiversity, and are on a journey to make education more inclusive for all. We are so passionate about it, that we’ve developed a Postgraduate certificate in Neurodiversity course, that embeds inclusive educational practice and provides insight and contemporary research and perspectives on neurodiversity within education, the criminal justice system, and the workplace.

Contact Sarah Moseley

(see back page) to be directed to useful information if interested in this course.



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