

## March, 2019

The Perception Zone was a themed zone for sixth form students, supported by the British Psychological Society. There were six psychologists in the zone:

- Vassilis Sideropoulos, the zone winner, is a laboratory technician looking at how the brain saves information and solves problems.
- Tirso Gonzalez Alam uses MRI machines to scan the brain and work out which parts are responsible for which actions.
- Matthew Longo is a professor of cognitive neuroscience who is studying how we perceive and experience our body.
- Jane Aspell is a senior lecturer in cognitive neuroscience who looks at how the brain experiences body illusions.
- Dawn Rose researches the link being music and wellbeing, particularly in people with Parkinson's.
- Alexandra Quigley is a psychologist for the NHS helping people who are experiencing pain.

### Key figures from the Perception Zone and the averages of the March zones

PAGE VIEWS	PERCEPTION ZONE	MAR '19 ZONES AVERAGE
<b>Total zone</b>	10,969	15,399
<b>ASK page</b>	334	1,114
<b>CHAT page</b>	586	1,291
<b>VOTE page</b>	521	1,327

	PERCEPTION ZONE	MAR '19 ZONES AVERAGE	IAS 2012-19 AVERAGE
<b>Perception Zone Schools</b>	7	8	10
<b>Students logged in</b>	202	388	391
<b>% of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE</b>	89%	92%	86%
<b>Questions asked</b>	113	443	675
<b>Questions approved</b>	89	216	297
<b>Answers given</b>	188	437	532
<b>Comments</b>	22	29	71
<b>Votes</b>	162	312	308
<b>Live chats</b>	18	19	16
<b>Lines of live chat</b>	2,398	6,732	5,711
<b>Average lines per live chat</b>	133	352	358

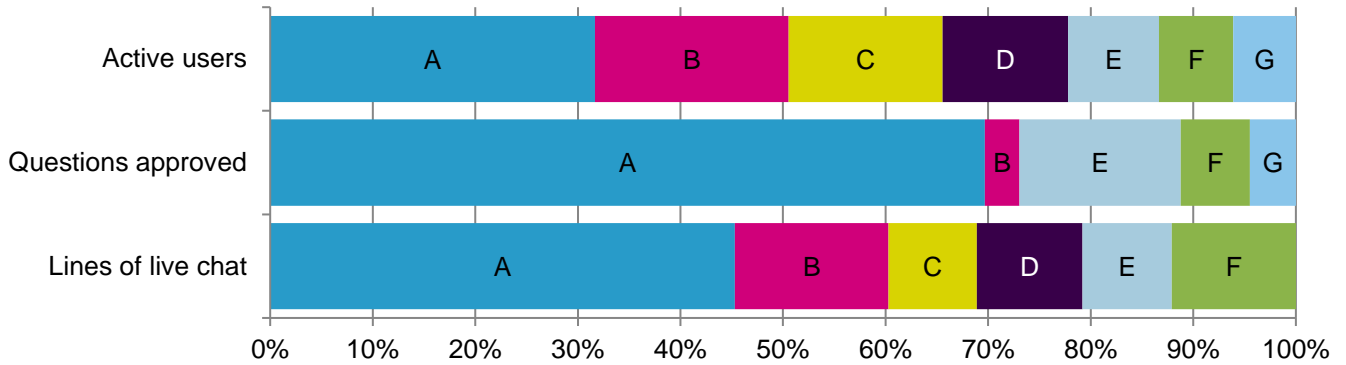
### Popular topics

Students had in-depth conversations with the psychologists about their work, frequently asking Alexandra about pain, Jane about the link between music and health, and all about psychology and neuroscience.

'Brain' was a word commonly used in both ASK and CHAT, relating to questions such as: "Why do some people who suffer from migraines have brain waves which appear like someone with epilepsy?"

Students also asked about careers within psychology, and where a psychology degree could lead for them. They also wanted to know about the psychologists' personal opinions on current affairs and more controversial topics.

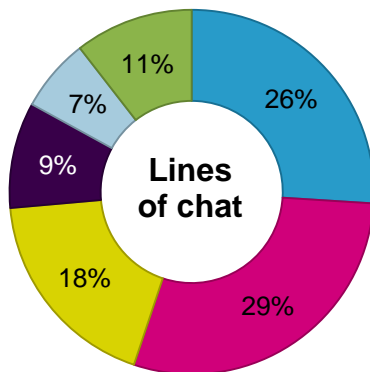
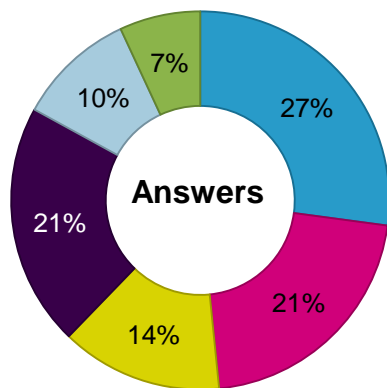
**School data at a glance**



School	Year/s	Classes
A	Y12, Y13	5
B	Y12	3
C	Y12	1
D	Y13	3
E	Y12	2
F	Y12	2
G	Y12	3

We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups going into STEM careers. Find out what we mean by our under-served (U) and WP schools (WP), and how you can support us in working with more of these at [about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp/](http://about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp/)

**Psychologist activity**

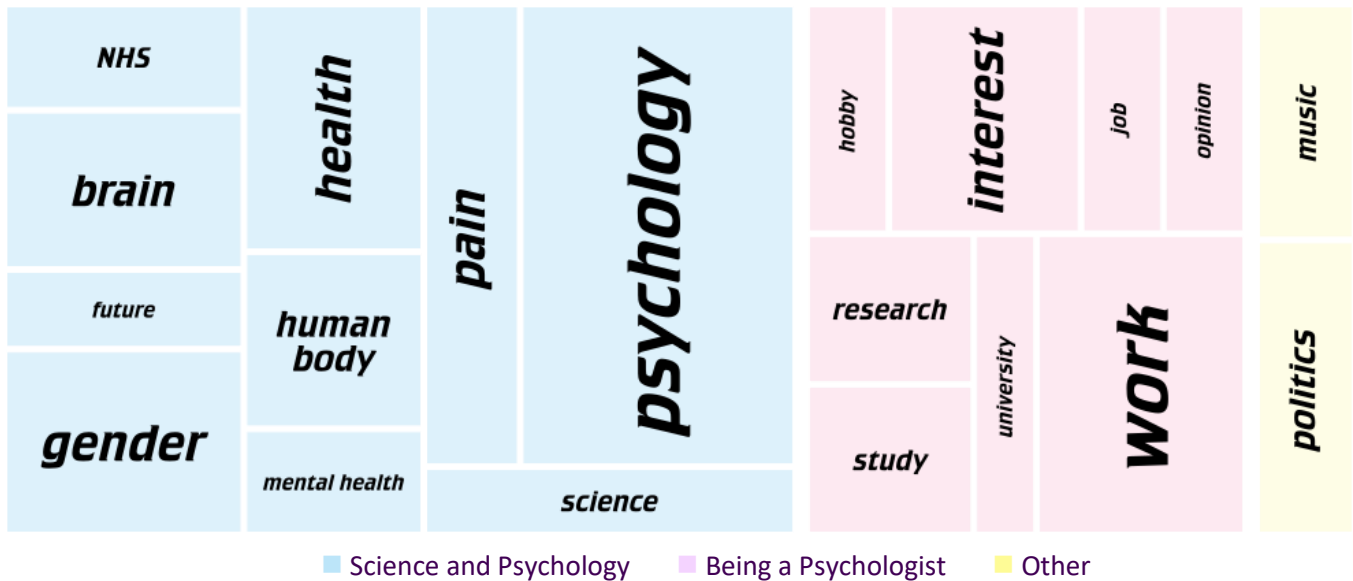


PSYCHOLOGIST	PROFILE VIEWS	POSITION
Vassilis Sideropoulos	357	Winner
Dawn Rose	303	2nd
Matthew Longo	251	3rd
Alexandra Quigley	269	4th
Tirso Gonzalez Alam	276	5th
Jane Aspell	221	6th

Ask ?

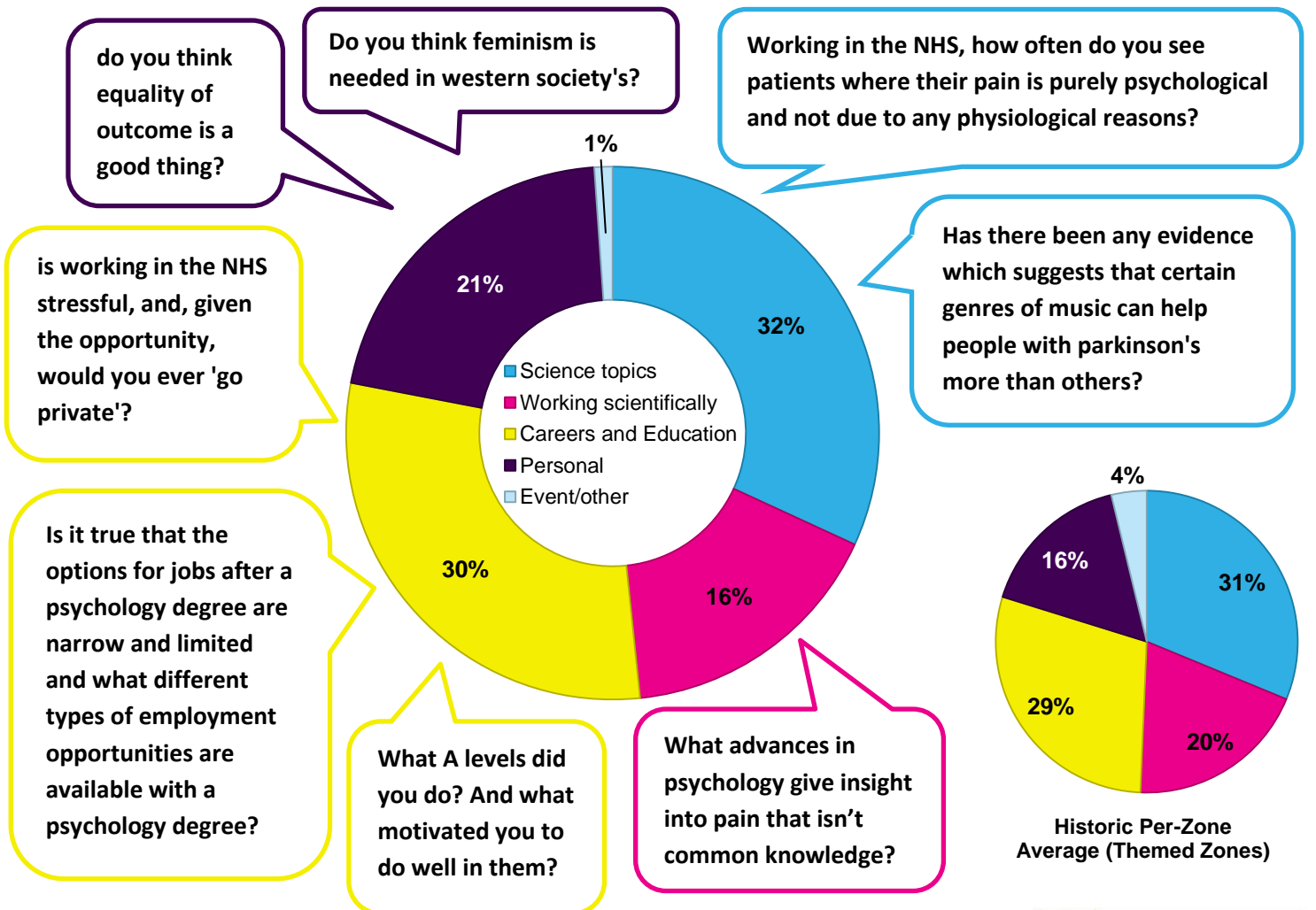
Top Keywords of questions approved in the Zone

Area represents frequency of use



Question themes and example questions in the Zone

Find out about how we've coded the questions at [about.imascientist.org.uk/what-do-students-ask-about/](http://about.imascientist.org.uk/what-do-students-ask-about/)



Chat 

Frequent words used in live chats by students and psychologists. Size of the word represents its popularity



**Examples of good engagement**

Students were interested in the psychologists' routes to their current careers, and discovered that the path to Tirso's job was winding. Tirso explains he 'felt everyone knew more than me' when starting to work in his field, helping to show the students that you don't have to know everything to be a scientist.

*"Tirso did you start out in cognitive neuroscience or another field?" – Student*

*"I started in Communication Science because I wanted to be a film director! :O Switched to psychology, then did neuropsychology and then came here after working in hospitals and universities for a while" - Tirso, Psychologist*

*"How did you find neuropsychology?" – Student*

*"Fascinating. I got to see cases that you wouldn't believe, like someone who had forgotten how to read but could still write. He could write something and then not be able to read what he wrote! It started my passion for neuroscience." - Tirso, psychologist*

*"Which aspect of your work in neuroscience/neuropsychology do you find the most challenging?" – Student*

*"At first working with magnetic resonance imaging was a nightmare for me. I never did it before and I felt everyone knew more than me and I was really dumb compared to them and didn't understand anything" - Tirso, psychologist*

In the ASK section there was interest in the subject of psychology in education and its future:

*"How relevant do you think psychology as a subject will be in 100 years?" – Student*

*"I think that psychology will always be important as a subject, since our mental lives are at the*

core of who we are. However, it is very possible that we will see changes in what sorts of things people consider to be psychology. Cross disciplinary research is becoming increasingly important, and its easy to imagine that the boundaries between psychology and related fields such as neuroscience, economics, and education may change or become blurred.” – **Matthew, psychologist**

“Psychology is really embedded in our lives so I think it will stay relevant. For example, all those ‘other people don’t drop their litter, so why would you’ adverts are based on ‘nudge’ psychology – and loads of stuff about how we use the internet is informed by psychology...and even if we had a catastrophic event that meant we lived differently (like climate change) we would still need psychology to work out new ways to live!” – **Dawn, psychologist**

“Psychology will always be a relevant science, mainly because Psychologists are studying human behaviour and thought and action. For this reason Psychologists will always have to research about something new related to human behaviour – for instance even if we find the cure to all the mental health related disorders and learn how to treat cognitive impairments, we will still need to find better ways of doing things. I think Psychology is like Medicine, they both become irrelevant when there’s not form of life.” – **Vassilis, psychologist**

“Completely agree with all of the other answers. Psychology helps people to get over emotional troubles, but it also guides advertisers, medics, business, technology, sports, and soooooo many other arenas of life.

The science of why people think and behave in the way that they do, and how to influence that, will never be redundant!” – **Alexandra, psychologist**



### **Psychologist winner: Vassilis Sideropoulos**

Vassilis’s plans for the prize money: “I want to spend it on organizing different types of events, conferences, practical classes or informative seminars, to showcase how Psychologists are not only doing one thing. These events will inform people, but particularly inspire young students!”

Read Vassilis’s [thank you message](#).

### **Student winner: Cathryn**

Cathryn from The Deanery was nominated by the psychologists for their “brilliant questions and commanding the sole attention of three scientists at the same time.” They came across as keen and polite and interested.

As the student winner, Cathryn will receive a certificate and a gift voucher.



Vassilis



Tirso



Matthew



Jane



Dawn



Alexandra

## Feedback

We're still collecting feedback from teachers, students and psychologists but here are a few of the comments made about March's *I'm a Scientist* activity...

It was fab! The children were engaged, there was a buzz around the room! What a pleasure to witness and inspire them! – **Teacher**

[I have learnt] a lot really about the level I should keep in a conversation to keep interest and how to give students little snippets of info so they do become curious... a crash course in communication really.

And I think I just became passionate about them, who they are what they think, what interests them – **Silvia, scientist**

[I have learnt] scientists are normal people aswell not just nerds – **Student**

Thank you very much for answering all of our questions. we have learnt a lot today and we really appreciate it because it has truly inspired us to follow our dreams and not worry about all the bumps in the way – **Student**

I sign up every term as it is a great addition to help students engage with science. It also ticks an Ofsted box of helping disadvantaged students to relate what happens in the classroom to the real world. – **Teacher**

love the live chats! It gives students the chance to ask anything and they really do! I have grown so much through my participation in this event! Thank You! – **Scientist**