

June and July 2021

The Psychology Zone (psychologyj21.imascientist.org.uk) ran for 6 weeks, from 7 June to 16 July 2021. It was funded by the **British Psychological Society (BPS)**.

The Zone featured psychologists from across the UK, working in a variety of fields.

Originally intended to run for 4 weeks, the Zone was extended to give teachers and their students more time to engage with it. This was due to the coronavirus pandemic, which was impacting teaching and learning in schools by causing almost 1 in 4 school students in the UK to be absent¹.

Key activity figures

Schools	19
Students logged in	476
Students active	84%
Psychologists	19
Questions asked	70
Questions approved	54
Answers given	133
Psychologist comments	14
Live chats	37
Lines of live chat	5,979
Average lines per live chat	162
Votes cast	151

Psychologists

19 psychologists created a profile in the Zone.

You can see who took part at psychologyj21.imascientist.org.uk/psychologists

The winning psychologist with the most votes from students was **John Shaw**, lecturer in sleep psychology at De Montfort University.

Students

476 students from 19 schools across the UK logged into the Zone.

71% of active students were from target schools: 61% from underserved schools and 13% from widening participation schools.

Live chats

38 live chats took place during the activity: 32 were school classes booked by teachers and 6 were additional chats, open to all the students.

There were 3 live chats where teachers asked questions on behalf of their students. Therefore, the number of students reached will be higher by about 50.

On average, 4 psychologists attended each live chat.

¹ Reference: [school attendance figures published on gov.uk site](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-attendance)

School activity

Students from 19 schools across the UK participated in the Zone. In addition to live chats booked by teachers, there were 6 Thursday evening chats for the students and their families.

School	Active users	Live Chats attended	Chat lines (total)	Questions approved
Bristol Cathedral Choir School, Bristol	63	4	658	18
Weald of Kent Grammar School, Tonbridge (U)	56	3	230	12
Aylesbury High School, Aylesbury (U)	43	3	146	0
Littleover Community School, Derby (U)	38	2	236	5
St Bartholomew's School, Newbury (U) *	31	4	133	1
Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College, Leeds	31	2	124	2
Burford School, Burford (U)	28	2	108	0
Cathedral Academy, Wakefield (WP)	24	1	176	0
St Dominic's High School, Belfast (WP)	16	1	103	0
Chenderit School, Banbury (U)	13	1	127	1
Beaulieu Convent School, Jersey (U)	13	1	82	0
Great Marlow School, Marlow	13	2	60	3
Cecil Jones Academy, Southend-on-Sea (WP/U)	11	1	151	0
Torpoint Community College, Torpoint (U)	10	1	93	2
Mark Rutherford School, Bedford *	10	2	91	0
Salisbury Sixth Form College, Salisbury (U)	10	1	34	10
Potters Bar Clinic School, Potters Bar	3	1	28	0
Primary School, London (WP) †	1	5	298	0
Hornsey School for Girls, London (WP) *	1	1	20	0

* In some of these chats teachers typed questions on behalf of their students, with the chat displayed on a screen.

† One student from this school attended 5 Thursday evening chats. School name removed for safeguarding.

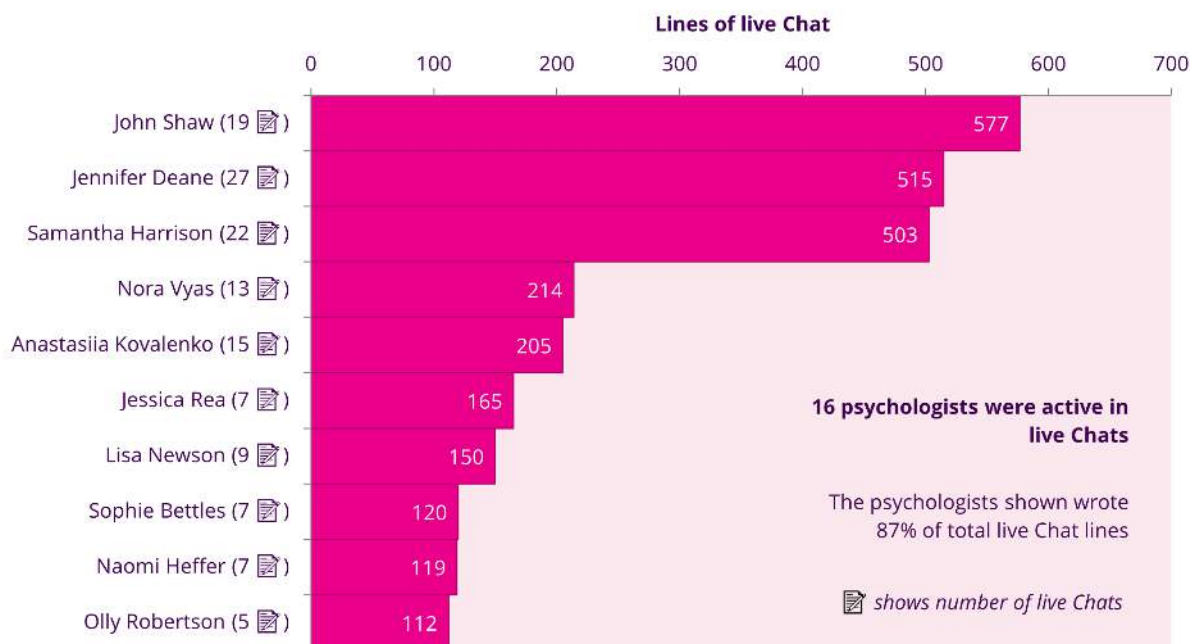
We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups. Find out what we mean by under-served (U) and widening participation (WP) schools, and how you can support us in working with more of these: about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp

Funded by:

Psychologist activity

During the Zone the psychologists interacted with students by writing 3,081 lines of live chat, and providing 133 answers to 54 posted questions.

10 most active psychologists in live Chats



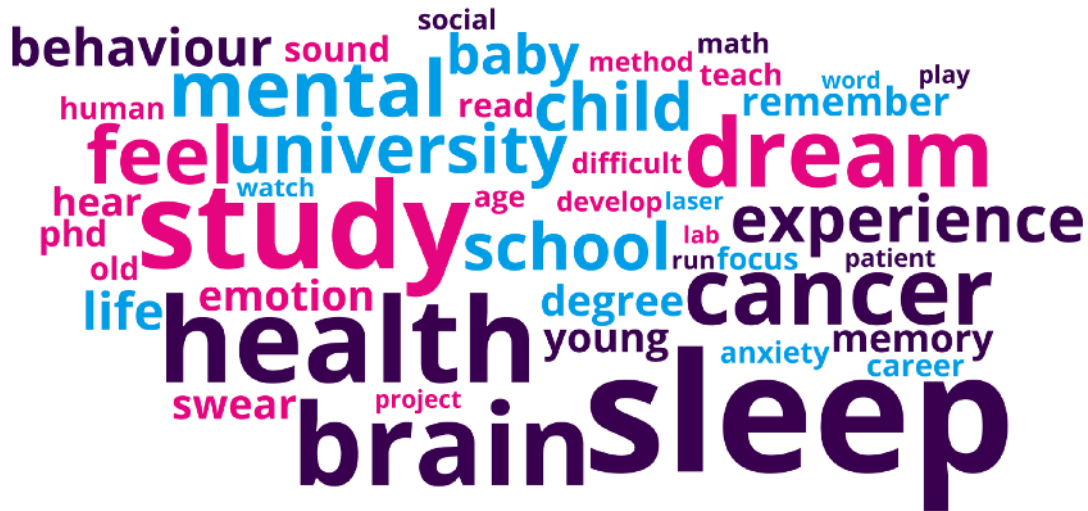
10 most active psychologists in posting answers



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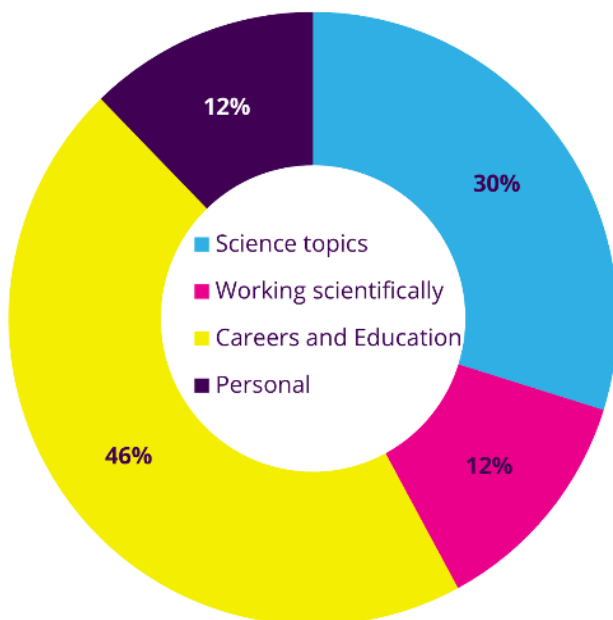
Live chats

The word cloud below demonstrates what students and psychologists talked about in live chats. The bigger the word, the more frequently it was used.



Questions in Ask section

The chart below shows a breakdown of questions students sent to the psychologists. Examples are coloured by category.



Anger is an emotion linked to swearing however, some people swear constantly, are these people more angry than others?

Is it rational to trust your 'gut feeling'?

Why do some people wake up in the night more than others?

Do you think schizophrenia is becoming more prevalent in younger generations or are diagnosis' just becoming more accessible?

How do you think the salary has an effect on the players if at all and if it impacts their behavior on and off the pitch?

Are psychology degrees over subscribed with not enough demand?

What do you wish you knew before you went to university?

What would you post on your youtube channel?

Good engagement

Many of the students in the Zone were sixth-form students studying A-level psychology, who wanted to know more about the value of pursuing the subject at university.

Student: would you recommend a career in psychology?

Jennifer (psychologist): I would! As you can see here with just 4 of us it is so varied and you can really find something that interests you. What are you interested in? I have friends who work with victims of violence, work for clothing brands and with bilingual children

Student: I am interested in fashion, so clothing brands could be interesting

Jennifer: I am sure there is a psychologist who works at a fashion school in London, there is a lot you can do to mix your two interests together - looking at sales side, design side, marketing etc

By connecting with the psychologists over shared interests, students learn that psychologists are "regular people". This helps students relate to the psychologists, making it easier for the students to visualise themselves in psychology-related careers.

Student: what is your opinions on reality tv such as love island?

Sophie (psychologist): LOVE IT! Can't wait!!

Sammi (psychologist): I've never seen it. but I do have a soft spot for competition shows like the Great British Bake Off and the auditions rounds of Britain's Got Talent :')

Lisa (psychologist): I havent watched love island, but i really enjoy first dates hotel!

Student: @Sophie neither!!!!!!xx omg i love bake off did you watch the celebrity one this year?

Sophie: All the prisoners tend to love it too - so we always have something to chat about!

Sammi: Yes! How funny was James McAvoy?!

Shared interests also include Harry Potter.

Student: @Sophie what harry potter house are you in

Sophie (psychologist): I would love to say Gryffindor but I know deep down I am probably Slytherin...

Sammi (psychologist): I'm jumping in with the HP love :D I'm a Hufflepuff! Although I was head of Gryffindor at my university's Harry Potter Society haha! :')

Student: im a slytherin to !!

Sophie: Hurray! :-) Let's change the stigma about Slytherins!!

This student had a very frank and open discussion with a psychologist about their ADHD, which led to practical advice about how to improve sleep patterns.

Student: it takes me hours to fall asleep cause i have ADHD - is that a big factor why i cant

John (psychologist): As a fellow ADHD person, I sympathise 100%. Yep, us with ADHD tend to have a more difficult sleep onset as we struggle to 'switch off', I don't know if your the same but I have that compulsion to move. I personally do mindfulness just before bed to try and mitigate all of this. We also tend to have more fractured sleep and lower sleep quality.

Student 1: yeh thats so true, ive been told to do lots of intensive exercise and do yoga

John: Those are things that can help. I've injured myself so I can't do much exercise right now but mindfulness and avoiding electronics is helping.

Student 1: oh no!! i hope you recover quickly, what happened??

John: I tore my Medial collateral Ligament trying to stop my fiancée's parent's dog from jumping into the sea while there other dog (cocker spaniel) full steam ran into the side of my knee. At the time I didn't realise but walking home I got some pain and 3 days later I couldn't walk 😊

Student 1: oooo does injury impact sleep?

John: Generally yes, injuries impact sleep due to increased pain and more awareness of the area. Immediately after it was awful for my sleep as with the ADHD I like to move and I couldn't do that anymore. Now those it's more a dull ache I've gotten used to

It's partly what got me into sleep research. I wasn't ADHD diagnosed until I was 24 but my sleep has always been awful and I wanted to know the impact of it.

Psychologist winners

Students voted each week for their favourite psychologist to be named Psychologist of the Week.

The first, third, fourth and fifth Psychologists of the Week were:



Ola Demkowicz

researcher in child development and young people's mental health, University of Manchester



Samantha Harrison

PhD student and research assistant, University of Nottingham



Jennifer Deane

researcher into psychological impact of cancer diagnoses, Universities of Newcastle and Cambridge



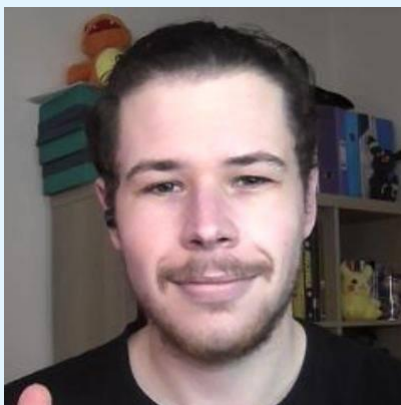
Nora Vyas

Associate Professor in psychology, Kingston University London

The second psychologist of the week was also the overall winner at the end of the Zone:

- **John Shaw**, lecturer in sleep psychology at De Montfort University.

As Zone winner, they receive £500 to spend on further public engagement projects.



"To anyone out there thinking of taking part in *I'm a Scientist*, whether you are a scientist, teacher, or student, I wholeheartedly recommend it.

For scientists, it is an opportunity to engage with some of the most enthusiastic minds you will encounter.

For teachers, you will be able to offer your students a direct connection to those within STEM who demonstrate how passionate they are about sharing it just by signing up.

For students it is an opportunity to get those answers to the questions you have had."

You can read John's full statement at

psychologyj21.imascientist.org.uk/2021/07/20/a-thank-you-from-your-winner

Feedback



Sammi Harrison
@SamiDoesScience

Wow that was the most intense
[@imascientist](#) schools chat yet!! I
could feel the smoke coming off my
keyboard as I was typing so
ferociously trying to keep up!

As always though, amazing
questions and discussions with the
students. ❤️

Thank you all for an amazing session!! We are
fortunate to have such fantastic role models!!

Teacher

Thank you all so much, you were all so cool and
sweet!

Student

Thank you so much, you have all been so
helpful and given us insight to the options in
our future

Teacher

Students were enthused in different ways. We
have a little book area in the corner of the
room and it largely goes unnoticed. A student
popped by during her free to look through a
child psychology book on the shelves. This has
definitely had the type of impact I was hoping
for.

Mrs King, Great Marlow School

THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!!!!!!!!!!!! LOVED IT

Student



Jennifer Deane
@jen_deane

Really enjoyed [@imascientist](#) chat
today. Loved the questions we got
asked. Students wanted to know
about our ethics and if we
considered psychology a science
along with some great questions on
our projects looking forward to the
next session [#imascientist](#)
[#healthpsychology](#)

