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British
Psychological
Society

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The Society has offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and London, as well as the main office in Leicester. All enquiries should be addressed to the Leicester office (see inside front cover for address).

The British Psychological Society

was founded in 1901, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Its object is 'to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge'.
Extract from The Charter



President's column

Liz Campbell

Contact Liz Campbell via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: president@bps.org.uk

This has been a busy year so far for the Society's membership team in the Leicester office. In the first three months of 2008 there were 1300 applications for chartered status. Our overall membership now stands at over 47,000. Membership developments also include a new 'grandparenting' application pack for the Register of Psychologists Specialising in Psychotherapy for those members of the Clinical and Counselling Divisions.

The Chartered Scientist award and the possibility of EuroPsych registration bring added value for members and continue to be promoted by the membership team staff. Two new Society qualifications are also in the pipeline. These are a Stage 2 Qualification in Sport and Exercise Psychology and a Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland). It is hoped to launch the sport and exercise qualification in June 2008, while the educational psychology qualification is targeted to be launched in September 2008.

Work towards establishing a Teaching Route to full membership of the Division for Teachers and Researchers in Psychology is progressing and it is hoped that final proposals will go to the Membership and Professional Training Board later this year.

The criteria for the award of Fellowships of the Society have been under discussion for a considerable time. We are moving towards a final document soon, and members are encouraged to consider this grade of membership when they have sight of the new criteria and procedures.

There has been good news from the Training and Development Agency (TDA), who have announced an additional 50 initial teacher training places for psychology at five new institutions throughout England starting in 2008/09 and running through to 2010/11.

We have a very active staff team who are responsible for responses to consultations from external bodies. In the first three months of 2008, 28 responses to consultations were submitted: one to the Scottish Executive, one to the Department of Education for Northern Ireland, two to the International Council for Science (via the Royal Society) and the remainder to consulting bodies based in England.

In addition, we have also responded this year to three consultations that have a direct bearing on the statutory regulation of psychologists: one the draft legislation from the Department of Health and two concerning the Health Professions Council standards. We are continuing our discussions with the Department of Health about the content of the legislation – see box opposite for a summary of the Society's position. Any news on this matter will be reported on the Society website.

The issue of statutory legislation has taken up a good deal of staff and honorary officers' time over the last 18 months. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that our primary function is to be a learned society promoting scientific knowledge and disseminating psychological

science. While we do have a role as a professional body, this is within the context of the promotion of psychology. At their May meeting, the Representative Council were asked to discuss how we might do more to present the Society as a learned society. This discussion will be continuing in a variety of forums over the coming year.

In May I was invited to the annual conference of the Northern Ireland Branch, which was founded in 1956. This conference was held in a lovely seaside village in the Republic of Ireland. Our Branches are the only subsystems that cover our entire membership and therefore have a very crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging for members as well as providing opportunities for academic discussion and professional development. The majority of our members do not belong to Divisions or Sections, but everyone belongs to a Branch. Long may our Branches thrive!

"our primary function is to be a learned society promoting scientific knowledge"

EVENTS DIARY

For a database of forthcoming events organised by the Society and other organisations, see www.bps.org.uk/diary.

To advertise your event, contact psyadvert@bps.org.uk or +44 116 252 9552.

Book Award 2008

Chris Frith

This year's British Psychological Society Book Award has been given to Christopher Frith, Emeritus Professor of Neuropsychology at the Wellcome Centre for Neuroimaging at University College London, for his book *Making Up the Mind*.

The book, published by Blackwell, is credited as being a technical research-based work that is easy to understand for students of psychology and also the general reader. The 2000 Nobel Prize winner in Physiology or Medicine, Dr Eric R. Kandel, described the book as 'a brilliant introduction to the biology of mental processes for the general reader. This superb book describes how we recreate in our brains a representation of the external world. Clearly and beautifully written, this book is for all who want to learn about how the brain gives rise to the mental phenomenon of our lives. A must read!'

Making Up the Mind is a fun and up-to-date introduction to new ideas in cognitive neuroscience and one of the first

accessible accounts of experimental studies showing how the brain creates our mental world. It uses evidence from brain imaging, psychological experiments and patient studies to explore the relationship between the mind and the brain. The book shows how 'false' perceptions may be created by our brain through making inferences about the physical world when new information from our eyes, nose and ears is combined with our prior expectations of the world around us. The novel argument is that these same mechanisms also allow us to make inferences about the minds of others.

Chris Frith was recognised by the Society for a previous book, *The Cognitive Neuropsychology of Schizophrenia* in 1996. He has also received the Kenneth Craik Award given by St John's College, Cambridge, the Robert Sommer Award given by Justus Liebig-Universität in Giessen, Germany, and the Burghölzli Award of the University of Zurich.

Since completing his PhD in 1969

Chris has been funded by the Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Trust to study the relationship between the mind and the brain. He has pioneered the application of brain imaging to the study of mental processes and has contributed more than 400 papers to scientific journals. Chris is known especially for his work on agency, social cognition and schizophrenia. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2000.

Regarding *Making Up the Mind* Dr Oliver Sacks, famous neurologist commented: 'Christopher Frith is well known for his extremely clear thinking on very complex psychological matters, such as agency, social intelligence and the minds of the people with autism and schizophrenia. And it is precisely such questions, along with the understanding of how we perceive, act, choose, remember and feel which are now being revolutionised by brain imaging. In *Making Up the Mind* he brings all this together in a most accessible way.'

SUMMARY OF THE SOCIETY'S RESPONSE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ON STATUTORY REGULATION

It has been this Society's policy for four decades that all psychologists who need to be regulated should be statutorily regulated. Our view is that the Department of Health's proposals to protect seven titles, as opposed to the single title 'psychologist' will exclude many psychologists currently practising and therefore fail to achieve the government's, and our, policy to provide comprehensive public protection.

Our key concerns are that the seven titles:

- | are not in line with other professions – no other profession regulated by the Health Professions Council (HPC) has more than one protected title;
- | will confuse the public, whereas the single title 'psychologist' will not;
- | will fail to regulate emerging areas unless further

expensive legislation is passed at some future date to protect additional titles;

- | will allow unscrupulous practitioners to adopt other plausible but unregulated titles, for instance 'consumer psychologist' or 'school psychologist'.
- | are a mismatch with the single protected title 'psychologist' commonly used to regulate psychology in other parts of the EEA, which will be confusing and problematic for migrants wishing to work here;
- | exclude the title 'neuropsychologist' thus allowing this highly specialised group, who mainly work within the NHS, to continue to practise unregulated.

In addition:

- | The proposal to exclude psychologists in training is

inconsistent with other regulators and government proposals. The GMC and GOC have a 'provisional' category for those in training which recognises that trainees can pose a risk to clients. Trainee psychologists often work directly with clients and therefore also pose a similar risk.

- | It is suggested that certain domains of psychology may not need to be regulated, for instance 'occupational'. Our view is clear; psychology is one discipline with many specialisms and therefore comprehensive regulation is necessary to avoid public confusion and to properly protect the public;
- | It is proposed that those who manage psychologists would have to be regulated. This ignores the contexts in which psychologists work. Many

psychologists, including those in the NHS, have managers who are ineligible for regulation because they are not psychologists.

And finally...

- | We find the DH's abrogation of responsibility in terms of the substance of the legislation surprising and worrying. The draft Order states that all the detail of how psychologists should be regulated shall be left to discussions between the Health Professions Council, this Society and another body – a trade union. No legislative principles or even guidance are included. Our position is clear, we remain committed to the principle that practitioner psychologists should be statutorily regulated. But, we believe that the Department of Health's proposals will fail to achieve the protection that the public has a right to expect.

CONSULTATIONS ON PUBLIC POLICY

The following responses to consultations were submitted during April:

Scottish Road Safety Strategy

In general, the Society welcomed the proposals contained in this Scottish Government consultation and strongly endorsed its focus on young drivers. Strengths were identified in relation to educational emphasis, the consideration of individual groups of road users, and a recognition of engineering and enforcement. However, concerns were raised regarding:

- I the search for an improved safety culture residing in education (it was recommended that this be modified with regard to the needs of each identified group, and directed heavily at developing the individual's motivation to apply their knowledge);
- I the interpretation of statistics (it was recommended that this be accompanied by careful explanations);
- I a lack of attention given to cyclists who, in the event of a crash, are prone to disproportionately serious consequences;
- I the lack of an explicit reference to, or commitment towards, the concept of roadside training for child pedestrians.

Skills That Work for Wales – A skills and employment strategy

The Society welcomed the Welsh Assembly Government's recognition of the need for increased collaboration between all the key stakeholders, employers, learning providers and learners. However, it was felt that there is a need to prioritise the vulnerable and disadvantaged to support and promote their participation and contribution to society, and that these elements require a key focus.

The response also highlighted the view that recent suicide rates among young people in Wales demonstrate the need for this age group to be prioritised and to be a focus for this strategy.

Guidance on Personal Education Allowances for Looked After Children

This consultation from the Department of Children, Schools and Families outlined the government's plans to introduce an annual personal allowance for all children in the Looked After System, who are at risk of not reaching the national expected standards of attainment. The Society's response recommended that the Personal Education Allowances should be linked to the Personal Education Plan for each child, and that children and young people should be involved in identifying what additional support they need.

NICE consultation on Preventing the Uptake of Smoking by Children

In response the Society supported the World Health Organization's recommendation that films with scenes showing characters smoking should be rated with an '18' certificate.

The preparation and submission of the Society's responses to consultations on public policy is coordinated by the Policy Support Unit (PSU). All members are eligible to contribute to responses and all interest is warmly welcomed. Please contact the PSU for further information (psu@bps.org.uk; 0116 252 9926/9577). Details of active and completed consultations are available at: www.bps.org.uk/consult.



Memorandums of understanding

At the Annual Conference in Dublin, the Society signed Memorandums of Understanding with both the American Psychological Association and the Australian Psychological Society. The documents 'affirm and reaffirm' the working relations of the bodies, and promise to 'seek to identify projects and activities in which they may work together, assist or support one another, or otherwise cooperate for the betterment of psychology and the public interest'.

Society vacancies

**Research Board
Postdoctoral Representative**
Recently appointed
postdoctoral researcher or
lecturer. See advert on p.483

Contact *Liz Beech*
liz.beech@bps.org.uk

**Standing Conference
Committee Chair**
Senior academic or practice
background. See advert on
p.485

Contact *Ruth Raven*
ruth.raven@bps.org.uk,
0116 252 9555

**Publications & Communications
Board Committee members**
Experience of publishing/public
engagement/web. See advert
on p.559

Contact *Suzanne Jefford*
suzanne.jefford@bps.org.uk

**Committee on Training in
Clinical Psychology Ordinary
Members**

Chartered clinical psychologists
familiar with training issues.
See advert on p.554

Contact *Lucy Horder*
lucy.horder@bps.org.uk,
0116 252 9596

Disaster resource database

A database compiled by the British Psychological Society's Working Party on Disaster, Crisis and Trauma has been published online at www.bps.org.uk/dcatwp. Its aim is to help members gain access to relevant resources in their work with those psychologically affected by disasters and other major incidents.

The majority of the database consists of references to articles and books that focus not just on trauma but also on the emerging field of disaster mental health. A number of weblinks are provided to key organisations that have written materials on disaster mental health and the needs of adults and children. These include government agencies, professional organisations and charities. There are further links to UK government guidelines on emergency planning.

In addition to general reviews the

database includes areas of knowledge relevant to the epidemiology and assessment of psychological reactions to disasters in adults and children, as well as their ethical, cultural, legal and research aspects. It also includes material on planning and intervention before, during and after major incidents, as well as articles detailing lessons learned from previous incidents.

The database is deliberately selective, with the aim of directing members to those resources that in the opinion of the working party are likely to be among those that are up to date and as far as possible evidence-based. The resources represent a starting point for those involved in disaster responding, and we hope provide a useful introduction to the many facets of this work.

Award for Outstanding Doctoral Research Contributions 2007

Rhiannon Turner

Dr Rhiannon Turner of the University of Leeds has been given the Society's Award for Outstanding Doctoral Research Contributions to Psychology for 2007.

Dr Turner's work focused on a series of studies on cross-ethnic intergroup contact between young Asian and white people in the UK.

The two articles submitted in support of the nomination were 'Reducing prejudice via direct and extended cross-group friendship' in the *European Review of Social Psychology* and 'Reducing explicit and implicit outgroup prejudice via direct and extended contact: The mediating role of self disclosure and intergroup anxiety' in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Key amongst the findings of her work has been that contact between groups can affect implicit as well as explicit attitudes showing that contact's effects on attitudinal outcomes could not be explained in terms of socially desirable responding.

Her work also found that positive

affective mediators (self-disclosure, empathy and trust) as well as negative affective mediators (intergroup anxiety) account for the effects of contact on explicit (self-reported as opposed to implicit) attitudes, and that both direct and indirect cross-group friendships have wide-ranging and impressive effects in reducing prejudice.

Her subsequent exploration of a new hypothesis concerning indirect or extended contact and its mediators has recently been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Dr Turner graduated from Cardiff University in 2000, progressing to the University of Kent for her

MSc and then New College, University of Oxford for her

DPhil in Social Psychology, which she completed in 2006.

Dr Turner said 'I am delighted and honoured to receive the Society's Doctoral Award. I would particularly like to thank Professor Miles Hewstone for his support and encouragement.'



NEWS FROM THE BOARDS

Publications & Communications Board

18 April 2008

- | **BA/BPS Joint Lecture** The 2008 lecture will be delivered by Professor David Clark, Professor of Psychology, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London. Subject and date to be confirmed.
- | **Public engagement** A paper outlining differing methods of public engagement was considered. The Board decided that a mixture of both uni-directional (carrying a set message about psychology to a mainly passive audience) and bi-directional (more open with influence and input from a proactive audience) methods of engagement would be the best approach. This subject to be revisited at the June meeting, once potential audiences, their needs, potential projects, costings, and evaluation methods have been investigated.
- | **Speakers panel** The formation of a speakers panel was agreed in principle, with its population being by nomination, and with the Press Committee overseeing the creation/upkeep of the panel.
- | **Top Santé** The Board reviewed the most recent *Top Santé* supplement, and it was agreed that there had been clear improvements in presentation, style and content over the three supplements. The next (and final under the current agreement) issue will be published in October 2008.
- | **Review of publishing** A working party including Board members and office staff has been set up to carry out a review of the Society's publishing output. Outcomes from this working party will be shared with other Boards for their input, prior to any recommendations being made to the Trustees.
- | **British Journal of Developmental Psychology** Margaret Harris was ratified as the new editor.
- | **Parliamentary and Policy** The Board ratified the Parliamentary and Policy Support Steering Group's change of name to the Parliamentary and Policy Group.
- | **Online publication** The Communications Director has had a meeting with EBSCO, an online aggregator, who are interested in taking on seven member network publications. Negotiations are ongoing.