



Psychology

# Newsletter



## Welcome to the November issue!

November is nearly over, which means that the first term of the year is coming to an end! It won't be long till everyone is back home for Christmas, enjoying themselves and forgetting about the looming deadlines. For now the department is still busy as usual, especially with research continuing. PS300 students have begun their testing, so why not help a third year out and participate in one of their experiments?

This issue has a lot of focus on students in different situations, e.g. Masters students, and year abroad. Why not read the 60-second interview, which is more of a quiz in the current issue, and see how well you know your lecturers!

Finally I would like to say thank you to the members of the newsletter team for writing interesting pieces yet again, and the design team for making the newsletter look great!

Happy reading!

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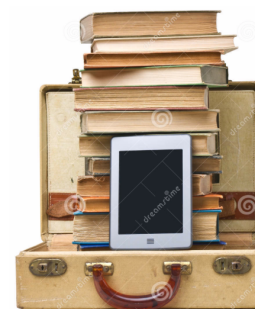
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# Studying abroad: the view of a current year abroad student

by Amy C L Brownsword

*22- Year old Chetan from London, a third year student is currently studying his BA degree in History and Sociology, at the University of Konstanz in Germany. I asked him a few questions about his experience.*



The decision to study in Germany was solely his own. "I chose to study here as the location is ideal, not only for studying but also when it comes to travelling around in Europe" – The city of Konstanz is right on the border of Germany/Switzerland and close to Austria.

**As always moving to a foreign country takes time and includes a lot of preparation. As time passes by, it's normal to feel that nerves might start to kick in.** "For me it didn't feel real up until I booked my flights to go abroad. The nerves came when I was about to leave for the airport, however, I was excited about the whole process from when I received my letter of admission, and also my second year grades to confirm my place abroad. I was excited (and still am) to experience a different way of life in a foreign country, and to be integrated in an entirely different culture as to what I am used to".

**At the University of Essex, clubs and societies are a big thing – they play an important part in the life of a student. You are able to socialise and meet people with the same interests as you, as well as meeting people from all around the world. Is it such a big thing in Germany?**

"Societies and clubs are not that big in German university systems, especially in comparison with the University of Essex, however there is a heap of things to do to pass time during the day at university. The university sits 100 metres from the beach of the Lake Constance, so it's always nice to walk down to check out a view or two".

**What about challenges abroad; every now and then it's normal to hear stories about students who consider coming back because they find themselves in very challenging situations.**

"I haven't faced any huge challenges yet, however communicating with the locals can sometimes be an issue as the majority of the older residents of the town do not speak English. By the way, my German isn't that strong at the moment.

**Every year there are students from the UK, including international students who consider taking a semester/year in another country. One of the general questions that might cross their mind is; why should they do it?**

"There are a million reasons why people should consider doing a year abroad. Don't waste the opportunity, JUST DO IT, you won't regret it"

**Chetan's Top 3 tips for considering a year abroad:**

1. Look at the course content and make sure that you will enjoy what's being fed to you by professors.
2. Research the amazing places you can travel to while abroad in your chosen destination.
3. It will be one of the best years of your life.

*On the left is a photo taken a few minutes walk from my flat on a clear day and shows the Swiss Alps in the background.*



If you liked the sounds of this experience and are interested in doing a year abroad why not contact the Essex Abroad team for more information at : [saoadmin@essex.ac.uk](mailto:saoadmin@essex.ac.uk)  
Or have a look online <http://www.essex.ac.uk/essexabroad/> for the different options available

# 60 SECONDS INTERVIEW

*Mitch Callan and Tom Foulsham*  
-Can you guess which lecturer  
responded with which answer?

**If you were to discover a planet what would you call it?**

- A) HR 8799 f
- B) Psyche

**What was the last book you read?**

- A) "A Child in Time" by Ian McEwan
- B) The Year of the Flood by Margaret Atwood

**If you likened yourself to a Disney/  
cartoon character, which one would you  
be?**

- A) I have been called Bananaman, as I eat a lot of bananas!
- B) Rutt, or possibly Launchpad McQuack

**What is your guilty pleasure?**

- A) Beer
- B) Dark chocolate, I can easily eat a large bar without any help

**What did you want to be as a child?**

- A) A Mountie
- B) For a while, I wanted to be an inventor, and I liked the image of the mad scientist! Later I thought I might end up as a journalist. Now I get to do science, and I get to write about it!

**Would you rather have increased smell or decreased hearing**

- A) Increased smell
- B) I'd always go for an increase. And a lot of taste is actually smell, so I'd be a super-taster!

**What would be your worst nightmare situation?**

- A) I think being trapped and not being able to communicate (as in "locked-in" syndrome)
- B) Work-wise, forgetting about a lecture I was meant to deliver

**Where would be your dream destination to go on holiday?**

- A) Somewhere I haven't been before, where there are cultural things to see as well as beaches etc. I'll say India as I am going there soon!
- B) Southeast Asia

**Answers:**



Mitch Callan:

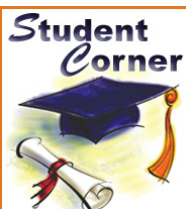
ABBAAABB



Tom Foulsham:

BAABBBAA

by Abiee Hill



# Masters Student Interview

by Vivian Ng  
Q & A with Masters Students

Every day we are presented with choices and we have to make decisions about the things we do. They can be good or bad decisions, and range from little things such as, 'what toppings should I have on my toast this morning?' to much bigger, life-changing decisions, 'what should I do with my life?' This week, I spoke to two of our Masters students to see how they came about making these life choices and their view on this choice.

The two students, Abigail Webb and Chelsea Harmsworth, are doing the same masters. Both of them are currently under-going a Masters by Dissertation (MSD), which is a new course the university, has introduced. So what enticed them to make that big step and choose to do a Masters?

In her second year, Abigail Webb didn't want the university experience to end. She loved learning and grasping new concepts, all factors which encouraged her to continue into further education. She knew what she wanted to do, making her driven and eager to learn. She wanted to continue delving more into specialised areas that captured her interests. On the other hand, we have our lovely Chelsea, who is doing her research among a clinical population. She got into this through the influence of her supervisor.

We all experience highs and lows in whatever we do, be it our daily jobs, our studies or even the hobbies we enjoy. At times we feel so energised and blessed to be alive! Other times, not so much. A few highs Abigail experienced were having the opportunity to become engrossed in an area she's passionate about. Being able to expand her knowledge and draw theoretical parallels within her particular area. She said the whole process of being able to formulate new hypotheses and testing novel ideas was captivating.

Chelsea, who is testing dry alcoholics, particularly those who have abstained from alcohol on a long term basis, enjoys meeting new people who have gone through a rough time, but were able to come out the other side with a fresh face and a smile. She is also pleased for the recognition she received from the paper and radio.

One of the lowlights experienced by the students were the difficulties of recruiting participants for their studies. Although Chelsea enjoyed testing dry alcoholics, she found it particularly difficult, as her sample was very specialised.

As we all know, it is a big step up from a bachelor's degree to a masters. But what is the difference? According to the two masters' students, they found it to be more focused than an undergraduate degree. A lot more independence is required as your attention is focused on one specific area, there are no classes or deadlines. It's a 'different experience, there is a greater sense of autonomy and independence.' Says Abigail.

Both students are thoroughly enjoying their course despite all the hard-work and definitely recommends it for students who are considering doing a masters after their undergraduate degree.

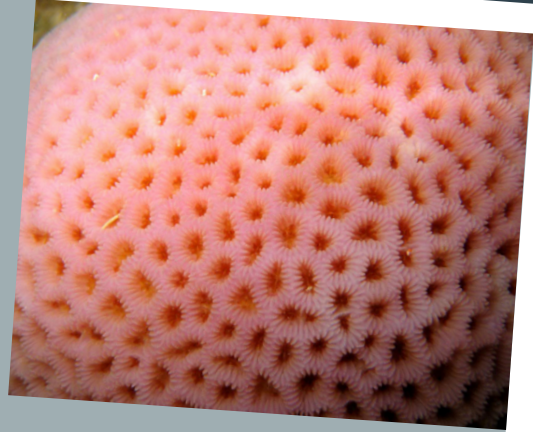
The opportunities for these students in the future are endless and they have both got aspiring goals. Abigail wants to continue her research in the form of a PhD and Chelsea would like to be accepted on the Doctorate for Clinical Psychology one day. I wish these two young women good luck with everything and hope their dreams come true.

## Have you ever heard of these four Psychological Phobias?

by Madiha Shabir

### Phobia of holes – *Trypophobia*

Trypophobia is an extreme fear of holes that provokes anxiety. Dr Cole and Dr Wilkins at the University of Essex performed a spectral analysis in their study on different images that generate Trypophobia. The findings in *Fear of Holes* suggest that the stimuli had a spectral composition, which is normally correlated with unpleasant images. It is argued that similar spectral characteristics are found in dangerous animals, but the sufferers of the phobia are not consciously aware of the association. In other words, sufferers of Trypophobia are not frightened of holes, but they associate holes with danger.



### Fear of cats - *Ailurophobia*

Ailurophobia is an irrational fear of cats. On one hand, this phobia is fear relevant; individuals who have been bitten or scratched by cats are at higher risk of developing ailurophobia because of the fear of getting harmed. On the other hand, if a mother of a child has indicated fear of cats in the past, the child is more likely to develop ailurophobia.

**AILUROPHOBIA**  
**THE FEAR OF CATS.**



**Fear of number thirteen- *Triskaidekaphobia***

Triskaidekaphobia is an irrational fear of the number thirteen. This phobia is not considered as a specific phobia because it does not notably influence sufferer's life. The sufferers might find it difficult to live on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor, or take an exam on the Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. However, some might advocate that triskaidekaphobia should be classified as a superstition rather than a specific phobia.

**Fear of snakes – *Ophidiophobia***

Ophidiophobia is fear of snakes, and is perhaps the most common phobia of all types of phobias. Some might suffer of a mild form of *Ophidiophobia* and find encounters with large snakes frightening. Additionally, others might suffer from severe forms of *Ophidiophobia* and find encounters with small snakes, or even images of snakes frightening. *Ophidiophobia* is often caused by traumatic experiences and are considered to be the easiest of all types of phobias to treat.

