1ˢᵗ Annual NPI Conference 2014

Abstracts

Session A: Educational Experience – Lecture Room 1

ABSTRACT 1
An instructional model for the teaching of research methods to students in undergraduate and postgraduate psychology and related disciplines

John Reece – School of Psychological Sciences, Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP)

A thorough appreciation and understanding of the importance of research lies at the heart of evidence-based practice, which is a central component of the scientist-practitioner model of professional training in psychology and related disciplines. Despite this, there is a substantial body of research demonstrating that research methods is the component of both undergraduate and postgraduate psychology degrees that many students (a) fear the most, (b) enjoy the least, and (c) struggle with most to appreciate its relevance and importance. One strategy for helping to reduce this so-called "stats anxiety" is to provide effective, sound pedagogical models and frameworks for guiding curriculum development, course content, and assessment. Much university teaching takes place within a theoretical and conceptual vacuum, and there is often no macro-level educational framework employed by academics to guide instruction and learning. Contextualising the learning experience within such frameworks has multiple benefits that will be discussed in this presentation. With this background, a hierarchical model for teaching research methods to undergraduate psychology students will be presented. This model varies from other models in this area in terms of both depth of detail, and in its emphasis in the importance of the skills of "research thinking" and "researching consuming", which are often given scant attention—at least in terms of direct instruction—in undergraduate research methods courses. In addition to describing the model, examples of both curriculum materials and assessments derived from the model will be described.

ABSTRACT 2
What helps our students stay and succeed? Educational experiences that facilitate study persistence amongst first, second and third year students

Jenny Coburn – School of Counselling, ACAP

This paper explores the educational experiences that have helped undergraduate students persist in their studies. In 2014, a sample of first, second and third year students enrolled in the School of Counselling at the Australian College of Applied Psychology were asked to reflect on the educational experiences that had facilitated, or impeded, their choice to persist with their studies. Rovai (2001) has defined 'study persistence' as "the behaviour of continuing action despite the presence of obstacles" (p. 1). Indeed, it is recognised that the decision to commit to higher education study often results in there being 'obstacles'. Teachers of higher education are familiar with this and many of us are aware that the challenges our students experience don't disappear at the end of first year. Often, students face challenges throughout their course. The decision to persist with one's studies is, therefore, ongoing. The Review of Australian Higher Education (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent & Scales, 2008) acknowledged that whilst some level of attrition from the higher education sector "must be expected and must be accepted", improving the student experience in higher education is a goal that is "worthy of attention" (p. 19). To date, very few studies have listened to the 'student voice' within the non-university higher education sector, prompting this sector to be labelled the 'silent provider' of education (Bennett, Nair & Shah, 2012). This research is the first to explore study persistence amongst non-university, higher education students. This paper will briefly explore the challenges that are typically experienced in first year, second year and third year. As higher education institutions are being asked to retain an increasingly diverse student population, some practical suggestions towards creating educational experiences that promote student persistence and success are explored.

ABSTRACT 3
Making time for peer review: student perspectives on a sustainable assessment practice

Ann Wilson - Navitas
Sharon Moore – School of Social Work, ACAP

'Assessment and feedback practices should be designed to enable students to become self-regulated learners, able to monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of their own work and that of others.' David Nicol (2010)
There is an inherent tension in many taught professional Masters Programs – where the students are working full time and studying part time. Many course designs use assessment as a means to focus and encourage students to engage with the readings and course concepts. This strategy, effective though it is in getting students to address the work of the course, can involve the teacher in a large amount of marking. Teacher marking of assessments does not help build the professional competencies of self and peer review amongst students nor the critical skills required by reflective practitioners rather it encourages student reliance on teacher judgments.
The new Masters of Social work uses a student centred, active learning approach to inform learning design. Across two courses we explored the use of peer review and feedback as a means of monitoring student understanding and progress through the readings of the course. This approach references the work of the REAP project (http://www.reap.ac). formative, one summative. We will report on the student perspectives on this assessment strategy drawn from informal interviews. It is hoped that these findings will inform future assessment strategies in the course.
References

Nicol, D (2010) From monologue to dialogue: improving written feedback in mass higher education. Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education. 35(5) pps 501 -

517uk/reap/index.html) and the work of David Nicol in peer review and feedback. The two courses used differing strategies in the application of peer review – one.

Session B: Attitudes and Influences – Training Rooms 8/9

ABSTRACT 1
Accepting Bad? Influences of Entertainment Media on Moral Judgment

Michael Weston – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Mike Innes – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Considerable research addresses the potential influence that media plays on the lives of its audience. Media influence has been demonstrated to create positive pathways for education and develop understandings of complex individual experience. However, negative media based images can also generate negative thoughts and behaviours, even shifting the individual's moral stance. The present study aimed to address how exposure to different types of entertainment media might generate a more flexible moral stance in viewers based on the content of the media. A set of stimuli was devised comprising excerpts from two mainstream popular television series (Sons of Anarchy and Mad Men) and two films (Oceans 11 and Hackers). Participants were then exposed to either a stimulus that depicted a congruent moral scenario, e.g., a crime met with punishment, or a stimulus that depicted a morally ambiguous scenario, e.g., a crime met with celebration or praise. A control group with a morally neutral stimulus was also utilized to create a comparison baseline for the two experimental groups. All three groups were assessed after viewing the stimuli using the Defining Issues Test. This paper will report on the results obtained from the comparison of the three groups on the Defining Issues Test, with popularity of the media excerpt and transparency of the message being communicated in the media excerpt as possible covariates. The research aims to demonstrate that those exposed to morally ambiguous stimuli are more likely to be more morally flexible when making moral judgments.

ABSTRACT 2
The effect of stigmatisation on attitudes and beliefs about the stigmatised person: the role of behaviour in the elicitation of responses

Praveena Rajeswaran – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Mike Innes – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Stigmatisation is the influence upon attitudes and behaviour of a person in interaction with another person who is identified as possessing some social undesirable physical, mental or behavioural characteristic. The effect of being labelled with a mental disorder was investigated in an experimental study, in which either a stigmatised person or a person with no label, played a game with a naive interactor. The stigmatised person was played by a confederate of the experimenter and systematically either cooperated or competed throughout the game. The naive interactor's attachment style was also manipulated by supraliminal and subliminal priming to enhance a secure or neutral style. The reaction to the stigmatised person was measured by asking the interactor how socially distant they would prefer to be with the target person, their positive or negative judgments of them, how much they enjoyed the experience and the extent to which they cooperated or competed in the game. The results showed that a competing stigmatised person was judged less negatively than a non-stigmatised person. The game experience was also considered more pleasant. Attachment security was not a significant factor in affecting judgment. Implications are drawn for the understanding of professional understanding of stigma, making less judgmental attributions and judgments of

personality and for the importance of measuring behaviour in realistic rather than hypothetical situations.

ABSTRACT 3
The Psychology of Internet Addiction

Prabu Dhanapalan – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Damith Woods – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

A sample of 255 individuals participated in an online-based questionnaire that examined the relationship between Internet addiction (IA), depression, inattention, hyperactivity / impulsivity, social anxiety, and hours of daily Internet use. This study aimed to build on the relative gap in the literature pertaining to adults in an Australian cohort. Participants were assessed using the Internet Addiction Test, Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale, Social Interaction Anxiety Scale, and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale.

Results: The prevalence rate for Internet addiction was 7.1%. Although IA was positively related to all variables in the overall sample and among young females (18-39), there were mixed findings in young males, old males (40+), and old females. There was no main or interaction effects for sex and age on IA. The IA group scored higher than the non-IA group on all variables. There was also no difference between male and female addicts on all of these variables. Hours of daily Internet use was the most significant predictor of IA followed by depression.

Conclusion: IA is a significant issue that warrants clinical attention. Greater consensus needs to be reached regarding definition and diagnosis of IA. Further research is required in order to determine the direction of causality between IA and these variables.

Session C: Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of the Lived Experience – Training Room 6

ABSTRACT 1
Experiences of members attending Hearing Voices Network Support Groups

Bianca Dos Santos – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Vanessa Beavan – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

The distress that is associated with auditory hallucinations, or voices, is well documented. However, increasingly research into this phenomenon is also capturing those who cope with their voices, and live meaningful lives. Peer support is fast growing to be a popular and useful way in which to learn to manage the distress for voice-hearers. The Hearing Voices Network (HVN) acts as an umbrella organisation for which research, training and peer support groups exist (www.intervoiceonline.org). Despite the growing amount of peer support groups established, there is to date no published material on these groups. The present study used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis to explore the experiences of four informants across three New South Wales HVN groups. Results suggest that the social connections, value of sharing and desire for more group members are all important within the group. Beyond the group, informants described the increased willingness to talk to others about their voice experiences, improvements in sense of self, and a positive change in their relationship with their voices. Clinical implications include the importance of peer participation in the mental health workforce, where safe spaces are provided for those with lived experiences to share and learn from each other in meaningful ways. Research implications include the need for further research measuring outcomes on a larger scale for these support groups.

ABSTRACT 2
Ngara Dyin: A Conversation With Indigenous Women

Mary Goslett – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

This oral paper will present the outcomes of an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) exploring identity, connection and belonging among Indigenous women of mixed descent. It aims to add to understandings of regional Indigenous women's experiences in Australia, to meet the paucity of research that identifies specific and identified regional variances that account for the unique dynamics within Aboriginal societies. Therefore, this study will explore, describe and analyse the essential characteristics of identity-forming experiences of nine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (TIS) women of the Shoalhaven and Illawarra Local Government Areas, incorporating the Wreck Bay, Jerrinja and larger Nowra communities on the southeast coast of Australia. The project is an extension of Reuben Bolt's (2009) previous investigation of the process of construction of Aboriginal identity within a section of this community, and addresses a possible limitation of his study, whereby he acknowledged research conducted by an older female could elicit different accounts from women participants. As Bolt (2009) highlighted, identifying positive aspects of Aboriginal identity can lead to the development of appropriate strategies and policies to alleviate the widespread issues of Indigenous marginalisation and improve the social, emotional and physical wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples.

ABSTRACT 3
"It's not very feminist of me, but…": How young, single, unmarried women living in Australia understand marriage

Stephanie Banning – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Fiona Ann Papps – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

The aim of the current research is to gain an in depth understanding of young women's understandings of marriage in contemporary society. Marriage is one of the most powerful institutions within contemporary western society, embedded in social and political structures, and taken-for-granted as a rite of passage through which most women who identify as heterosexual will proceed. The current landscape of marriage has remained remarkably traditional and appears to be very resistant to change, despite neoliberal ideologies and increased gender equality. Many of the traditional wedding practices have been linked to benevolent sexism and hidden power and consequently, rarely questioned. Marriage remains a privileged state, representing high status, and often considered the ultimate achievement among women. Single women are therefore often viewed as failures, defective, and less worthy or valuable. The present research used a qualitative methodology grounded in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore how young, single, financially independent women, aged 26 to 30 years, living in Australia understand and make sense of the institution of marriage. Eight women were interviewed using a semi-structured interview process. Resultant verbatim transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis to break the text into meaningful portions and compare across interviews. Analysis revealed that although the young women trouble some of the ideas associated with traditional marriage, framing their resistance in terms of the assumption of a feminist identity, there remains an uptake of understandings that constitute marriage as central to a woman's identity. What these understandings imply for therapeutic practice with young single women will be considered.

POSTER 1
Psychopathy and Emotional Processing: Investigation into nonviolent psychopathic individuals in the profession

Alexander Mottee – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Longstanding theory in the profession of psychology posits that we as individuals are diverse in the ways in which we process information. Social psychology would suggest that this individualism is mediated by differences in personality type. It would be intuitive to suggest that personalities of professionals in psychology would be equally diverse. Although the literature available on information processing is broad, one area that continues to peak interest is the potential differences in the processing of emotionally laden information. Currently, literature suggests we subconsciously prefer and seek out emotionally laden information when presented with complex scenes. Given this motivated behaviour to prefer emotional stimuli where learning or practice is performed, could there be any ramifications when an individual with a more pejorative personality, such as one demonstrating mild psychopathic behaviours, is involved? Furthermore, what is really known about the healthy individual with traits of psychopathy when processing emotionally laden information such as a sad or fearful faces in complex scenes?

The condition of psychopathy is trending in mainstream media and empirical literature due to its recent reconfiguration to a spectrum of symptoms rather than a categorically classified disorder. Organisational research suggests that non-violent psychopaths are somewhat prevalent in the workplace and are able to capably function without readily detectable impairment as may be associated with most disorders of personality. My research endeavours to investigate this subpopulation and gain insight into behaviours involved in processing information. By utilising an experimental design involving presentation of male and female faces to undergraduate students, findings will broaden what is known about the prevalence of non-violent psychopathy in learning environments, and more specifically, the relationship between trait psychopathy and emotional processing.

POSTER 2
Person-First Language: The Perceptions of Individuals with a Diagnosis of Schizophrenia

Rosa Oyta - School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Natalie Morrison - School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Background:
Person-first language is a linguistic structure which has been incorporated into policies within the global health system as a means of providing people autonomy from the stigma and stereotypes associated to medical diagnoses (e.g., "person with schizophrenia", as opposed to, "is schizophrenic"). Current research findings are equivocal, with reports of person-first language to, at best, improve the individuals experience within the system, in others to provide little subjective purpose and value, to, at worst, being frustrating and damaging to the consumers within the health care system. In addition to the uncertain status of person-first language has been the underemphasis of research in mental health care, and specifically amongst mental health consumers themselves. In fact, much anecdotal evidence within the mental health consumer online community is fiercely opposed to the use of person-first language. The aim of this study was to explore the opinions and attitudes of people with a diagnosis with schizophrenia, a traditionally highly stigmatised diagnosis which impacts

approximately 1% of the Australian population, regarding the language used in mental health care services.

Method:
Participants were six high-functioning individuals over the age of 18 years with a diagnosis of schizophrenia from Sydney. The study used semi-structured telephone interviews which were designed to elicit participant experiences with, perceptions of, and, attitudes towards the use of person-first language in their mental health care – as experienced in institutionalised settings, in the community and in the development of their own self-image. A thematic analysis will be used to draw response themes.

Results:
Results will be presented at the time of the conference.

Implications:
This study will be an initial observation of the experiences of mental health service consumers and their ongoing interactions with person-first language.

Session D: Modes of Learning – Lecture Room 1

ABSTRACT 1
Online communities of inquiry support academic literacy development at ACAP

Jacquie Delord - ACAP
Jacqui Parker – ACAP

To ensure that online students move successfully through their courses, and hence improve retention rates for this cohort, students need to learn and apply academic literacy concepts and skills.

ACAP Student Learning Support has developed a suite of synchronous online academic literacy programs that are creating new best practice in the field. Tailored programs of between seven and ten webinars are available for students across vocational and higher education courses. Written information was the primary source of academic literacy training for online students prior to this initiative.

Based on a social constructivist pedagogical approach, these programs provide the opportunity to learn actively and also to interact with academic literacy teachers and fellow students. Creating a sense of community *requires* interaction, and from the base of interaction and community, deep learning is encouraged. Interaction and community are, however, missing from traditional text-based resources.

Using the community of inquiry model (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007), this paper analyses ACAP's online academic literacy programs and evaluates their effectiveness. A well-functioning community of inquiry combines social, cognitive and teaching presences to create "deep and meaningful learning, particularly in an online environment" (Lambert and Fisher, 2013). Evaluation of the academic literacy program takes into account post-webinar evaluations, as well as research undertaken into the program's long-term impact on students' ability to apply academic skills. The key conclusion of this research and subsequent analysis is that flexible communities of inquiry are created during ACAP's online academic literacy programs. In addition, social presence is the key factor that enables these communities and the learning that takes place within them. The success of these communities provides an opportunity for other teaching units, schools and colleges to investigate using this approach.

References

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ABSTRACT 2
Designing for interaction and engagement: Teaching academic literacy skills using an online synchronous classroom

Ellen Cooper – ACAP

Online technologies can increase flexibility and accessibility; however, this creates a significant challenge for educators as they need to be prepared to teach in this environment and to meet the needs of the students enrolled. Despite the possibilities that technologies present to enhance the student experience, there are also significant barriers for students, as it is well known that online learners can experience significant isolation and disengagement and that designing for interaction and engagement is critical in this field (Wegmann & Thompson, 2014).

This paper presents the findings of a mixed methods research project which investigated interaction and engagement in an online synchronous classroom session designed for first year tertiary students developing academic literacy skills. Particular attention is given to interactions that occurred in four main areas: learner-learner; learner-tutor; learner-content and learner-technology. Student perceptions were sought in relation to the extent that quality engagement and interaction took place; whether or not the online session contributed to the development of their academic skills; and the benefits and limitations of an online synchronous learning experience. Additionally, an interaction analysis of the planned and exhibited interactions was undertaken using Hirumi's (2002) framework. The results offer insights into quality eLearning design, analysis and evaluation in relation to synchronous classroom teaching.

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ABSTRACT 3
Cycles of learning in a first year tertiary foundational learning skills unit

Ed Irons – Navitas College of Public Safety (NCPS)

Responding to the transitional learning needs of an entering cohort with widely varying academic abilities and concerns from teaching staff that these students lacked worldly understanding, an academic unit, Academic Enhancement (AE), was developed at Navitas College of Public Safety (NCPS) to run parallel with three other units in a

student's first trimester at the College. This unit focuses on student learning skills by relating them to assessment required in other units and by adopting an iterative process. The cycles of learning alluded to in this paper's title are of three kinds. First is the cycle of using material twice, a recycle if you like, where assignment reading or research from other units could be used as source material in AE. Second is an iterative assessment cycle of feedback requiring a student to rework or extend assignment work for resubmission before a final grade is given. Third is a 'feedback exercise' towards the end of the unit where students are required to reflect and comment on feedback received throughout the trimester from any units. This paper will outline these cycles and establish pedagogical value in the process.

Session E: Decision Making – Training Rooms 8/9

Abstract 1
"Shop 'til they drop": A qualitative exploration of women's experiences of online clothes shopping and their perceived effect on body image ideals and body satisfaction

Melissa Gilkes – School of Psychological Sciences - ACAP
Fiona Ann Papps – School of Psychological Sciences - ACAP

The proliferation of Internet technology has provided new avenues for shoppers who once shopped in retail stores to shop online. This exposes shoppers to a variety of unique online advertising messages and images about clothing and the people who wear it. The effect of such images on female consumers' body image and body satisfaction has been widely studied in forms of media such as magazines and television. The thin ideal displayed in these images has been linked to lowered self-esteem, negative body image and disordered eating. To date, no research has been conducted on the perceived influence of online shopping stores' advertising images on female shoppers' body image and body satisfaction. The current study aimed to explore the nature of women's online shopping experiences, how female online shoppers experience and describe their bodies in the online shopping environment, and what online shoppers learn about their body image when they shop online. Because of the exploratory nature of the present research, a qualitative methodology grounded in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was utilized to conduct the study. Ten female frequent online shoppers aged between 18 and 24 years old participated in semi structured interviews. Participants were asked about their online shopping experiences, perceived differences between retail shopping and online shopping, body satisfaction, and liking of different display techniques (i.e. models, no models, body parts displaying clothes). Resultant verbatim transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis to break the text into meaningful portions and compare across interviews. Analysis revealed that young women online shoppers experience their bodies in multiplicity of ways, with the online shopping environment giving pleasure to women, especially when they felt their bodies emulated the ideal.

Abstract 2
Investigating Differences in Cue-Use across Expert, Intermediate, and Novice Rugby League Playmakers

David Johnston – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Ben Morrison – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Within the sport of Rugby League, there exists a perceived shortage of talent in playmaking positions (i.e., halfback and five-eighth). In response to this, an academy dedicated to the development of playmaking skills has recently been established. However, the precise skills targeted for development by the academy are yet to be determined. It could be argued that decision-making, how people select one option from a set of possible options, is a critical skill for a Rugby League playmaker. There is significant interest in determining the factors which allow experts to make superior

decisions to non-experts. Some researchers have suggested that experts show superior skills in discovering reliable cues in the environment. Similarly, researchers have suggested that experts process these cues differently to non-experts, and that these differences in cue-use may, in part, differentiate decision-making performance. The authors conducted a Cognitive Task Analysis with expert (N =3), intermediate (N=3) and novice (N=4) Rugby League Playmakers to determine the influence that expertise level has on cue-use. Specifically, the study examined how playmakers identify and process cues within a Rugby League context, and the role these processes play in expertise development in the domain.

Abstract 3
Correlates of Decision Making and Psychopathy in the Community

Madeleine Lucas – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Natalie Morrison – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Background:
Psychopathy is a trait popularly understood within a pathological and criminal context. However, the literature indicates that psychopathy is a personality trait present in all individuals to differing degrees, and can in fact be advantageous in many professional contexts where analytical rather than emotive decisions need to be made; CEOs, sports coaching . The two-factor model of psychopathy conceptualizes this broad trait in terms of *primary psychopathy characteristics*, such as superficial charm, reduced empathy, and lying, and *secondary psychopathy characteristics*, such as social deviance, boredom, anger, and most critically, impulsivity. As such, individuals high in secondary psychopathy are more likely than those high in primary psychopathy to have dysregulated stress responses and engage in more socially deviant behaviours. It had been understood that such social deviance resulted from engaging in risky decision making behaviours, however, recent research suggests no direct link between impulsivity and risky decision making (Dean et al., 2013). As such, the critical features of secondary psychopathy that correlate with risky decision making are yet to be identified.

Aims:
The current study investigated the relationship between primary and secondary psychopathy and risky decision making, with focused attention on the characteristics of secondary psychopathy to determine the underlying features of risky decision making, including; impulsivity, proneness to boredom, lack of adherence to long term goals, and anger.

Method:
Undergraduate psychology students participated in return for course credit points. Participants completed online a short demographic questionnaire, five measures of the personality traits of interest, together with taking part in an online card game – the Iowa gambling task to evaluate risky decision making.

Results:
Regression analyses were conducted to evaluate the correlations between IGT performance and four key personality characteristics of secondary psychopathy. Results show that a lack of consideration for long-term goals, impulsivity, and trait anger significantly predict risky decision-making. This study contributes to a growing body of research regarding decision-making ability in the context of psychopathy.

Session F: Human Behaviour – Training Room 6

ABSTRACT 1
Mindfulness and Disordered Eating: Contributions of Experiential Avoidance, Rumination, and Impulsivity

Clare Russell-Williams – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Lynne Harris – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Eating disorders are among the most common psychopathologies seen in women, and are increasingly affecting men (Locker, Heesacker, & Baker, 2012). Recently, mindfulness has been applied to eating disorders, with a growing number of studies providing evidence for the utility of mindfulness interventions for eating disorder psychopathology (Masuda & Hill, 2013), with findings indicating that trait mindfulness can influence both the symptoms of disordered eating and the outcome of mindfulness-based interventions. Teasdale et al. (2003) have cautioned the application of mindfulness training to psychological disorders without first considering how the approach will address the maintaining factors present in the specific disorder under consideration. The present study addresses this issue, and examines whether facets of trait mindfulness vary across eating disorder symptomology and the relationship between disordered eating, trait mindfulness and constructs implicated in the aetiology and maintenance of disordered eating. The present study recruited a general population sample (N = 328) to examine these relationships. Participants were 275 women (83.8%) and 53 men (16.2%) aged 18 to 71 years, with a mean age of 31.07 years (SD = 10.19). Participants completed a series of on-line questionnaires measuring disordered eating, trait mindfulness, experiential avoidance, rumination, and impulsivity. The results of this study have implications for understanding the relative contributions of trait mindfulness, facets of trait mindfulness (observing, describing, acting with awareness, and accepting without judgment), impulsivity, rumination, and experiential avoidance to disordered eating. Pathway analysis conducted to assess the role of trait mindfulness as an explanatory mechanism linking impulsivity, rumination, and experiential avoidance to disordered eating will also be presented.

References
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ABSTRACT 2
Eight week group intervention for Binge Eating Disorder: Early findings

Lynne Harris – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Mary Arlington-Watt – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Binge Eating Disorder (BED) has been recognized as a discrete condition requiring intervention for several decades, and well developed programs for BED exist (Mitchell, Devlin, de Zwaan, Crow, & Peterson, 2008). Despite this, BED has only recently been included as a diagnostic category in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) is an efficacious treatment for BED, however little translational work to establish the effectiveness of CBT for BED in heterogeneous samples has been conducted. This is particularly problematic, given the high rates of comorbidity among those with BED. This paper reports preliminary findings concerning the effectiveness of an eight week group CBT program for BED in a general treatment-seeking sample with

limited exclusion criteria. Adults who met criteria for BED following a structured interview (n=20) undertook group CBT (GCBT; n=10) or were placed on a waiting list (WL; n=10) based on availability. All participants completed self-report measures including the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q; Fairburn & Beglin, 2008) on two occasions. The findings supported the effectiveness of group CBT in reducing weight and shape concerns among an unselected sample of treatment seeking adults with BED, however further research with larger samples is needed.

ABSTRACT 3
Cognitive Outcomes in Self-threatening Social Comparisons

Amanda Georges – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Lynne Harris – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

The factors that influence attentional focus have been the subject of recent research because of the central role of attentional focus in task performance (Mather & Sutherland, 2011). Previous work has shown that upward social comparisons induce changes in focus of attention whereby individuals under conditions of upward social comparison and evaluative threat display increased attentional focus (Normand & Croizet, 2013). However, the relationship between social comparisons and measures of state and trait anxiety, known to influence attentional focus (Reinholdt-Dunne, Mogg & Bradley, 2013), was not examined in this study. The present study sought to replicate and extend the study of Normand and Croizet (2013) by considering the impact of individual differences, as well as social comparisons, on attentional focus.
The study used a 3 (social comparison: upward; downward; control) X 2 (threat: present; absent) factorial design with participants randomly allocated to one of the six experimental conditions. Participants also completed the 6-item Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Scale and the 40-item State-Trait Anxiety Inventory along with visual analogue scales concerning their mood during the study. The experimental task comprised two blocks of 72–trials to assess attentional focussing. Following the attentional task, all participants completed questions to verify that the manipulation of threat and social comparison were effective.
It was expected that both threat and social comparison would influence attentional focusing and that these effects would be greater among those scoring higher on measures of trait anxiety. The findings are discussed in terms of current theories of attention, and have implications for understanding the factors that impact on task performance when people are under stress.

Session G: Professional Education – Lecture Room 1

ABSTRACT 1
Internet-mediated supervision: A vision to the future?

Pol Dominic McCann – School of Counselling, ACAP

Clinical supervision has long been a vital aspect of support for professional counsellors to ensure that they work in an objective, effective and ethical manner. Its role in challenging and supporting both trainees and qualified counsellors is well documented (Grant & Schofield, 2007). Less examined are the qualitative, experiential dimensions of supervision conducted through the Internet, although Chapman et al (2001) present a small scale quantitative study focusing on synchronous or a-synchronous versions. Webinar technologies such as Blackboard Collaborate and Adobe Connect, and Internet video-telephony programs such as Skype and Zoom create a facsimile supervision session. The Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP) has been conducting supervision in traditional face-to-face small groups since 2010, and online supervision through Blackboard Collaborate since 2013. During this time, the college has surveyed students on aspects of the supervision experience. This report will draw on these data

sets to explore the similarities and differences between two methods of supervision. Quantitative data will report on degrees of satisfaction with the course delivery, and be augmented by de-identified qualitative quotes. This research draws from an existing database of feedback held by the college: students have consented for this data to be used for course improvement, which this research contributes to. This exploratory report aims to create a theoretical framework and interview schedule for further interview and focus group-based research. Subsequent research will require HREC approval, and will involve both supervisees and supervisors.

ACAP teaches in all Australian states, and ensuring that the online delivery of our courses is of equivalent value and depth to on-campus teaching is a vital aspect of educational equity. The current research aims to ensure that supervision, a key aspect of the training and professional development of counsellors, is available in an effective way for all students, regardless of geographical location.

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Grant, J., & Schofield, M. (2007). Career-long supervision: Patterns and perspectives. Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 7(1), pp. 3-11.

ABSTRACT 2
The inquiry method for the practice of professional education: Extending learning capacity for reflective thinking within online environments

Giovanni Di Lieto – NCPS
Ingrid D'Souza – Navitas

This paper reflects on the pedagogical value of integrating the theory of inquiry into reflective thinking tools within online environments in manners that are techno-culturally accessible, sustainable and inclusive of diverse attitudes and capabilities to teaching and learning in professional education.
The authors argue that the integration of inquiry methods within an interactive online environment is conducive to evolve the practice of professional education beyond the traditional duopoly of orality and print forms of learning. In the authors' view, this is a positive step insofar as it expands the focus of contemporary pedagogical discourses on building tools to extend capacity for critical inquiry and reflective thinking.
The evidence-based analysis of the authors' practice revolves around the design of online discussion forums in Moodle and assignments based on reflective thinking for a 100-strong cohort of commencing students in a Bachelors degree in Criminology and Justice.
The approach in question provides an opportunity for members of the class to learn from each other based on the readings, different life experiences, and unique perspectives gained from studying course materials. For each weekly discussion, all set in the first half of the learning period, the students are expected to read allocated material and consider the related critical inquiries before posting their original thoughts about the activity. The desirable outcome is active participation and engagement through discussion forums in Moodle.
Students are then required to submit a critical evaluation piece of how the weekly discussion forum tasks have expanded their previous knowledge, resolved any intellectual doubts, or raised new analytical problems in relation to an open-ended topic. With a rubric, the submission measures each student's achievement of critical inquiry, as it will form a reflective basis for the final assessment task, which is content-based.

ABSTRACT 3
Research, recognise and don't repeat: Preventing burnout by helping pastors research their family's emotional history

Amanda Mason – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Vanessa Beavan – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Burnout is a lived experience for many of Sydney's Christian pastors. From the perspective of Bowen family systems theory, resisting invitations to mindlessly replay cycles of emotional and interpersonal patterns first encountered out in one's family of origin results in a healthy differentiated self who is free to remain separate but connected within intense relationships. For the Christian pastor, this interpersonal stance of healthy connection represents 'job engagement', the antithesis of depersonalised job burnout.

A small number of qualitative research studies suggest that insight from Bowen theory can (i) enhance core business in other occupations with strong interpersonal components (e.g. family therapy) (ii) improve the functioning of teams with diverse make up and (iii) play a role in preventing the mosaic of exhaustion-based physical, emotional and relational burnout symptoms common to people professions. This qualitative research study explores a potential opportunity for the emotional and relational knowledge base of psychology to promote vocational sustainability and prevent burnout among pastors.

Detailed data collected about pastors' experience via individual semi-structured interviews with 6-8 participants was analysed using Thematic Analysis. This paper presents some preliminary findings with a focus on pastors' lived experience of researching their family's emotional history, being assisted to recognise and not repeat exhausting interpersonal patterns, and the flow-on effect this has on their pastoral work.

Session H: Power and Relationships – Training Rooms 8/9

ABSTRACT 1
"You just wouldn't talk to your partner the same way that you talk to your mother: that's just a matter of course!" Handling (demand-withdraw) conflict in cohabiting lesbian relationships.

Carey Little – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Fiona Ann Papps – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Research has identified that in married heterosexual couples, disagreements and contentious issues commonly lead to behaviour where one partner makes a complaint or request and the other avoids the discussion and/or removes from the situation. This behaviour has been labelled the demand-withdraw pattern of conflict, and is commonly found in relationships in distress and in those that end in divorce or separation. Many studies have shown women as the demanders and men as the withdrawers, although what constitutes the most important issue for the couple can also determine who takes up what role. However, questions arise as to how these roles are taken up or allocated in same sex couples. The 2011 census registered that 1% of couples in Australia register as same-sex, with 16,000 women (47.48%) identifying as lesbian or as women in a same sex relationships. This significant proportion makes the topic of conflict-resolution an important one, particularly as some practitioners may not feel they understand the nuances or issues central to this section of our community. The present research used a qualitative methodology to explore how women who self-identify as lesbian experience the demand-withdraw pattern in their cohabiting relationships. Eight women in cohabiting relationships of more than one year were interviewed. Interview transcripts were analysed using a process of thematic decomposition, where transcripts are

decomposed into dominant themes and the themes themselves further deconstructed for use of language and taken-for-granted assumptions. Analysis revealed the importance of themes of the influence of gender as performance and power implications and the constriction of binary constructions of gender on the women's experiences of the demand-withdrawal pattern of conflict. It is hoped that the results of the research will also help to reduce stigma, bullying and ostracism by contributing to the literature describing the experiences of a small and marginalised community.

ABSTRACT 2
The Impact of Childhood Bullying on Adult Friendship Quality

Nicholas Whitehead – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Damith Woods – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Introduction: Bullying is a worldwide problem and is estimated to have a prevalence rate of up to 37% for traditional forms of bullying (physical, verbal and relational) and 40% for cyber bullying. Childhood bullying can affect various aspects of adult functioning including mental health (e.g., depression, self-esteem and anxiety), social functioning (e.g., lower quality friendships) and general well-being (e.g., health). Although there has been an abundance of research exploring the effects of traditional forms of bullying on adult relationships there has been limited research on the effects of cyber bullying on adult relationships.

Purpose: The purpose of the current study was to examine the impact of four primary forms of bullying (physical, verbal, relational and cyber bullying) on adult functioning. Specifically, it investigated the impact of childhood bullying on adult friendship quality.

Method: Participants were required to complete a survey which consisted of demographic information and three questionnaires. Each questionnaire was used to measure levels of childhood traditional bullying (primary and high school), childhood cyber bullying and adult friendship quality.

Preliminary Results: Preliminary results revealed that 8.4% of participants indicated being bullied by traditional forms in primary school, 15.3% in high school and 15% in both primary and high school. Additionally, 50% of participants reported being cyber bullied during their childhood. Lastly, it was found that participants who were bullied in high school were more likely to have been cyber bullied. This was not found for participants who were bullied solely in primary school.

Conclusion: The preliminary results suggest that the levels of cyber bullying within Australia are increasing over time. This implies that as the frequency and availability of technology and social media rise the prevalence of cyber bullying may continue to increase. The results of the present study will aid in the future construction and implementation of programs focussed on bullying prevention and resiliency in Australia.

ABSTRACT 3
Deconstructing inherent power hierarchies in NSW secondary schools: Do HSC students' learning practices support or contradict their study preferences?

Georgina Jarvis – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Ran Shi – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

The field of educational psychology involves the study of individual differences in cognitive processes when learning. Logical positivism is a common philosophical framework within empiricism, measuring ability objectively from sense perception and specifically, direct experience and/or observation. Within New South Wales, the Year 12 Higher School Certificate (HSC) Mathematics syllabuses demand students are taught and

assessed by tests and exams—considered so reliable because they fit within this framework (Niss, 1993; Watt, 2005). While this parallels the quantitative framework dominating the literature, the literature lacks influence from critical social theory, whereby the tension between liberation and oppression are examined within society (Powers, 2007). Three research aims are proposed. Firstly, to investigate the learning practices, preferences and goals of eight NSW HSC Mathematics students through one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Secondly, to evolve the literature from an etic approach (where academic scholars and NSW Government bodies dictate learning), to an emic approach (where students discuss their own learning practices). Discourse Analysis enables such socially constructed language and meanings within students' discourse to be deconstructed (Forrester, 2013). Thirdly, to deconstruct the implicit nature of shared taken-for-granted assumptions which are not explicitly stated (Harper et al., 2008) and examine the subject positions that are (re)produced as a result of these. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis enables such inherent power hierarchies to be deconstructed (Willig, 2008).

Findings suggested there is a clear hierarchy within the intuition of education, interestingly dictated by the parents of students, as the paying consumers of the education service. Also found was both within and between student competition, however this was driven by ranks and holistic study techniques (such as, past papers) for those in higher units (i.e. 3 Unit Mathematics), versus marks and more detail-orientated study preferences (such as steps) for those in lower units (i.e. General Mathematics). A gender divide was also found, such that males appear to be typically more accepting of student-teacher roles and used more mechanical metaphors in their discourse of study preferences, whereas females appear to less accepting of student-teacher roles and used more people-orientated/"life" metaphors in their discourse.

Ultimately, the research hopes to contribute to the psychological field, currently lacking both a qualitative focus and opinions of those at the epicentre of this entire institution—students. Ideally, by empowering students with the consideration of their "rights" rather than just their "responsibilities" (Clarke, 1996), they may see the opportunity of the challenge of HSC Maths, rather than simply view the challenge in the opportunity.

Session I: Theory and Assessment – Training Room 6

ABSTRACT 1
Reading Chinese Pseudo-characters: An account of word recognition models

Mark Tang – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Ran Shi – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

The study of Chinese psycholinguistics has become of great interest to researchers investigating the types of information represented in the mental lexicon. Previously studied models of word recognition have been developed from English and other alphabetic writing systems. Studies of the drastically different orthography in Chinese have produced a number of important and interesting findings that have great implications for proposed models of language processing. Most psycholinguists concur that Chinese characters have a unique representation at lexical level, but whether there are sub-lexical levels of representation (potentially containing radicals, strokes and features), and their involvement in lexical accesses is still under debate. For example, the Lexical Constituency Model (LCM) suggests that radicals contained in compound characters would activate its own standalone character pronunciation, whereas the Hierarchical Interactive Activation Model (HIAM) suggests that radicals do not have direct access to phonological activation. Aim: Therefore, an experimental study of native Chinese speakers, in a pseudo-character naming paradigm was used to validate predictions based on said models. The LCM predicts the generation of stem-

pronunciations and the HIAM, type-pronunciations. Additionally the properties of Character structure were also examined by comparing horizontal and vertical pseudo-characters. Method: using the pseudo character paradigm, 69 Native Chinese speakers (37 females, 28.62 years old) were required to name 40 non-existent phonograms varying between horizontal or vertical structures. Results: A preliminary 2 x 2 within subjects ANOVA found that there was a significant difference between Stem and Type pronunciation as well as structure. These findings provide support for the HIAM and an argument for the need to consider position-specific radicals in future models of Chinese character recognition.

ABSTRACT 2
WISC IV Profiling in ADHD Children in an Australian Cohort

Jacqueline Schell – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Damith Woods – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
John Blythe – John Blythe Child Psychology

Objective: The current study will investigate the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition (WISC-IV) index profiles of children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in order to examine differences between symptomatology and neurocognitive functioning.

Method: The study was retrospective with data collected from files of children aged between 6 and 16 years who had been clinically referred for an assessment of attention. The sample consisted of 110 children with diagnoses of ADHD-Combined, ADHD-Inattentive, and ADHD- Hyperactive/Impulsive subtypes. A control group, comprising children who were assessed but who did not meet criteria for ADHD were also included. A descriptive analysis was undertaken in relation to demographic data, sex, parental status, number of siblings and co-morbid conditions. Based on historical evidence, it was hypothesised that children with ADHD would perform differently based on their WISC-IV profile in terms of Full Scale IQ (FSIQ), Working Memory (WM) and Processing Speed (PS) index scores. It was also hypothesised that there will be correlational differences between ADHD subtype performance on the WISC-IV and a continuous test of performance, the Test of the Variables of Attention (TOVA). Preliminary investigations support this hypothesis.

Conclusion: It is expected that the findings will provide support that WISC-IV profiles may be helpful in predicting symptomatology and outcome in children with ADHD.

ABSTRACT 3
It is time to exercise smart rather than exercise hard. A comparison of high intensity interval training and circuit training to traditional aerobic and anaerobic exercises

Paul Ling – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Damith Woods – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Objective: Physical exercise has been shown to help in the prevention of mental health disorders. Many researches have addressed the effect exercise has on psychological health, yet few researches have compared the efficacy of different types of exercise. This study compared the psychological health of individuals who engaged in different types of exercise including: aerobic, anaerobic, and interval (combined) to those who did not exercise (none).

Method: 184 participants completed an online questionnaire. Participants were asked to report the type of exercise they mostly engage in (e.g., aerobic, anaerobic, combined) or none if they did not exercise as well as their psychological health measured by the

Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21) and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12).

Results: No significant differences were found between exercise group and scores on the DASS-21. However, the three exercise groups (e.g., aerobic, anaerobic, and combined) revealed significantly higher general health than those who did not exercise on the GHQ-21 ($p < .05$).

Conclusion: The current findings suggest that engaging in some form of exercise is mutually beneficial to general health and wellbeing. Limitations of the study design are discussed to explain the disparity between the recent study and the existing literature.

Session J: Sustainable Practice – Lecture Room 1

ABSTRACT 1
Professional Health Education and Practice: Students Supporting Sustainable Community-Based Health Promotion

Iain Doherty - Navitas
Michelle Honey – The University of Auckland, NZ

As part of their health professional education, undergraduate nursing third-year students at the University of Auckland are assigned to work in groups of three with community organisations. Such work counts towards their clinical hours, and provides community-based practice that takes a population health perspective. This practice expands students' health promotion skills and knowledge and provides them with the opportunity to gain experience of working with communities. Examples of student projects include: 'Smokefree Nurses Aotearoa New Zealand'; 'The Use of Social Media for Health Promotion for People with Huntington's Disease'; Developing an Effective On-Line Forum to Support Families with Mental Health Problems'; and 'Development of an e-Resource for People Who Present to an Emergency Department with Self-Harm'.

In practical terms the students are charged with planning, creating, and considering how to evaluate a specific intervention that contributes to the organisation's goals to meet population health objectives. The students must first assess the organisation and target audience and the interventions that are created tend to be practical and sustainable. Alongside creating a useful resource for the organisation, students have the opportunity to apply their theoretical health promotion knowledge, research and nursing knowledge to an authentic task. The development opportunity also helps to develop students' teamwork skills. Feedback from organisations demonstrates that they consider the final product is of an excellent standard. In addition to the positive feedback the development work is valued by the organisations as the organisations in question are often resource poor.

ABSTRACT 2
Sustainability for Human Service Education

Sharon Moore – School of Social Work, ACAP

Social Sustainability is arguably the least understood way of approaching sustainability and thus sustainability education. Social sustainability has had considerably less attention in public debate than economic and environmental sustainability. I would argue that there are two main approaches to social sustainability. The first argues for a triple bottom line approach, familiar from business speak and management education, also known colloquially as the 3 Ps, managing for people, profit and planet, and it is widely viewed as a model for addressing sustainability. Governance can be added to it as a fourth or over-arching concept. In this approach social sustainability encompasses the

social or people dimension, including social equity, community development, social capital, human rights, social support, community resilience and cultural competence, and occupies a fairly narrow area for education and practice.

In this paper I will argue for a second approach, which suggests that all of the domains of sustainability can be viewed as social, including ecological, environmental, political and cultural aspects. That is, these domains of social sustainability are all dependant on the relationship between the social and natural worlds, with people in their environment. Social Work, Psychology and Counselling with other human services can all be seen as relevant to this approach. In this framework, social sustainability encompasses all human activities, not just the focused intersection of economics, the environment and the social (see the Circles of Sustainability approach used by the United Nations for a social policy view supporting my argument).

The paper will apply this second approach and explore the dimensions of social sustainability and sustainable human development, arguing social sustainability provides exciting new directions for human services education and practices in Australia, our region and internationally.

ABSTRACT 3
Challenges for Professional Psychology in Australia

Lynne Harris – School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

National registration of psychologists in Australia commenced July 1 2010, and by March 2014 there were more than 30000 psychologists registered with the Psychology Board of Australia. According to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), psychologists are now the third largest group of registered health professionals in Australia, after nursing / midwifery and medicine (AHPRA, 2013). The change from state-based registration has improved the opportunity for mobility of professional psychologists within Australia, as psychologists are no longer required to be registered in multiple jurisdictions with slightly different registration requirements, although differences remain between the states in the oversight of psychologists' practice. The majority of training models for professional psychologists within Australia do not align well with international standards, restricting international mobility. It has been argued that the registration of psychologists is outstripping population growth (Hyde, 2014), although, if non-practicing registrants are excluded, this is clearly not the case. This paper considers current drivers of the changing profile of professional psychology education, including health workforce demand and funding models, and considers the implications of these in terms of the narrowing of specialisation within the professional psychology workforce and alignment with international models of training.

Session K: Resilience, Vulnerability and Emotion – Training Rooms 8/9

ABSTRACT 1
Fear of Death: The Unique Roles of Invulnerability, Resilience and Psychosocial Maturity

Vasilieos Tsiakalis - School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Fiona Ann Papps - School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Through observations from a young age, we begin to understand that we will not live forever. As we grow older, we become increasingly aware of our mortality, and come to learn that death is an inevitable and constant threat to everything we love and care for. Although death and dying are visible and honoured in many traditional cultures, Western cultures tend to conceal the sick and elderly and thus convey understandings of death through popular mediums, such as film and television. These media portray death as a consequence of homicide, illness, accidents and old age. Consequently, awareness of death is curtailed and pain and suffering as inevitable components of death are highlighted. It is hardly surprising, then, that fear is the most frequently observed response to death for individuals in Western cultures. In the present study, we investigate what predicts death fear in a sample of Australian men and women. To date, psychological research has focused primarily on socio-demographic factors, such as age and religiosity, in predicting death fear. In the present study, however, we are interested what the psychological variables of resilience, invulnerability and psychosocial maturity, can add to the explanation of death fear. We invited 343 Australian men and women to complete a brief online survey. Analysis of responses indicated that women report a significantly higher fear of death than men. Furthermore, we found that resilience, psychosocial maturity, and perceived health were significant predictors of death fear for both women and men, but that invulnerability and age were significant predictors of death fear only for women. We conclude that psychological variables can offer us more information than socio-demographic variables in the explanation of death fear, and that variables that promote positive illusions are important in buffering the fear of death, particularly for women.

ABSTRACT 2
Evaluating Risk and Monitoring Progress following Child Protective Services and Interventions

Peiling Kong - Sydney Counselling Centre
Gary Banks - Sydney Counselling Centre

Risk assessment studies in child welfare have largely focussed on identifying individual, family and environmental risk factors associated with future harm (Lennings, Lennings, Bussey & Taylor, 2014). Comparatively, empirical research examining protective factors, assessing parents' capacity for change and the ability to sustain significant change following child protective services involvement is lacking. This has created a predicament within forensic settings in Australia, whereby clinicians, expert witnesses, magistrates and judges are likely to rely on risk of future harm measures to assess parents' abilities to demonstrate sustained change, impacting on the realistic possibility of children being restored to their parents or remaining in out of home care.

The current study reviewed fifty de-identified clinical and forensic expert reports for the NSW Children's Court between years 2000 to 2014. Two raters coded the expert reports on a wide range of variables and factors, including but not limited to family context and functioning, abuse history, substance use, parenting capacity, quality of parent-child interactions and number of prior child protection intakes etc). Based on Harnett's (2007) theoretical framework for assessing parents' capacity for change, logistic regression was utilised to determine the extent to which transtheoretical model of change variables, goals for change, implementation of appropriate intervention with proven efficacy predicted parents' abilities to sustain change and reduced subsequent risk of harm. Preliminary findings identified factors such as gender, abstinence, participation and completion of parenting skills groups, employment status predicted parents' capacity to sustain change. These preliminary findings have important implications for future work on evaluating parents' capacity for change as well as the efficacy of child protection interventions in clinical and forensic settings.

ABSTRACT 3
Should tests of emotional intelligence be considered in the selection process for entry into Masters of Clinical Psychology programs?

Itohan J. Omoregbee - School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Ben Morrison - School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

The requirements for registration as a psychologist within Australia are continually evolving. The present shift away from supervised internships towards higher education pathways (i.e., Masters/Doctorate) are an attempt to offer a more stringent approach to professional training in line with global standards.

At present, selection into Masters of Clinical Psychology courses within Australia is largely contingent upon a combination of undergraduate grades (i.e., Grade Point Average; GPA) and the honours year thesis. These measures have been shown to adequately predict cognitive ability in a range of domains. Interview data and experience in applied mental health settings are also often considered. However, the use of objective, non-cognitive measures of ability (outside of the interview), are virtually non-existent. The literature demonstrates, however, that personality measures can add predictive value to tests of cognitive ability, when specific constructs are matched to specific domain attributes.

One measure relevant to the field of clinical psychology is the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT); a well validated ability-based measure of Emotional Intelligence (EI). EI, the ability to identify and regulate one's own, and others' emotions, may act as a worthwhile predictor of performance within domains requiring advanced communication and empathy skills, such as clinical psychology. Specifically, measures of EI could be utilised to predict and/or evaluate clinical competency as part of fitness to practice protocols.

The present study sought to investigate the relationship between EI as measured by the MSCEIT and performance on non-cognitive measures of ability compared to cognitive measures of ability, such as GPA. It was hypothesised that there would be a positive relationship between first year Masters of Clinical Psychology students' (N = 19) MSCEIT scores, and those scores obtained on two non-cognitive assessments of ability, as rated by an expert scorer. Implications to higher education selection and the clinical psychology profession are discussed.