



Research Academy 25th February: Enjoying Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy

Registration Contacts

For information and to register for the event please email go to
<https://metanoia.ac.uk/researchacademy22/>

Theme 1: Being a Researcher (and researcher support)

Theme 2: Diversity in Research

Theme 3: Innovative methodology

Seminars and speakers

The overarching aim with the conference is to introduce therapists to research approaches ranging from qualitative to quantitative via mixed methods research. The contributors represent a broad range of approaches and universities, as listed below

Dr Sofie **Bager-Charleson**. Research Academy co-founder, and director of Studies for the MPhil/PhD at the Metanoia Institute.

Dr Clio **Berry**. Lecturer in Healthcare Evaluation and Improvement, BSMS, University of Brighton.

Nicola **Blunden**. Director of Studies for the BA/Diploma in Person-Centred Counselling, the Metanoia Institute.

Professor Divine **Charura**. Programme Director for the Counselling Psychology Doctorate at the York St John University.

Dr Sally **Cook**. Associate Research Fellow at Birkbeck University of London.

Professor Nollaig **Frost**. School of Applied Psychology. University College Cork, Ireland.

Dr Nikki **Hayfield**. Senior lecturer in Social Psychology at the University of UWE Bristol.

Dr Cassie **Hazell**. Senior lecturer in Clinical Psychology at the University of Westminster

Dr Alistair **McBeath**. Director of Studies for the DPsych by Public Works at the Metanoia Institute.

Dr Peter **Pearce**. Faculty Head for the faculty of applied social and organisational sciences, Metanoia Institute.

Dr Saira Gracie **Razzaq**. Director of Psychology and Well-Being Services (NHS) and Primary Tutor on DCPsych, Metanoia Institute.

Dr Louise **Rolland**. Associate Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London

Dr Biljana van **Rijn**. Research Academy co-founder, and Faculty Head of Research and Doctoral Programmes at the Metanoia Institute.

Pablo **Van Schravendyk** and DPsych candidates (Cohort 21) are accredited psychotherapists and doctoral researchers specialising in professional studies in Psychotherapy at the Metanoia Institute.

Programme overview for the 25th of February 9.00-17.00

The day starts with a keynote to all participants. You can then select four seminars from the three 'pathways' outlined below.

For All

09:00-9.45 Introduction and Keynote Lecture by Biljana van Rijn

Developing a research voice in psychotherapy – where could it lead and why are we doing it

The keynote by Dr van Rijn expands on the significance of publishing practitioner research in psychotherapy and offers a reflection on the complexities of the peer review process in journals with some suggestions about ways to work with them and overcome the difficulties.

Four Seminars for You

You can pick four seminars from three (interlinked) interest areas, namely

1. Being a Researcher – and researcher support
2. Diversity in Research
3. Innovative methodology

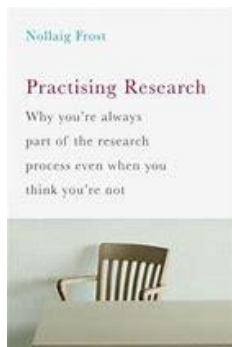
Please submit **your preferences by the 15th of February to receive pre-reading.**

Below is the list of choices across the themes 'researcher support', 'diversity' and 'innovative methodology'. Each seminar is held by a chapter contributor to the *Enjoying Research* books, lasting 1.5 hours and consisting of a presentation followed by a 'taster' of 'doing' the research.

Time	1	2	3
10.00 – 11.30	Being a researcher (Professor Frost)	Decolonising research (Professor Charura)	Pragmatic mixed methods research (Dr McBeath)
11.45 – 13.15	Researchers' mental health (Dr Hazell and Dr Berry)	Autoethnography (Dr Razzaq)	Doing surveys creatively (Dr McBeath)
Interval 1.15 -2.15			
14.15 – 15.45	Bumps, bruises and beyond: implementation tales from the student- researcher. (Metanoia DPpsych candidates from Cohort 21)	Co-constructive, pluralistic research, (Nicola Blunden)	Reflexive thematic analysis (Dr Hayfield)
16.00 – 17.30	Researcher support and supervision (Dr Bager-Charleson & Dr McBeath)	Mixed methods when researching sensitive topics (Dr Cook and Dr Rolland)	Creative use of RCT (Dr Pearce)

17.30 – 18.30 Book launch. This is an opportunity to debrief together and to listen to the authors of some recent publications, including *Enjoying Research* and other titles such as:

Theme 1: Being a Researcher (and researcher support)



Being a Researcher, by Professor Nollaig Frost. Nollaig's seminar is based on her published book *Practising Research: why you are always part of the research process even when you think you're not*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, and on her current book-in-progress. *How to Become a Researcher* (working title), Open University Press. Being a researcher means that you are curious to find out and understand more about aspects of the world around you. In one sense we are all researchers all the time: exploring, hypothesising and seeking explanations for things and people we want to know more about. Nollaig expands on how being an academic or practitioner/researcher means going beyond opinions, beliefs, hunches, anecdotes and ideas that often provide starting points for research, to carry out research that is formalised, rigorous and based on techniques and approaches that are valued and recognised by others. Being a formal researcher also means recognising personal characteristics and resources and understanding how these can be acknowledged and nurtured to improve research practice. By highlighting these elements of research, Nollaig's seminar will show you how you can be a researcher who carries out high quality research that not only addresses your own curiosity but also contributes to the field. We will also celebrate Professor Frost's 2nd edition of 'Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology: Combining Core Approaches', Open University, on the book launch in the evening. **Professor Nollaig Frost** works at School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork, Ireland, and as a visiting researcher and lecturer at Middlesex University and City University of London. For information about her 2nd Edition of *Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology: Combining Core Approaches*, see here: <https://www.mheducation.co.uk/qualitative-research-methods-in-psychology-combining-core-approaches-2e-9780335248971-emea-group>



Understanding the mental health of doctoral researchers

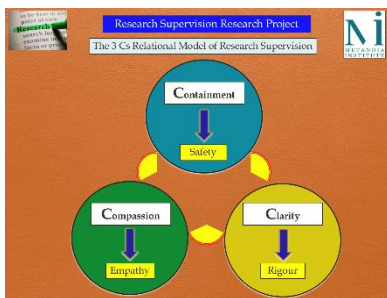
Doctoral Researchers and their mental health, by Dr Cassie Hazell and Dr Clio Berry. Cassie and Clio offer a seminar based on their powerful research into the mental health of doctoral researchers. Their expansive study

into mental health problems and suicide risk among doctoral students is based on online, cross-sectional survey with between-group design which involves comparing responses from Doctoral Researchers (DRs) with a matched group of educated Working Professionals (WPs) drawing on screening tools for depression, anxiety, mania and suicidality, followed by a thematic analysis of qualitative data drawn from free text comments. As expanded upon in their chapter covering areas of support, focusing on obstacles and opportunities for enjoying research, DRs were found to be particularly vulnerable to experiencing mental health difficulties during their PhD. They refer to their findings from the online survey showing how 40% of DRs (n=1300) met Suicide Behaviour Questionnaire-Revised criteria for being at high risk of suicide. Within the qualitative data, the study identified three higher-order themes: (a) lived experience of suicidality; (b) PhD: the good, the bad, the ugly; and (c) life outside the PhD. **Dr Cassie Hazell** is a senior lecturer in Clinical Psychology at the University of Westminster, and **Dr Clio Berry** is a lecturer in Healthcare Evaluation and Improvement, BSMS, University of Brighton.

Bumps, Bruises and Beyond. Metanoia D(Psych) by Professional Studies' candidates. Pablo Van Schravendyk and DPsych candidates (Cohort 21). This seminar offers a collection of experiential vignettes of challenges encountered during the creating and implementation of research designs, their impact on the researcher and how they were overcome. The seminar addresses questions like:

- how do we challenge the complexity of philosophical approaches when there are so many variations?
- the profound political impact of one researcher's investigation into bullying and harassment in their organisational setting,
- applying a data analysis method that has no pre-defined epistemological positioning and creating a bespoke research design,
- responses to the pragmatic and personal impact of life events (e.g. Covid, grieving or mental health issues) on the research process,
- the challenge of embodied phenomenology; participant sampling and gatekeeping dilemmas,
- the implementation of an approach to phenomenological interviewing.

The theme through this seminar is relationships: between academic rigour and creativity, the pragmatic and the personal, self-care and humility, and the vital importance of peer support. Cohort 21 promotes 'resilience, endurance, perseverance and crisps' as essential qualities for psychotherapists to enjoy and overcome the bumps and bruises of the research experience.



Relational Research Support and Supervision. Dr Sofie Bager-Charleson and Dr

Alistair McBeath follow up the theme of 'researcher

support', based on a UKCP supported mixed methods study into the experience of research supervision among supervisors and supervisees on research training for psychotherapists and counselling psychologists. *What makes research supervision on doctoral*

programmes constructive versus non-constructive for therapists? What might supervisors learn from supervisees' experiences of supervision, and vice versa? The questions permeated their online survey (n=226) with closed and opened questions generating 558 comments and 10 subsequent follow-up interviews. The seminar will refer to how the findings, first and foremost, showed an unequivocal appreciation of research supervision. In the free text comments, supervisees stressed the value of research experience, empathy and containment. The interviewed supervisees valued trust and broad research knowledge as well as being exposed to optional approaches. Supervisors emphasised, in turn, the importance of self-directive learning. One particularly illustrative example was how one supervisee described her supervisor as her 'telescope' – helping her to navigate and see across great distances – whilst a supervisor chose to illustrate his role as 'stethoscope' to support each student to connect 'inwardly' and build their own relationship with research. Common across both groups, with their different setups, priorities and archetypes, were what Bager-Charleson and McBeath propose as a 'relational' supervision based on the '3 Cs': Containment, Compassion, and Clarity. **Dr Sofie Bager-Charleson** works as Director of Studies for the MPhil/PhD at the Metanoia Institute, and **Dr Alistair McBeath** is the Director of Studies for the DPsych by Public Works at the Metanoia Institute. For more information about the study, please go to the interactive Supervision Guide on [Relational Research Supervision for Doctoral Psychotherapy Research \(metanoia.ac.uk\)](https://www.metanoia.ac.uk/research-supervision) and to the CPR article: [Containment, compassion and clarity: Mixed-methods research into supervision during](#)

[doctoral research for psychotherapists and counselling psychologists - Bager-Charleson - -
Counselling and Psychotherapy Research - Wiley Online Library
https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/capr.12498](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/capr.12498)

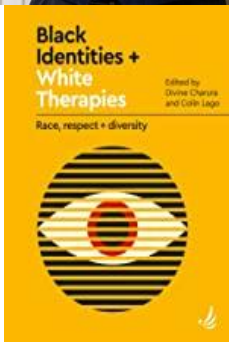
Theme 2: Diversity in Research

Doing Decolonising Research, by Professor Divine Charura.



Divine explores the importance of a critical engagement with one's ontological and epistemological position in therapy related research design. By this we mean questioning 'the nature of reality' and one's own experience of 'being in the world' (Pring, 2004). In relation to epistemology, this means critically exploring how theories of knowledge and the methods used to gain understanding of social reality are being generated (Grix, 2001). Divine's seminar expands on how research can engage with the ways in which Eurocentric perspectives and power inform and maintain mechanisms that perpetuate oppression and discrimination. He explores ways to challenge how knowledge is being generated and how to gain an openness for a non-defensive approach and a capacity for reflection.

Divine refers to own studies in the field of arts-based and duoethnographic research. Duoethnography uses the interaction between people and their perceptions to unearth different subjectivities and generate new meanings – often creating 'hybrid identities' (Asher, 2007, p. 68) instead of 'binary opposites' (p. 3). We will also celebrate Professor Divine Charura's and Professor Colin Lago's new book in the evening, titled *Black Identities + White Therapies: Race, respect + diversity*, by PCCS Books. Please follow this link to read more: ['We have that history to face in our own household' | The Psychologist \(bps.org.uk\)](#)



Divine Charura is a full Professor of Counselling Psychology at York St John University (England). He is a Chartered Psychologist, and Counselling Psychologist with the British Psychological Society and an Honorary Fellow of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy. Divine's psychotherapeutic interests are in exploring the therapeutic relationship when working with, loss, diversity, psychological distress, trauma, love, relationships and their impact of on being. Divine has co-authored and edited numerous books in counselling, psychology and psychotherapy. These include *Love and Therapy: In relationship* [co-edited with Stephen Paul] and with Colin Lago has co-edited the following books: *The Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy Handbook: Origins, Developments and Current Applications* (2016) and: *Black Identities + White therapies : Race respect and diversity*, (2021). For Divine's Publications please see <https://ray.yorks.ac.uk/profile/2104>



Autoethnography. Research with healing and heart in mind. Dr Saira Razzaq

examines the stages of a reflexive autoethnographic study, drawing on an evocative personal narrative to describe, interpret, reconstruct, and transform the traumatic effects of colour racism on the self. She will describe her research using process-orientated, creative analytic practices (Richardson, 2002) as well as her non-traditional attempts to use various methods, analyses and narrative writing strategies to make links between life events.

Saira has been the Director of Psychotherapy and Well-being Services in the NHS for over twenty years. She is a Registered Psychologist and an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, and works as a lecturer, supervisor and examiners on Doctoral Programmes for Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy. Saira's doctorate research was an Autoethnographic account of Racist Trauma. Her interest in Autoethnographic psychotherapeutic research is based on its powerful contribution to explain Otherness from the inside. She is interested in how mind, body and spirit can be integrated within the researcher as research knowledge. Her seminar includes references to APR (Autoethnographic Psychotherapy Research) which expands on research 'with healing and heart in mind' guided by a focus on how Autoethnographic research often speaks to a relational unconscious in a political/socio-cultural context. The seminar addresses how researchers often feel lost and overwhelmed in writing autoethnography and worry about scholarship and validity of their work. The workshop aims to give space to this and the practical applications of the method - reminding of how Autoethnography has important epistemological insights to serve us in understanding our emotional human geography and is a research method that most closely resembles therapy. It is explored as an approach that is accessible, relatable, interactive and 'therapeutic' in its capacity to heal.



Co-productive research and pluralistic inquiry, by Nicola Blunden.

Nicola straddles diversity and innovative research in her seminar as she expands on her research into 'presence' in psychotherapy. She will explain her use of '*co-productive*' research. Co-production refers to a pluralistically oriented form of research which promotes engagement and shared decision-making between researchers and participants. It is positioned under the umbrella of pluralistic inquiry, emphasising dialogue,

collaboration and the co-existence of multiple truths in order to secure opportunities for people from different backgrounds to co-produce knowledge in ways that support their involvement in decision-making. Making reference to her own research, Nicola draws on constructivist grounded theory when comparing arts and music to psychotherapy as a means of gaining a deeper understanding of 'presence' in therapy. Nicola shares exciting examples of engaging in co-produced research as turbulent, challenging and illuminating. She expands on how co-production research partners are committed to 'hermeneutic justice' (Fricker, 2007) in which different ways of understanding are considered to be of equal value – especially in areas where some actors have been previously silenced (Blunden & Calder, 2020). **Nicola Blunden** is the Director of Studies in Person-Centred Pluralistic Counselling at Metanoia Institute. She specialises in co-production of therapy, research, and learning. Among other things, she has co-produced research with clients, school curricula with marginalised young people, and assessment criteria with student therapists. Nicola loves the equality and diversity inherent to all co-creative approaches. Her pluralistic values and

methods help her to overcome binaries and silo-thinking in research, and she has recently published a co-authored article in *Frontiers in Psychology* on pluralistic research approaches.



Using Mixed Methods when Researching Sensitive Topics. Dr Sally Cook and Dr Louise Rolland

expand on choices in mixed methods, ranging from qualitative- to quantitative driven mixed methods research in context of emotionally loaded and sensitive topics. Sally Cook explains stages within a qualitative mixed-methods approach combining Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, 1996) and Ethnography to explore the meaning survivors of torture ascribe to using a second language in their healing journey. **Sally Cook** is an Associate Research Fellow at Birkbeck University of London, where she obtained my PhD in Applied Linguistics and Communication in 2019. In her PhD studies she explored the experience of using a later-learned language in the therapeutic journey of survivors of torture, used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Smith, 1996) combined with strategies from ethnography.



Louise Rolland explains how combining a web survey with interviews enabled her to unpack the initial, quantitative findings regarding multilingual clients' language use, revealing rich associations between languages, emotions and identity. Louise is an Associate Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London, where she obtained her PhD in Applied Linguistics in 2019. Her research interests centre on the social and psychological aspects of multilingualism. She has studied how multilingual clients use their languages in psychotherapy, with implications for processing emotion and accessing plural identities.

Theme 3: Innovative methodology

Dr Alistair McBeath offers two seminars:

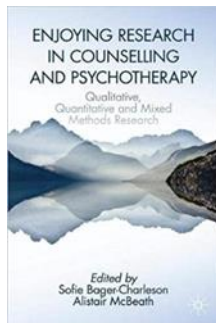


Mixed methods research: The case for the pragmatic researcher.

This seminar introduces Mixed Methods Research (MMR) as an innovative and progressive approach to research in counselling and psychotherapy. The historic debate that has cast quantitative and qualitative research as competing and incompatible approaches is rejected in favour of a focus on a what-works-best approach to researching any particular phenomenon. There is a consideration of pragmatism's advantages as the philosophical underpinning of mixed methods approaches to research and examples of specific mixed methods designs are also discussed.

Dr Alistair McBeath keenly emphasises the advantages of a Mixed Methods Research approach and presents illustrative data from some of his own research activity. He makes the key point that Integration of qualitative and quantitative data can offer more depth of understanding than if quantitative and qualitative data are considered in isolation.

It is this 'added value' which lies at the heart of Mixed Methods Research and why it can be an enriching experience for the committed researcher. Many students engaged in research in counselling and psychotherapy appear to view qualitative and quantitative research approaches as an 'either or choice'. Dr McBeath hopes that more researchers will move away from this outdated approach and discover the liberating and exciting opportunities offered by Mixed Methods Research.



Doing surveys creatively. Dr Alistair McBeath presents some progressive and advanced ways to utilise the power of online surveys in counselling and psychotherapy research. He illustrates how so-called *intelligent surveys* can be designed using such advanced features as skip logic and conditional branching. There is a keen emphasis on how to effectively design, market and publicise online surveys and also an explanation of how to determine a reasonable sample size for surveys and how to use social media to obtain homogenous survey samples. Dr McBeath uses illustrative material from his own research activity throughout

the presentation.

There are examples of how to effectively present and analyse survey findings with a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative data. Examples are presented of just how powerful online surveys can be in collecting rich quantitative and qualitative data. Dr McBeath firmly believes that there has never been a better time to harness the rich opportunities offered by utilising online surveys in counselling and psychotherapy research. The presentation hopes to encourage researchers to exploit the power of online surveys to become time-efficient and inclusive in developing a tool that offers both a qualitative and quantitative lens with which to view phenomena under study.



Reflexive Thematic Analysis. Dr Nikki Hayfield expands on her chapter in *Enjoying Research in Psychotherapy (book 2, in process)* written with Braun and Clarke. She also refers to her recently co-edited book in the *APA Essentials of Qualitative Methods* series about thematic analysis, which offers exciting opportunities to gather in-depth qualitative data and to develop rich and useful findings. Dr Nikki Hayfield explains the concept of reflexive thematic analysis as a method of analysing interview and focus group transcripts, qualitative survey responses and other qualitative data. Central to this method is the recognition that we are all situated in a particular context, and that we see and speak from that position. This leads researchers to produce knowledge that represents situated truths and provides

insights into people's perspectives on a given topic. **Nikki Hayfield** is a Senior Lecturer in Social Psychology in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol. Her research interests are primarily in sexualities and marginalised identities, with a particular focus on how bisexual, pansexual, and asexual identities are experienced and understood. She is a qualitative researcher who collects data using interviews, focus groups, qualitative surveys, and story-based methods. In terms of analysis, Nikki has a particular interest in thematic analysis, and is co-author with Gareth Terry, on [Essentials of Thematic Analysis](#) (part of the [American Psychological Association's Essentials of Qualitative Methods series](#)). She has also published a number of book chapters with

Victoria Clarke, Virginia Braun, and Gareth Terry. At UWE, she leads the *Identities, Subjectivities, and Inequalities* theme which is part of the *Social Sciences Research Group*. Her first book entitled [Bisexual and Pansexual Identities: Exploring invisibility and invalidation](#) was published in 2020. You can see Nikki's most recent research on my [UWE staff page](#) and on [Google Scholar](#) and [ResearchGate](#).



Doing randomised control trial (RCT) research

creatively. Dr Peter Pearce demonstrates the use of RCT to test the effectiveness of school-based humanistic counselling (SBHC) in an ethnically diverse group of young people (aged 11-18 years old). The seminar builds on Dr Peter Pearce's chapter in *Supporting Research* (Bager-Charleson & McBeath 2020 eds, in process) and makes reference to his field research with colleagues Sewell, Cooper, Osman, Fugard and Pybis (2017). Peter Pearce is the Faculty Head for the faculty of applied social and organisational sciences, Metanoia Institute.

For questions and to register for the event please email <shea.holland@metanoia.ac.uk> or go to <https://metanoia.ac.uk/researchacademy22/>

Please email <sofie.bager-charleson@metanoia.ac.uk> for more information.