

# What **PSYPAG** is and why it's good to get involved

## **What is PsyPAG?**

PsyPAG (**Psychology Postgraduate Affairs Group**) is a national organisation for all UK psychology postgraduates and trainees (working towards Chartership); membership is free and automatic. PsyPAG is run voluntarily by an elected committee, which any member can be voted on to.

The aims of PsyPAG include: to provide support to members, represent postgraduate interests, and act as a vehicle for communication between postgraduates. PsyPAG achieves these aims by organising an annual conference, hosting workshops on topics such as statistics, teaching etc, and publishing our journal 'Quarterly', which is distributed free to all psychology postgraduates in the UK (if you don't receive it, email [quarterly@psypag.co.uk](mailto:quarterly@psypag.co.uk) to arrange delivery). The committee is made up of representatives for most of the British Psychological Society (BPS) subsystems (Divisions/Sections/Branches) as well as the core committee members such as Chair, Treasurer etc.

2007 is PsyPAG's 22<sup>nd</sup> year. In that time, we have grown from a small group into an important resource for the psychology community. In 2006-2007 there were 39 members of the committee, many holding more than one position. We are pleased to publish that four committee members have successfully completed their PhD this year – congratulations to all, and a number of reps have completed their time in office, meaning there are several committee positions now available.

Committee positions are available for 1 year, with the option of continuing for a second year without standing for re-election. This year there are a number of vacant positions (though some have co-opted representatives), and we invite you to join us. This leaflet is designed to provide all the information you need prior to joining the committee, but if you need any more, please contact Althea Valentine at [vicechair@psypag.co.uk](mailto:vicechair@psypag.co.uk).

## **Why become a representative?**

Becoming a PsyPAG rep is a great opportunity to make connections with renowned professionals in your research area. Sitting on boards and committees can give you 'insider' information and it is a great learning opportunity. You attend the four PsyPAG committee meetings each year, which is a great opportunity to network with other postgraduates, and find out about different psychology departments across the UK. Being a representative also looks good on your CV and may be the bit of experience that makes you stand out from other candidates at interviews.

## **What does a representative do?**

*Subsection (Division/Section/Branch) & Board Representatives*  
Subsection & Board reps attend all committee meetings (or as many as possible) of the relevant subsection/board and represent postgraduate interests at these. There are usually 3 to 6 meetings a year. You will mainly be asked to provide input on events, postgraduate prizes and bursaries, and may also be asked to help with workshops, conferences etc. run by the subsection. Reps then feed back any relevant information to the PsyPAG committee at the quarterly meetings.

### *Quarterly Editors*

The Quarterly is PsyPAG's main method of communicating with the wider psychology postgraduate community. Editors take responsibility for one issue each year, plus proofread & edit a couple of articles each quarter, depending on the submission rates. You need to have a broad interest in psychology and be quite well organised. Although most of the time you read articles as they come in by email, the month before an issue is due can be quite pressured. The format of the Quarterly has changed recently, with a new glossy cover, but there is lots of scope for change, if you fancy a challenge.

## How do you become a rep?

The best way is to stand at the AGM, held this year on **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July** at Southbank University, London. The AGM is very relaxed, however if there are multiple applicants you will be asked to give a brief statement on who you are, why you are interested in the position, and what you will contribute if elected. It is a good idea to have something prepared, just in case. You and the other applicants will then be asked to leave, and a vote will be taken. You may hold up to 3 positions on the committee.

Throughout the year, members can be co-opted onto the committee into a vacant position, though they will have to be elected at the following AGM. If you would like to join the committee later in the year, contact Julie Freeborn, Information Officer on [info@psypag.co.uk](mailto:info@psypag.co.uk).

## What happens next?

A meeting will be held the day after the AGM to introduce new members to each other, and explain what you need to do next. Before the next meeting in October you will be expected to have contacted the committee you represent (aided by your predecessor, or the Information Officer if there isn't one), and maybe have attended one of their meetings. You will be added onto the PsyPAG mailing list (a Yahoo Group) which enables us to keep in touch. The Yahoo Group site contains the Handbook and Constitution, which you should also read before the next meeting.

## Email applications

If you would like to find out more about vacant positions, express your interest in a position, or if you can't attend the AGM but would like to get involved with PsyPAG, you can apply by email. Please email the Vice Chair, Althea Valentine, on [vicechair@psypag.co.uk](mailto:vicechair@psypag.co.uk), with the following information: your name; which positions you're interested in (up to three) and why. Please put 'PsyPAG vacant position' in the subject line, and send by **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July**.

## Vacant positions

The following positions will be available for election at the AGM:

- Conference Standing Committee ♦
- Consciousness & Experiential Psychology Section ♦
- Developmental Psychology Section ♦
- Division for Teachers & Researchers in Psychology ♦
- Division of Counselling Psychology
- Division of Educational & Child Psychology
- Division of Forensic Psychology ♦
- Division of Health Psychology
- Division of Neuropsychology
- Division of Occupational Psychology
- Learning & Teaching Support Network/PGwT +
- Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section +
- London Branch Officer
- Membership & Professional Training Board
- National Postgraduate Committee ♦
- North East of England Branch +
- North West of England Branch
- Northern Ireland Branch
- Psychology of Women Section +
- Psychotherapy Section
- Publications & Communications Board
- Qualitative Methods Section ♦
- Quarterly Editor x 6 (3 positions co-opted) +
- Scottish Branch ♦
- Scottish Division of Educational Psychology ♦
- Social Psychology Section ♦
- South West of England Branch ♦
- Special Interest Group of Coaching Psychologists
- Transpersonal Psychology Section
- Treasurer
- Vice Chair
- West Midlands Branch

♦ Positions currently vacant

+ Positions currently filled by a co-opted member