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PSI Student Newsletter



Welcome

Welcome to our first student newsletter aimed at providing you with useful information and links to resources while you study a maths-related degree at University and start to think about future career options.

Did you know?

On November 23rd, Mathematicians around the world celebrate the Fibonacci Sequence: a sequence of numbers that creates a spiral, beginning with 1, 1, 2, 3. That's how they got to November 23 (11/23).

PSI Events

PSI offers a range of opportunities to learn about statistical techniques used in the Pharmaceutical industry, as well as valuable personable skills. Sessions range from a couple of hours to all day events. More details and how to register can be found on our [website](#), but here is a taster of one coming up:

R for Clinical Trial Statisticians

5 x 2-hour training sessions run over 5 weeks during November 2021

Statisticians use a variety of statistical software packages, whether working on clinical trials or other areas of medical statistics, and this course aims to increase participants proficiency in R – including data manipulation, graphics and statistical analyses.

Target audience: final year BSc, MSc, PhD who already have experience of other software languages (such as SAS).

Free workshop: How to be an effective statistician

**Wednesday 1st December 2021
14:00 - 17:00 GMT**

Peter Drucker – one of the main leadership gurus of the 20th century, who heavily influenced how we think about leadership today – wrote many books. One of his best is “The Effective Executive – The Definite Guide to Getting the Rights Things Done”. Drucker describes the different techniques and tools executives need to master to produce results for their organizations.

In a similar way to Drucker's book for executives, this workshop will equip you as a statistician with a toolbox to become much more impactful, and will provide you with insights via real-life examples and give you actionable steps to move forward. The interactive virtual workshop will be a combination of

- short presentations,
- question and answer sessions, and
- group discussions in break-out groups via zoom.

Register

**Type of event**

One-hour live webinar

Date and time

Wednesday 10th November 2021
13:00 - 14:00 GMT

Who is this event intended for?

All students studying Mathematics, Statistics, or a degree with high numerical content who would like to learn more about the career possibilities within medical research and how to take the first steps towards this field.

What is the benefit of attending?

PSI MEDMathS is our brand-new one-hour careers talk which offers an introductory presentation about how Mathematics and Statistics are applied in medical research, with time for questions. Find out how PSI can help students in their future careers.

[Registration deadline: Monday 8th November 2021](#)

Register

**Type of event**

Full-day interactive event, including a live panel discussion and an exhibition session

Date and time

Wednesday 2nd March 2022
10:00 - 17:00 GMT

Who is this event intended for?

All students with an interest in the field of Medical Statistics, for example within pharmaceuticals, healthcare and/or medical research, and would like to take the next step in exploring this as a career option.

What is the benefit of attending?

PSI Medical Statistics Careers Event is an excellent opportunity to find out more about the types of opportunities available within Medical Statistics, talk to different organisations and make contacts for the future.

[Register between 10th November 2021 - 16th February 2022](#)

Register

Benefits of PSI for Students

- **Free membership**
- **Special Interest Group (SIG) new starter group and CALC (Careers group within PSI)**
 - Opportunity to network and understand more about the industry
 - Motivating to meet experienced statisticians - can see how your career could progress
 - Understand more about the nature of the industry - i.e. how statisticians collaborate across a range of companies
 - Possibility of job opportunities through networking or at least becoming aware of positions which are open - looks good on CV as demonstrates a genuine interest in pharma industry
 - Helps with professional development (i.e. more experience in emailing/joining calls)
 - Engagement/membership with PSI as a student gives something to talk about in job interviews for roles in the industry - shows a genuine interest in a career in pharma
- **PSI content**
 - Access to conferences/webinars which may be of interest (could be linked to modules taken at university)
 - Annual careers event

PSI New Starters Special Interest Group (SIG)

Are you interested in pursuing a career in the pharmaceutical industry, a Contract Research Organisation or an academic Clinical Trial Unit? Would you like to grow your professional network, learn about different early career paths and build valuable soft skills? Meeting people new to the industry is a great opportunity to ask questions about the practicalities of various roles, to learn about options for the early stages of your career and to discover completely new areas of the industry that you may never have considered before.

The New Starters SIG typically organises one event per year to facilitate networking amongst 'new starters' (statisticians and programmers) working in medical research - the pharmaceutical industry, Contract Research Organisations and Clinical Trial Units - and current students planning a career in one of these sectors. These events typically facilitate networking through career paths discussions, delegate-led technical presentations and informal social events. The next event will hopefully take place in Feb 2022 and the team will advertise the event more widely nearer the time.

Please reach out to Jack Euesden (jack.x.euesden@gsk.com) if you would like to know more.

Undergraduate Prize winners

2021 PSI prize winners

In June 2021, PSI awarded a cash prize to two final year undergraduate students who were nominated by their University. This is an annual award so if you are interested in being considered for the award, remember to discuss with your tutor for next year. Both winners wrote the following about their path in studying medical statistics.



Chloe Trendall

Hi, my name is Chloe. I am studying towards an MSci degree in Statistics at the University of Glasgow and I am going my 5th and final year. When I am not studying I also really enjoy running, baking and playing the violin in the university strings group.

I became interested in medical statistics after studying a Biostatistics module in my 3rd year which introduced me to statistical methods and concepts relevant to problems in medicine. This course really brought home to me the critical importance of medical statistics to society and the vast number of ways statistics could be used in medicine, such as epidemiology, public health, and clinical research. Rather than be a 'standalone' subject, my studies quickly felt incredibly relevant to the world. This relevance, of course, has been even stronger with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks to this course I knew that this was an area of Statistics that I was particularly interested in. This led me to choose 'Estimating Changes in Health Inequalities in Respiratory Disease Across Scotland' as my 4th year dissertation topic. My studies involved looking at respiratory disease risk across Scotland as a measure of health inequality. I then used disease mapping as a visualisation tool to analyse the prevalence of respiratory disease by region and to compare disease risk between areas in Scotland and across time.

Even though it was stressful, I thoroughly enjoyed writing my dissertation and learnt so much in the process. The experience overall confirmed to me that through this area of Statistics I could make a valuable contribution to better decision-making and outcomes. Although I am undecided on what path I am going to take after university, whether a PhD or go straight into employment, I know that medical-related statistics is a route I would love to pursue for my career.



Sally Cockayne

Hello! My name is Sally Cockayne, and I studied BSc Mathematics with a Placement Year at the University of Reading and have just graduated this year (2021). An interesting fact about myself is for many years I competed nationally in Equestrian Vaulting which is a unique sport combining horse riding, gymnastics, and dance – give it a google if you are interested!! Most of my experience relating to medical statistics started from my placement year at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) where I worked as a student Statistician performing statistical tests on many drugs and medicines within the R&D department. It gained me great experience and knowledge within the industry and developed my interest in medical statistics. Following my placement, I returned for my final year at university where I studied modules in mathematical biology, multivariate data analysis and experimental design which all related in some way to medical statistics. This was great for supporting my understanding in medical statistics and aided my knowledge for my university project titled "Techniques for Solving the SIR Epidemic Model" which focussed on two different methods for modelling the spread of infectious disease which I found very interesting to work on! All

my studies and experience have now helped me to secure a graduate job role at Sanofi UK, another pharmaceutical company, where I will start my new journey on their Aspiring Leaders' Programme.

2020 PSI prize winner



Jess Kirk

Winning the PSI prize at the end of my third year of university really encouraged me to start an MSc in Statistics and pursue a career as a medical statistician. Although I hadn't been familiar with PSI during my time at university, I was keen to learn more about the organisation as it was so relevant to the career path I was interested in. Through PSI, I was able to find out a lot more information about the roles of statisticians in the pharmaceutical industry than I'd been able to through careers advice websites/services while at university. They have podcasts for students interested in a career in pharma, relevant jobs listed on the website and a community of experienced statisticians who are more than happy to share their experiences in the industry.

While studying for my masters, I went on to join the communications committee for PSI, which has the aim of spreading the word about PSI to other statisticians in the industry. I've also collaborated with members of the CALC team who help to involve students with PSI and inform them of potential careers. By getting involved with PSI, I was able to meet and network with statisticians already in the industry. I found this to be really helpful in getting me a graduate job as a medical statistician- not only did it stand out to employers but I was also given valuable advice from other PSI members who had been through the stages I was going through already. Attending the annual PSI Medical Statistics careers event was also very useful as I was able to meet potential employers before I had interviews with them. This made the process of being interviewed much less stressful as in some instances I had already spoken with them! It's also made me very excited to start my career as I feel so much more informed of the role of a medical statistician and how their careers can develop.

Podcasts



Placement Students

In July 2021, PSI invited placement students to share experiences of their placement year in the industry and partnered with Alexander Schacht on his "The Effective Statistician" podcast to produce two episodes: you can check these out at <https://psiweb.org/careers/student-placements>. Listen to hear eight students (five statisticians, three programmers) chat about their experiences from the past year and share their recommendations and tips for anyone thinking of doing a placement year or interested in a career in medical statistics. Four other students also provided a write-up of their past year, which can be found on the same page.

Interviews with Statisticians

On the [Effective Statistician/students page](#) you can also find PSI's series of podcasts with Alexander about medical statistics as a careers option where you can hear more about the role of a medical statistician and the different career paths and opportunities available.

Job Vacancies

Many companies employing statisticians advertise their job vacancies on the [PSI website](#). Career Opportunities are updated on a regular basis, and is always worth a look to see what options are available.



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