



Becoming a PsyPAG representative

www.psypag.co.uk

What is PsyPAG?

The Psychology Postgraduate Affairs Group (PsyPAG) is a national organisation for all psychology postgraduates who are based at UK higher education institutions. Funded by the Research Board of the British Psychological Society, PsyPAG is an independent organisation run on a voluntary basis by a committee of postgraduates, for postgraduates. The PsyPAG committee encompasses a range of representative roles, from editing our publication, *The Quarterly*, to representing postgraduates on the BPS Ethics Board. You can find more information about PsyPAG and a list of all current committee positions at: www.psypag.co.uk

What does a PsyPAG committee member do?

PsyPAG committee members are engaged in a wide range of activities aimed at promoting the postgraduate community. Although the specific activities will be dependent on your exact role you can expect to be:

- Attending three PsyPAG meetings each year
- Attending your member network committee meetings
- Helping your member network to understand postgraduate needs
- Obtaining sponsorship from your member network for the annual PsyPAG conference
- Writing an article for the Quarterly
- Contacting postgraduates interested in the area you represent to find out their views on issues which affect them
- Chairing and judging sessions at the annual PsyPAG conference
- Promoting the PsyPAG workshop budget, awards and bursaries
- Promoting PsyPAG to postgraduates at your institution
- Being involved with one of our sub-committees which include, workshops, bursaries, awards and, media and communications sub-committee

Additionally reps are expected to prepare a short report detailing their activity prior to each PsyPAG meeting (whether they are able to attend or not). This report details the meetings which representatives have attended for the BPS member network they are affiliated with and the activities they have engaged in since the last meeting that contributes to representing and supporting postgraduates. The report is not a big task, and it can help to update it as you go, adding anything which you have done.

PsyPAG committee meetings

Three face-to-face committee meetings are held each year, usually one at our annual conference (July), one in November and one at the BPS annual conference (April). These meetings usually take place on Friday afternoons and last around three hours. Basic expenses

are covered for meeting attendance; further information on this is available when you join the committee.

What happens in between committee meetings?

In between meetings, the bulk of committee business and communication between committee members is conducted via email. As a PsyPAG committee member, you are expected to provide input where required. This may be in the form of you offering feedback or your opinion on something that the committee is proposing to introduce, or your involvement in disseminating information (e.g. about events) throughout your networks so that information is shared with as many postgraduates as possible. You will also be asked to advertise PsyPAG bursary and award schemes to your departments and all appropriate contacts. Promoting PsyPAG and what we do is one of the key roles of all committee members.

What else might I be expected to do?

Some roles, such as the representatives for the BPS Divisions, Sections, and Regional Branches also require attendance and involvement at other committee meetings. At these meetings your role is to represent postgraduate interests. This could include providing input on events and prizes, and in some cases judging applications for awards and bursaries. It could also involve organising workshops for postgraduates in your area or editing the student pages of a BPS member network's newsletter. Each Division, Section and Regional Branch is different but they all looking for proactive representatives who want to get involved.

We strongly encourage PsyPAG representatives in these roles to try and organise a PsyPAG stand at conferences and events held by the Divisions, Sections and Regional Branches, in order to promote PsyPAG and encourage more postgraduates to be involved with the BPS member networks. All activities of this sort would then be fed into your representative report for PsyPAG meetings. Most representatives have said that hosting a PsyPAG stand at a conference or event is a very enjoyable experience that allows them to meet other postgraduates and network.

Representatives are encouraged to write for PsyPAG's Quarterly publication and to take part in the organisation of PsyPAG events, such as conferences and workshops. These can be great experiences that help you develop and refine skills valuable to your CV. We would also hope that you would be involved on one of PsyPAG's subcommittees; these are smaller working groups of committee members with a particular focus or task. At present these include a bursary subcommittee and awards subcommittee which are responsible for reviewing applications and awarding prizes. There is also a workshop subcommittee and we have recently established a media and communication subcommittee.

How do I become a PsyPAG representative?

All PsyPAG representatives are psychology postgraduate students or trainees currently registered at a UK higher education institution. There are two ways you can join the committee: being elected at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in July or being co-opted at one of the quarterly committee meetings. You are allowed to hold up to three concurrent PsyPAG committee positions at one time. Each position has a term of two years, but you are able to stand down before then if you wish. You can also stand to be re-elected, but this is not guaranteed.

Being elected at the PsyPAG AGM

Our AGM is always held at our annual conference. The details of the AGM are included in the conference programme and all conference attendees are invited to attend.

Before the AGM, the Vice Chair will announce each vacant position on the JISC List, website and social media. Applicants are required to complete the application form and send it to vicechair@psypag.co.uk by the advertised deadline which will be 7 days prior to the start of the conference.

The application forms will then be anonymised and placed into a booklet which will be distributed to delegates at the conference to allow them time to read and reflect on the applications prior to the AGM.

During the AGM, we will read out your response to question one anonymously. If there is more than one applicant for a position then a vote will be taken. If there is one applicant we will ask if there are any objections, and if there are none you will be elected to the role. You will be informed of the outcome via email if you do not attend in person.

Being co-opted at a quarterly PsyPAG committee meeting

Throughout the year there will be some vacant committee positions, either because they were not filled at the AGM or because a representative has stood down before the end of their term. The vacant positions are shown on the committee list on our website. If you are interested in standing for any of these positions during the year you can email the Vice Chair (vicechair@psypag.co.uk) and declare your interest by completing the application form. This will then be sent to the PsyPAG committee. If there are no objections you will be co-opted at the next quarterly committee meeting. If there is more than one application the committee will take a vote via email. You will then be formally elected into the position at the next AGM.

What happens after you have been elected?

If you are elected at the AGM and in attendance you will have a short welcome and introduction by the Chair following the AGM. A welcome pack, including copies of the PsyPAG Constitution and Handbook will then be emailed following the conference. You will be invited to attend the next PsyPAG committee meeting, which is usually the following November. If you are co-opted at a quarterly meeting at which you are not present the welcome pack will be emailed to you.

The previous representative in your position will provide a handover document with their contact details and details of how to contact your member network. You will be formally introduced to your BPS member network or other committee via email and they should contact you with details of their meetings.

If you would like more information about a specific role on the committee or have any other questions, please contact the Vice Chair: vicechair@psypag.co.uk