Since our last research newsletter, and leading up to Christmas many of us have been working away in preparation for the mock REF panels that took place in December. Colleagues may be interested to know staff across the School contributed to returns for the following units of assessment in the mock exercise:

- Pedagogy (C25)
- Psychology (A4)
- Politics and International Studies and (C21)
- Social Work and Social Policy (C22)

We have now received feedback from the external assessors who reviewed materials submitted for the panels and I thought it would be useful to share with you some common themes.

A key message from our externals was that for all of the units there was evidence of real strength and we should consider being less modest about our achievements. This fits with the real emphasis of the REF in 2013 being about research excellence rather than research profile. This raises a key issue of how we achieve the right balance between the quality of outputs and impact case studies and the number of staff we return who meet the threshold for inclusion.

Across the University the threshold is considered to be 2* as a minimum which indicates research worthy of international recognition for originality, significance and rigour. Our outputs need to reflect research groupings that Units of Assessment refer to in other sections of their submission in broadest sense. Our externals told us this is an area where we need to do further work. We recognise that this is important for the REF but also as a longer term strategy for developing research groups and clusters across the School. The intention will be to support colleagues to come together to support and innovate in areas where there are shared research interest and activity. For me this offers a really exciting opportunity.

External assessors also encouraged us to think more creatively about our statements pertaining to our research environment. We had some indicators of innovation in relation to the numbers of PGR the way we support and facilitate research outputs from early career researchers, our rising stars and the supportive research culture we are trying to embed. Our externals suggested we would do better to focus on how we are raising these standards rather than simply describe our structures for supporting research such as School and College research committees as all Universities have similar types of decision making bodies.

To help us achieve this, externals suggested we should look at the data we submitted in the 2008 RAE and highlight where we are doing better in terms of PhD student numbers to demonstrate our trajectory. Also to look at funding councils’ research priorities and how these are reflected in our outputs. Further evidence of our growing success could be gleaned from staff destinations/promotions, prizes and prestigious conferences presentations.

In our impact case studies we were encouraged to focus less on breadth and more on the quality of the research underpinning the IMPACT. We need more evidence of the latter and this is where we will be focusing our efforts over the next couple of months. Externals thought we could achieve this by interviewing staff about their research and taking a more systematic approach to gathering evidence. We will be investing in time for research assistants to help us with this.

In summary, the panels were a positive experience with lots of constructive feedback from our externals. The key message was that we needed to raise our profile of our excellent research and back this up with evidence of our impact and research trajectory as we plan to develop this further.

With this in mind I suggest we reflect this in the title of our newsletter which becomes:

**RaISS –IT**

Standing for research and innovation in social sciences – inspiration and transformation. The idea of raising our standards fits with our mission as a School and our research strategy. This edition of the newsletter testifies to the innovative and transformational research that is happening in our School and that we should be proud of.

**February 2013**

**Issue 5**

**Inside this issue**

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14. Conferences
Psychology has welcomed a number of new members of staff to the Division: lecturers Eva Zysk, Tom Dunn and Claire Thompson as well as a new Reader Mathew Belmonte.

Jens Binder and Lucy Betts (with colleagues in Law and Sociology) have started work on a £32K research contract with The Holocaust Centre evaluating an educational intervention with school children.

Alex Sumich and David Wilde have been awarded research grants from the BIAL foundation. Alex’s £48K project involves using EEG data to investigate hallucinatory experiences. David’s £25K project exploring out-of-body experiences and developing a psychometric instrument for screening purposes.

Mark Griffiths has had 22 papers accepted including papers in some high impact journals including: Clinical Psychology Review, Aggression and Violent Behavior, Computers in Human Behavior, and Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking

The past three months have also seen many publication successes with over 30 new papers accepted in peer-reviewed journals ranging from Aggression and Violent Behaviour (IF 1.95) to Archives of Sexual Behaviour (IF 3.525), the International Journal of Psychophysiology (IF 2.144) and the Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology (IF 1.96).

Matt Henn and Nick Foard have now completed their ESRC project, and currently drafting outputs for publication and dissemination. A website has been developed to disseminate the project and findings to policy-makers, the general academic community, other interested parties and the general public. The website can be found at:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/groups_centres/soc/young_people_politics.html

PhD ALERT (The following PhD is available):

Prof M Henn. Young people and political (dis)engagement

Over the last decade, policy makers have become increasingly concerned that young people are turning their backs on British democracy. This unease has centred primarily on young people’s voting records—with only 44% voting in 2010. This project will explore reasons for this generation’s apparent reluctance to play a full role in political life, focussing on differing patterns of participatory engagement between distinct groups of young people, and considering the implications of this participatory disparity. The nature of the research is such that either quantitative or qualitative methods, or a combination, will be possible.
Sarah Lawther, Frances Scott and Angela Vesey, submitted their article ‘A series of changes made to a programme in direct response to monitoring of data to understand student withdrawals within the programme and improve student success and retention’ to the second edition of the ‘Compendium of Effective Practice: Proven ways to improve student retention and success’. The article was based on an intervention at NTU aimed at targeting students who were considering withdrawing from the programme and who had difficulty in achieving the required standard of academic work. The focus of the interventions was to increase students’ ability and confidence in academic skills. 46 first year students were graded on a diagnostic test of transferable academic skills. It was found that, the first year students who took part in the project attained higher marks at the end of year one than those with the same test score who did not. Long term monitoring of the progression and achievement data for Youth Studies students has enabled the programme team to identify those students most at risk of discontinuing their studies and address the issues impacting on their decision making and sense of belonging to a learning community engaged in a shared enterprise.

Following publication with Lianne Kerlin of their research into training in residential care homes, Matthew Gough has been invited to a round table discussion organised by the Association of Directors of Adult Services to help develop better outcomes for adult safeguarding in anticipation of legislative changes, ‘making safeguarding personal’. Further success for Matthew, as he has also just had a journal paper ‘Psychosis, Psychiatry and Escape’, accepted for a special edition of the US Journal of Progressive Human Services focusing on Experiences of Mental Health Survivors.
As part of NTU’s commitment to investing in research that shapes lives and society, the university is awarding 12 fully-funded Vice-Chancellor’s PhD Scholarships for 2013.

The studentships will pay UK/EU fees and provide a maintenance stipend linked to the RCUK rate (currently £13,590 per annum) for up to three years. Applications from non-EU students are welcome, but a successful candidate would be responsible for paying the difference between non-EU and UK/EU fees. (Fees for 2012 / 13 are £11,300 for non-EU students and £3,828 for UK/EU students.)

Dr G Bowpitt: Homelessness and risk among young people

High unemployment and cuts in support are putting vulnerable young people increasingly at risk of homelessness and multiple exclusion. This project will build on growing international knowledge to explore what package of interventions works best in protecting young people from sinking into a chronically excluded lifestyle. Research with local agencies will evaluate hostel, lodging, supported housing, family mediation and other schemes. Alongside mainstream qualitative research methods, the project will explore the use of participatory methods that work with young people in data generation.

Dr A Barnard: Psycho-social support in Mental Health

The project will address how contemporary models of mental health care and services meet the human rights/needs of service users within an international legal framework. The project will include an examination of dissatisfaction with mainstream mental health services and how these maybe breaching the human rights for people with complex needs.

Operating a ‘realist evaluation’ methodology, this project seeks to address the extent to which PBR-mentoring is likely to result in reoffending reductions. Integral to answering this question, is an exploration of the extent to which PBR-mentoring is embedded in a theoretical understanding of why/how people desist from crime and the inherent difficulties in engendering positive ‘human change’.

Dr. J. Pandya-Wood: Who governs? Big Society, community engagement and Nottingham Citizens

The Big Society seeks to facilitate citizen and community engagement in local decision-making. This window of opportunity has created the environment for the emergence of new community organisations such as Nottingham Citizens. But how effective will this policy development be – and who do these community organisations really represent? This research project seeks to utilise Nottingham Citizens as a case study in order to explore the ambition, role and impact of these new forms of community engagement as a vehicle for civic renewal.
Examples of this year's projects by division

Dr. A. Castro: A lifespan analysis of feature and semantic processes at memory encoding vs. retrieval: Evidence from event-related brain potentials.

Understanding, improving and protecting memory processes has important implications for facilitating and maintaining learning across the lifespan. We propose an examination of the electrophysiological responses to feature (N100) and semantic (P300) processes during encoding and retrieval of declarative memories. Core experiments will be run using the division of Psychology’s recently acquired state-of-the-art electroencephalographic facility to identify brain networks involved in these fundamental cognitive functions as a function of age (8-80 years). Further impact is derived from the potential to develop a benchmark across ages with which to compare performance from clinical populations associated with memory and/or learning difficulties.

Other Projects Available for Funding Include:

Dr. M. Keenan.
‘Invisible’ difference in shared accommodation: A qualitative exploration of the challenges of communal living with reference to the experience of LGBTQ students

Dr. M. Sutton
Fear of crime against falling crime rates: Exploring the role of real and administrative neighbourhoods and crime perceptions

Dr N Blagden
Circles of Support and Accountability: Offender experience and progression

Dr J Binder
Deception, conspiracy, manipulation: What (online) friends are for?

Dr J Houston
Posttraumatic growth in emergency service personnel

Dr J Stiller
Longitudinal electrophysiological study of sex-differences in adolescent socio-cognitive development

Dr M Karanika-Murray
Relationships between personality, addiction to work and performance

Dr A Dunn
Individual differences in earwitness memory

Prof M Griffiths
Online technologies and the facilitation of online help support groups among addicted populations

Dr D Guest
The effect of ageing on visual processing

Ms P Premkmar
The effects of expressed emotion on risk for psychiatric illness: understanding neurobiological mechanisms

Dr G Jones
Using artificial grammar learning to explain and help alleviate language impairment

Dr C Howard
The contribution of temporal resolution to perceptual expertise

Dr P Stacey
See you, hear you: The contribution of visual information to understanding speech in background noise
In November 2010, Nottingham Trent University (NTU) began a two-year long Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS). The work was led by a team from the Emergency Services Research Unit (ESRU) based in Psychology. The KTP evaluated the various safety initiatives NFRS uses to support the community it serves. Against a backdrop of changing demographics and decreasing public sector finances, the NFRS needs to establish how effective its advice is in reducing the number of incidents it attends, and how fit for purpose the service will continue to be if demographics continue to alter. The findings from the project have real implications for the defence of budgets against public sector cuts.

However, where budget cuts are unavoidable the project’s findings now allow evidence based decision making around resource allocation, particularly by establishing which interventions are the most effective means of delivering community support. The project has already had huge implications for NFRS; during the project NFRS restructured their organisation, using intelligence generated during the work on which to base their new structure and processes. Tom Simpson, the KTP Associate working on the project, has since been employed by NFRS in the role of Evaluation Officer to continue to drive forward this work. Viv Brunsden, Supervising Academic said “Tom’s appointment was the icing on the cake. Not only do NFRS now understand the importance of evaluation, and have the processes embedded by which they can do this, they also have someone within their organisation who completely understands how best to continue.”

Another significant output from the project already benefiting NFRS is an information sharing guidance document. This offers an easy to understand guidance to key legislation, such as the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act, explaining that these Acts are not a barrier to the sharing of information when it is in the interests of public safety and protection of the vulnerable. This document has eased the sharing of information both within NFRS and between them and their partner organisations. They have been able to establish new partnerships and now pool information with other organisations. This is likely to have a significant impact on the safety of communities in Nottinghamshire.

The research project ended with a conference on Monday 12 November. Delegates were given two key research project outputs. As well as the information sharing guidance document an evaluation toolkit to be used by Fire and Rescue Services was shared. The toolkit assists FRS in identifying measurable outcomes for their initiatives in their planning stages and in then assessing the results of initiatives. It is embedded in a wider evaluation process including the formation of an evaluation library to ensure that learning is not lost. It also offers guidance on measurement process and how to take account of local influencing contextual issues, such as demographics, which have the potential to distort and disguise real impacts. The conference also featured presentations from the management team of NFRS, the KTP Associate employed on the project and NTU academics. It was attended by delegates from across the UK emergency services who are taking outputs back into their own organisations.

“The event was a fantastic way to end the two year project. This work has cemented our positive relationship with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and we are now planning to continue with important new bodies of collaborative research. We look forward to achieving similar successes with them in the future”.

Rowena Hill, Lead Academic
The first in a new annual conference took place in November 2012 organised by the School’s Emergency services Research Unit

Emergency Management: Themes in emergency planning, response and recovery is a multi-disciplinary event intended to bring those working in both emergencies related research and emergencies related practice together to share understandings and network. The conference has a research focus but takes a broader view of this than traditional academic conferences. Here, instead of research solely being presented by academics, ‘insider’ research conducted by those actually working in emergency related professions was also presented. There were also a number of papers reporting collaborative research that had been conducted by academics and emergency professionals in partnership.

The underpinning rationale for the conference is that of knowledge transfer and partnership in research. It stems from the realisation that academics conduct research that may not always be best oriented to the needs of practitioners; and that practitioners may not always have access to academic research. Similarly those who conduct ‘insider’ research may be limited in their opportunities to share their findings more widely with those who can best make use of these new bodies of knowledge. By bringing these groups together the conference not only gives a platform for people to present their work to those who can most benefit from it, but it also provides an opportunity to discuss alternative directions for new bodies of research. The opportunities for networking make it possible for new collaborations to be developed, meaning that the conference’s impact can go far beyond the fact of the day itself.

The conference was opened by the Dean and had an international flavour with presentations and delegates coming from places such as Canada, the USA, the Republic of Ireland, and Australia, as well as from across the UK. There were presentations on issues as diverse as: transport infrastructure resilience; emergency planning in the health service; community risk profiling; fiscal stress and the fire service; international disaster aid; and earthquake mortality – as well as many others. As well as the oral presentations a number of presenters chose to present using research posters which were displayed for viewing during the coffee breaks and at lunch – and which facilitated much lively discussion and debate. Delegates were also able to book tours of the full-sensory, immersive and interactive ‘Mission Room’ (http://www.missionroom.com) which has many potential uses in relation to emergencies, risk and health and safety training and planning.

A number of prizes were awarded at the event including the launch of a new award for Significant Contributions to Emergencies Related Research. This award was presented to Dr Anne Eyre. Anne is a sociologist specialising in the psycho-social aspects of crises, emergencies and management.

The Emergency Planning Society’s Education Committee sponsored a prize for the Best Student Presentation. This was awarded to Abigail Mottershaw for her presentation on Ambiguous loss: work-famaily relations in the emergency services. The Emergency Services Research Unit sponsored a prize for the Best Student Poster which was awarded to Lisa Sanderson for her poster on Evaluating a Telephone Trauma Support Service. Both Abigail and Lisa are graduates from S3 – Abigail from the BSc Psychology and Lisa from MSc Psychology. To prevent any biases the student prizes were awarded by panels that didn’t include any academics from NTU – and Abigail and Lisa beat off stiff competition to win as they were up against PhD students’ work.

We hope that S3 academics will get involved again next year both through submitting their own papers and by encouraging their students to do so. A call for papers will be issued sometime around Easter but in the meantime if you want to know any more about the conference feel free to contact Viv Brunsden.
Professional Education in an Ageing Society

Contributed by Chris Ring

This poster, presented to the Society of Research into Higher Education’s “Newer Researchers” Conference” in December 2012, outlined the findings from a small research project completed with first year social work students in 2011-12. A review of the sparse literature on teaching social workers about ageing, informed by a small survey of local stakeholder views on teaching priorities in this area, highlighted the need to develop robust methods for assessing students functioning knowledge in working with older people e.g. to apply specific theories to practice situations. Examination with students of a range of assessment methods demonstrated relatively greater construct validity for declarative knowledge (relevant concepts, theories, and “facts” of ageing), than for functioning knowledge, where no assessment method of acceptable validity was identified. Alternative interpretations are that such “functioning knowledge” exemplifies a “wicked competency” (Knight and Page, 2007), and cannot in principal be assessed as a generic aptitude. Alternatively, it may be that a sounder measure of competence in this area can be developed. The poster can be viewed through this link \napier\blsshared\Soc-Shared\S3Research\SRHE poster- final version (C RING).pptx


Mentoring Scheme

Contributed by Andromachi Tseloni

A mentoring scheme will shortly be in place to support staff competence and capacity for research and scholarly activity and thereby contribute to the research culture, outputs and research grant capture of the School of Social Sciences. The scheme will focus on supporting academic staff in the Divisions of Sociology, Politics and IR, and Social Work and Professional Practice since mentoring arrangements are already in place in Psychology although interdisciplinary research would stretch across all Divisions of the School. Mentoring may serve a range of functions including support and guidance for staff who wish to develop their research/scholarly activity profile through to more directive input to assist with paper publication and or grant applications. Mentoring will be short or long term depending on objectives, confidential, of benefit to both the mentee and mentor and will strengthen, in addition to research activity, collegiality.

The details of the scheme are available in the School Research Committee papers. Divisional Research Coordinators are in the process of approaching individual staff members with a short questionnaire to determine expertise and ‘wish lists’ in order to facilitate the process.
Chris Towers and Ricky Gee gave a presentation on ‘the use of role play in the classroom’ at the School of Social Sciences staff development week. They now have had their article on role play in the classroom accepted in the latest edition of ‘educational developments’, published by SEDA (staff and educational development association). Their article ‘acting on the knife edge’- incorporating role play within the curriculum, describes how role play has been used effectively within the discipline of Social Policy, taught on the Health and Social Care Degree.

Students have responded well to these initiatives with 87% of the student group who witnessed the role play commenting that they found the exercise ‘very interesting’ or ‘interesting’. One student said that they found it ‘very helpful’ as it is a more ‘in depth way of learning’. Another commented that ‘I think you should do more of it; it helps the visual learners to remember the information. Everything was brilliant’. Role plays have seen Towers and Gee play out various encounters between for example benefit advisors and claimants or educational welfare officers and parents. Students have through witnessing these enactments learned more about the ‘knife edge’ on which policy and practice takes place with decisions and actions made which can have profound effects on lives. They have learned to engage with the ‘real world’ of policy making.

Students have commented on how this work helps visual learners with one student commenting ‘I was able to visualise the scenarios in a working environment and learn how professionals reach decisions’. Towers and Gee have also involved some students in the role plays themselves and have plans to work with other groups of students in the division. Both lecturers and students have many non-academic employment and broad life experiences to bring to role play. Role play can help students reflect on their learning and also consider work settings and the tensions that can exist between service providers and service users. In this way role play facilitates their employability as it enhances understanding of settings and people that may encounter beyond graduation.

The Article ‘Acting on the ‘knife edge’: incorporating role-play within the curriculum By Dr Chris Towers and Ricky Gee, Nottingham Trent University, is published in ‘educational developments’ Issue 13.4 December 2012, pages 8-11
Welcome to colleagues in International Relations

The new Division of Politics and International Relations was established on 1 August 2012 and we look forward to working with our new colleagues and innovative courses. The first cohorts of year one BA International Relations students and BA Politics and International Relations started this September as well as the new MA in International Relations. In addition, our new colleagues also bring with them a range of new research interests. Many of you will have already met and worked with our IR colleagues. We have however provided a brief individual profile below by way of further introduction...

Liam McCarthy

I joined the division of Politics and International Relations and NTU in September 2012, and currently teach on a range of core International Relations modules at all levels. I am also on the supervision teams of two PhD students, and I look forward to contributing to the research community further in the future. My research examines the developments in Critical Security Studies, analysing the mechanisms of norm formation, and the normative/progressive implications of the Copenhagen School. I have a particular interest in the range of security challenges facing post-colonial Indonesia and the wider Southeast Asian region, and have attended conferences and workshops in Kuala Lumpur in 2011 and 2012 presenting on these issues to both academic and policy orientated audiences.

Sagarika Dutt

I was awarded my Ph.D. in International Relations in 1991 and joined Nottingham Trent University as a Lecturer in 1995. My Ph.D. thesis entitled ‘The politicization of the United Nations specialized agencies: A case study of UNESCO’ was published the same year by Mellen University Press. Since then my research interests have expanded to include other UN agencies and I have recently published a review article in India Quarterly on ‘The UN and global governance: Do ideas alone help?’ (June 2012). I teach modules on international institutions at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels and since 2009 I have also played the role of Subject Leader for International Relations. My regional interests focus on South Asia and I have recently published the following: Sagarika Dutt and Alok Bansal (eds), South Asian Security – 21st century discourses, Routledge: 2012.

Marie Gilbert

I joined NTU in November 2011, following a one-year postdoctoral fellowship in South Africa. My current research project focuses on normative convergence between regional organisations in West Africa. It tries to assess to what degree organisations such as the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopt and implement the same international norms of governance and security (e.g. on democracy, human rights, or unconstitutional changes of government). I recently presented papers exploring two cases studies at conferences in June and September 2013, and hope to revise and submit these to journals over the coming year. I am also completing a project launched with Dr Malte Brosig (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa); this is funded by the EU’s Jean Monnet Lifelong Learning Project, and will come out in the form of a special issue of the journal African Security in late 2013.
The new Division of Politics and International Relations was established on 1 August 2012 and we are delighted to welcome five new colleagues to the School of Social Sciences who teach and research in the area of International Relations. We look forward to working with our new colleagues who have already played crucial roles in re-aligning our activities and developing new and innovative courses. The first cohorts of year one BA International Relations students and BA Politics and International Relations students in Social Sciences started this September - as well as the new MA in International Relations. In addition, our new colleagues also bring with them a range of new research interests. Many of you will have already met and worked with our IR colleagues. We have however provided a brief individual profile below by way of further introduction...

### Virginie Grzelczyk

I joined NTU in 2010 as a lecturer in International Relations in the School of Arts and Humanities and have now moved to the School of Social Science where I am now a senior lecturer in the division of Politics and International Relations. I teach on a variety of modules at the undergraduate levels and am the course leader for the new MA in International Relations. Most of my research focuses on how to deal with dangerous states, and I am especially working on North Korea, its nuclear weapons program and its interaction with the rest of the world. My latest publications deal with North Korea’s redefinition of energy security, and North Korea’s family dictatorship. This year, I will continue my collaborative work with colleagues in Italy and South Korea through a grant from the Academy of Korean Studies that support our research on the concept of national identity in both North and South Korea and its importance for the reunification of the Korean peninsula.

### Imad El-Anis

Imad is a Senior Lecturer in International Relations and Course Leader for the BA (Hons) International Relations degree. He first joined NTU in 2003 as a student on the BA (Hons) International Relations degree, and completed his PhD here in International Political Economy in 2008. He is a fellow of the British Higher Education Academy as well as a number of international academic associations including the International Studies Association and the British International Studies Association. He has previously supervised two PhD candidates to completion and currently supervises ten others. His research is most closely associated with critical versions of liberal institutionalism and uses mixed methodological approaches focusing on the international relations of the Middle East and North Africa; International Political Economy; international and global trade patterns and relationships; US foreign and trade policy; Islamic history, crisis management, and energy security. He regularly comments on Middle Eastern affairs in the British and international media, and he has acted as a consultant for government and private sector actors.

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Recent Publications


Andrew Wilson, Sociology, has had his paper ‘Instability, weak government, and immigrants: 1968 the making of racist skinheads’ accepted for presentation at the BSA Annual Conference 2013. Over, 780 abstracts were submitted for this year’s conference, with only 8 papers accepted.

Matthew Gough and Lianne Kerlin presented a Workshop titled ‘Don’t waste your time in this session. You’ll only forget it all by the time you get back to the workplace’ Effective ‘Training’ in residential care: insight from local research’ at the Conference ‘What good Looks like for Dementia Care in Care Homes’ at Nottingham Conference Centre, 30th January 2013.

Eva Zysk, Psychology, delivered a seminar to the Institute of Psychiatry, King’s College London (Maudsley) in December on the Aetiology, Phenomenology, Assessment and Treatment of Morphing Fears in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

Matt Henn was invited to provide a chapter for an e-book following a presentation of an invited paper at a workshop organised by theUniversitat Autonoma de Barcelona and the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (March 2012). This event was broadcast live to audiences in Barcelona and Madrid including academics, postgraduate students and practitioners. The purpose was to inform legal and academic opinion on how to effectively extend fundamental political rights to young people across Europe and encourage increased democratic participation.


Dunn, J. T., & Baguley, T. (2012). Intro to multilevel modeling in R. For ASSESS SPSS/R user meeting at the University of York.


