3B **"My anxiety levels rise just flicking the pages" - Statistics Anxiety when learning Statistics as part of another course**

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Statistics is often a compulsory part of the curriculum for psychology, and other subjects, e.g. social sciences. Learning of statistics and research methods is an important professional skill for any student wishing to pursue a career in psychology; also, research skills are associated with the development of graduate attributes (Robertson & Bond, 2005), and are included as one of the guiding principles in the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy (2011 – 2015). Despite this convention, statistics is perceived by students as challenging (Lahar et al., 2007). Indeed, recent research has documented the existence of statistics anxiety, defined as the experience of fear or dread regarding statically-related tasks or concepts (Payne & Israel, 2010). This has been found particularly in psychology, business and social science students (Papousek et al., 2012) – i.e. those required to learn statistics as part of another course. Aside from the emotional distress of this, the experience of statistics anxiety has been shown to negatively impact attainment outcomes (Hembree, 1990; Schacht & Stewart, 1990).

The purpose of the current research was to identify the prevalence of statistics anxiety in psychology students here at the University of Glasgow; identify perceived causes of this; and establish any practical interventions that could be introduced in attempt to alleviate this. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, using measures of anxiety and self-efficacy in statistics and psychology, and focus group discussions. The results showed that more than half of the students reported moderate/considerable statistics anxiety, and this was higher than the experience of anxiety towards psychology. Analysis of the qualitative data suggested various factors that increased statistics anxiety levels, such as assessment, and this anxiety prevented students from revising for exams and attending lectures. Factors identified as potentially reducing statistics anxiety and the feasibility of possible interventions will be discussed.