

## Writing an abstract for BCUR

BCUR is a multidisciplinary conference therefore it is important to write your abstract in a way that an audience, comprised of students and researchers from any discipline or area, will understand.

Using clear language, avoiding subject specific jargon, and emphasising the context of your project will allow the full impact of your research to be understood by those outside of your subject area and will also attract delegates to attend your presentation at the conference itself.

Writing an abstract for a multidisciplinary audience will be different to an abstract you might write for a journal that focuses on a very narrow subject area, for example, but writing in this way is an increasingly indispensable skill for a career in academia and beyond. Writing an abstract that is accessible to those outside of your own discipline allows anyone who is not a subject specialist to engage with your work: from potential funding panels, to employers, to the general public.

### **The key features of a successful abstract are:**

1. A clear statement of your research question or field of investigation
2. A clear statement of the methodology used in your research
3. The background to your research project
4. A summary of your conclusions (or preliminary conclusions)

### **Top Tips**

Target the audience intended to read them

Include key words and phrases that quickly identify the content and focus of the work

Use clear, concise and powerful language

Provide a fully self-contained, summarised description of your work

Follow the same chronology as the accompanying presentation

Stick to the word limit!

Read your abstract to a peer/family member not in your subject area to make sure they understand it.

### **Example Abstracts**

#### **Oral and Poster**

#### **A comparison of novel drug combination efficacy in three dimensional cell culture**

Rebecca Shaw (Molecular and Cellular Biology)

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Gliomas make up 68% of all primary brain tumours. The invasiveness of gliomas means that full surgical removal is difficult, leading to frequent reoccurrence of the tumour. To treat cancerous cells not removed, a combination of chemotherapy and radiotherapy is employed. Presently, chemotherapy treatment for the most aggressive brain tumours only serves to increase survival to 15 months maximum. Current chemotherapeutic drugs are indiscriminate, causing death of both cancerous and non-cancerous cells; the development of resistance by the tumour cells presents another problem to treatment. Therefore, increasing the effectiveness of drug therapeutics is an area of ongoing research which has been revolutionised by the development of 3D cell models.

The aim of this project is to investigate the effect of combined treatment with a histone deacetylase inhibitor and current chemotherapy drugs on glioma cells. Cells were treated with a range of concentrations and the extent of cell death will be measured. Cells were also cultured using both 2D and 3D methods to determine whether there is a significant difference in drug efficacy between the models. All drug combinations were found to cause cell death, which was found to be statistically significant in the 3D cell models.

### **Nature in the city: young people's perceptions, values and experiences**

Rebecca Shaw (Geography & Environmental Management)

Current academic research has established a variety of benefits associated with 'nature' or 'naturalness' now recognised in urban strategy, policy and planning.

Comprising of a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this research explores the perceptions, values and experiences of young people aged between eighteen and twenty four, and which they associate with open, green and natural spaces within their local urban environment. The sub-theme of the study was to question whether the kinds of spaces provided ensure that young people are socially included in the quality-of-life benefits associated with them and subsequently to establish if there are potentially problematic gaps between 'official' and young people's understandings of these spaces.

This examination revealed tensions that indicate the need for a more complex 'bottom up' approach to urban planning, policy and strategy than is already experienced. A palpable passion for naturalness, signified by nature, was revealed, being descriptive of social exclusion through perceptions of marginalisation, fear or stigma, rather than a dislocation from nature.

### **Performance**

#### **Black Voices in Georgian England**

Rebecca Shaw (Arts and Humanities)

Through the medium of spoken word I will challenge the common stereotype that England has only recently been a multicultural society, black people have had a

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presence in our history for centuries. In 1788, Philip Thicknesse complained that: '... London abounds with an incredible number of these black men [...] in almost every village are to be seen a little race of mulattoes, mischievous as monkeys and infinitely more dangerous'. Following my research, I will bring to life the stories of some of these characters such as **Olaudah Equiano** (c.1745-1797), a former slave who went on to become a radical reformer and best-selling author; **Ignatius Sancho** (1729-1780) who published four collections of musical compositions, and sat for a Gainsborough oil portrait; and The Black Terror, **Bill Richmond**, born a slave in Staten Island who became a legendary prize fighter.

Gretchen Gerzina, *Black London* (1995), David Olusoga, *Black and British: A Forgotten History* (2016).

## Creative show and tell

### Jewellery as protest

Rebecca Shaw (Arts and Humanities)

Overall, sales of single-use bags by big supermarkets have fallen 90% since 5p charge introduced, but still **550 million** single-use plastic bags were sold by the UK's seven main retailers in 2018-19. In my Show and Tell, I will be sharing how I made a piece of contemporary art jewellery, which incorporates waste plastic. My talk will focus on the materials used to make the piece and why some artists use unconventional materials, and using photographs I will share the research and design process and how it got made. To make the session interactive, I will bring in some pieces to pass around the audience and ask them questions about how the work makes them feel.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/carrier-bag-charge-summary-of-data-in-england/single-use-plastic-carrier-bags-charge-data-in-england-for-2018-to-2019>